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### How Will The Politics And Government Of Hong Kong Change In 2047 When The “One Country, Two Systems” Policy Has Expired.

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How Will The Politics And Government Of Hong Kong Change In 2047 When The “One Country, Two Systems” Policy Has Expired.

Christopher Spalding

James Lochte

Advisor:

Dr. Emma Leonard-Boyle

## **Introduction and Thesis**

Since the official transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong from Great Britain to China in 1997, Hong Kong has been governed under a special set of laws dubbed “One Country, Two Systems”. Though Hong Kong and the mainland are one country, the People’s Republic of China, they are governed under two different systems with regards to economic and political policy. This two-system agreement has been seen as a guarantor of Hong Kong’s Western-style democracy and political freedoms, especially as compared to the rest of the People’s Republic. However, the system was set to be in place for only fifty years and is due to expire in 2047. The upcoming expiration of the One Country, Two Systems style of governance has led to speculation as to whether or not 2047 will spell the end of Hong Kong’s way of life. Through data gathered from research into other studies of the same topic, as well as interviews with experts from Hong Kong, these fears seem unfounded. Because of Hong Kong’s significant economic importance to China, as well as the presence of Western interests and nationals in Hong Kong, the expiration of the One Country, Two Systems law is not expected to affect any sort of significant change for Hong Kong. Though the Chinese government is likely to continue suppression of independence movements, and immigration to the island is expected to increase, the general projection for Hong Kong after the expiration of the Two Systems law will continue into the future in a very similar way since cost and gains do not seem to be equitable for mainland China.

## **Pre-Communist China**

The complexities of the current politico-economic situation in the People’s Republic of China and Hong Kong are part of the larger history of the region. For centuries, China was ruled by various successive imperialist dynasties who ruled by Divine Mandate. The final Chinese dynasty, the Qing dynasty, fell in 1912 because outside pressures and internal discord had made the old-fashioned Qing government untenable in a changing world. The collapse of the Qing Empire created a power vacuum which gave rise to several warlords and strongmen, who controlled territory and loyalties on a local level but could not begin to assert themselves as successor states to the Qing Empire. This was further accentuated by a lack of a unified Chinese identity which would become instrumental in building the modern People’s Republic. The southern Han (who constitute the traditional Chinese people), the northern Manchu (who had made up the ruling dynasty and elites of the Qing Empire), and the western Uyghurs (who were Muslims from the western marches of Qing territory) suddenly all found themselves of the imperial authority which had been the only thing unifying them. This period of turmoil in China, aptly named the Warlord Era, meant that the warlords were more concerned with fighting amongst themselves than with state building by any sense of the term.<sup>1</sup> These cliques kept political development in China suppressed, and it would not be until some sense of unity was restored that China could progress and rebuild.

From this disjointed background, two bitterly opposed political movements emerged to bring China back to order. One of these movements was led by General Chiang Kai-shek, who

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<sup>1</sup> Roberts, J. A. G. "Warlordism in China." *Review of African Political Economy*, no. 45/46 (1989): 26-33. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4006008>.

came to power in the Nationalist government in 1928. Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist government can best be described as a right-wing authoritarian government, organized more along the lines of the European dictators of the time, rather than on any imperial pretenses. Chiang Kai-shek succeeded in bringing much of the south of China under his government's control, and many of the warlords allied with or submitted to him.<sup>2</sup> Standing in opposition to Chiang Kai-shek's nationalists was the Communist Party of China, which was founded in the early 1920s. The emergent leader of Chinese Communism was Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong and the Communists opposed Chiang Kai-shek's government and eventually the two entered into open combat. The Chinese Civil War between the two sides nearly ended in defeat for Mao a number of times, but he was able to lead his battered army on a lengthy fighting retreat, termed the Long March, and regroup in Northern China.<sup>3</sup> The Civil War was interrupted by the eruption of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937. Japanese aggression and brutality forced Mao and Chiang Kai-shek to temporarily declare a ceasefire and work together to combat the external threat. From 1937 until the defeat of Japan in 1945, the Nationalists and Communists worked with the Allied Powers of World War II and each other in an uneasy alliance.<sup>4</sup> Once Japan surrendered and the Japanese vassal states of Manchukuo and Mengjiang had collapsed, the Chinese Civil War entered its

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<sup>2</sup> "Chiang Kai-shek." EHISTORY. Accessed December 12, 2018. <https://ehistory.osu.edu/biographies/chiang-kai-shek>.

<sup>3</sup> "Mao Zedong (1893-1976): Major Events in the Life of a Revolutionary Leader." Expanding East Asian Studies. Accessed December 12, 2018. <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/weai/exeas/asian-revolutions/pdf/mao-timeline.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> "The Chinese Revolution of 1949." Office of the Historian. Accessed December 12, 2018. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/chinese-rev>.

second phase. After vicious fighting between the two sides for the rest of the nineteen forties, Mao Zedong’s army emerged victorious. The Communists had established control over the whole of mainland China, and Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters fled to the island of Taiwan, just off the Chinese coast. There, Chiang Kai-shek established the Republic of China under his nationalist Kuomintang government but had to concede Communist control over the Chinese mainland.<sup>5</sup>

### **Mao Zedong and The People’s Republic of China**

As one of the few extant Communist states left in the world, an understanding of Communism is integral to understanding the history of the modern Chinese government. Though it was developed as an ideology by the Germans Marx and Engels in the nineteenth century, the first state organized along Communist lines was the Soviet Union. After overthrowing the House of Romanov in 1917, Russian Communists battled anti-Communists in their own civil war to establish the Soviet Union in 1922. Both because of the geographic proximity of China to the far eastern territories of the Soviet Union, and the expressed goal of exporting Communist revolution worldwide, the Soviets had an interest in the development of Communist movements in East Asia. Mongolia, independent of Chinese influence since the collapse of the Qing Empire, became a Communist state under heavy Soviet influence in the early 1920s. Even among the warlord states in China, the Soviets were exerting their influence. The warlord clique in Sinkiang, in far western China, was reliant on Soviet support through arms and soldiers. With the onset of the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the western NATO powers, the Soviet

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<sup>5</sup> "The Chinese Revolution of 1949." Office of the Historian. Accessed December 12, 2018. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/chinese-rev>.

Union was eager to extend its influence further into China. Once the Communists had established practical control over the mainland, the Soviets reached out to establish friendly relations with the Peoples Republic of China. Through the *Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance*, signed in 1950, the Soviet Union recognized Mao Zedong's government diplomatically, rescinded their recognition of the Republic of China, and promised extensive monetary and military support to the Chinese government.<sup>6</sup> As China entered the 1950s, it was a Communist state in the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union.

With the nationalists defeated, Mao Zedong set to work rebuilding the country and cementing communist policies. As Chairman of the Communist Party of China, Mao Zedong was the undisputed leader of China throughout the nineteen fifties, sixties, and into the seventies. His harsh policies have had far reaching implications for China's government and people ever since. One aspect of Mao's brand of Communism which distinguished it from the Soviet model was his emphasis on agrarianism and the Chinese peasantry, as opposed to the Soviet emphasis on industrialization and urbanization. Throughout China's long history, it had always been an agricultural society and during his rise to power Mao's primary base of support was from among the peasantry. One of Chairman Mao's defining projects was the forced collectivization of agriculture, termed the "Great Leap Forward", through which he had hoped to improve the lives of the Chinese agricultural classes and uplift them. In Mao's China, the collectivization policy was not optional and many peasants were forced to participate Mao Zedong's collectivization

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<sup>6</sup> People's Republic of China. Soviet Union. *The Treaty Of Friendship Alliance And Mutual Assistance Between The People's Republic Of China And Soviet Union February 1950*. CIA. August 30, 2000.

policies are now established to have directly contributed to a famine which caused the death of millions of Chinese people.<sup>7</sup>

Politically, Mao Zedong was an important centralizing figure in China after years of strife and discord. In marked contrast to the Warlord Era where no one man could lay claim to all of China, in the People's Republic Mao Zedong was the undisputed leader. As is typical of one-party states led by a single charismatic figure, Chairman Mao developed a cult of personality. In the face of criticism for the suffering the Great Leap Forward had caused, Chairman Mao declared "Cultural Revolution" in the nineteen sixties and into the seventies. This Cultural Revolution was effectively a nationwide purge, comparable in scale to the ones Joseph Stalin had carried out in the Soviet Union during the nineteen thirties. The Cultural Revolution saw violent reprisal against those perceived as counter revolutionary, which was interpreted broadly as including traditionalists, capitalists, those with western or imperialist connections, and anyone critical of Mao's policies. This purge saw political violence sweep the country and ensured that Mao Zedong's ideology was the only permissible ideology in China.<sup>8</sup> Mao's consolidation of power meant that Maoism supplanted Stalinism, Leninism, or even Marxism as the guiding political principles in China. Though they had signed a treaty of friendship with the Soviets in 1950, by the beginning of the nineteen sixties relations between the two Communist states had soured considerably. Whereas the Soviets had hoped that China would be simply another Communist state in its global Communist sphere of influence, Mao Zedong had determined that

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<sup>7</sup> "China under Mao 1949-1976." China Online Museum. Accessed December 12, 2018.  
<http://www.chinaonlinemuseum.com/history-mao.php>

<sup>8</sup> "China under Mao 1949-1976." China Online Museum. Accessed December 12, 2018.  
<http://www.chinaonlinemuseum.com/history-mao.php>



China would go its own way. In the early nineteen sixties, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party publicly asserted that the Soviet Revolution had been betrayed, and that Chinese Communism represented the truest form of Marxist ideology. From that point onward, China could no longer be counted as part of the Soviet Bloc.

### **Deng Xiaoping and the Opening Up of China**

After Mao Zedong's death in 1976, Chinese political life changed drastically and began to trend more towards the modern government of the People's Republic. The men who succeeded Mao as Communist Party leaders set to work undoing the harmful aspects of his years in power. One such step was the official disavowing of the Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward, which Chinese officials now acknowledge as having detrimental effects. The government's tougher Maoist stances were also beginning to relax in the years after his death, with his cult of personality being weakened. Hardcore Maoists who had participated in the purges during his rule were put on trial. The relaxation of Maoist policies was an integral part of China's emergence as a world power during the latter half of the twentieth century. Even before Mao's death, some softening of policy meant China could participate more fully in international affairs. In 1972, after the cessation of the Cultural Revolution, United States President Richard Nixon made an official state visit to China. No president had done so before, and the United States had had no diplomatic relations at all with the People's Republic of China since the Communists came to power, having only recognized Chiang Kai-shek's Taiwanese regime. This important step in Chinese-American relations demonstrated that a Communist state could engage with the United States, and the West at large, even while the Cold War standoff was ongoing.

The shortcomings of Mao Zedong’s economic policies were also evaluated by his successors. One such successor, Deng Xiaoping, was instrumental in transforming China into the manufacturing giant and economic powerhouse it is today. As the leader of China throughout the nineteen eighties, Deng Xiaoping set to work making China’s economy more profitable and competitive by undoing those aspects of Mao’s economic policies which had by that time been proven failures. Deng Xiaoping promoted the development of industry and manufacturing. One key aspect of Deng’s years in power was the decision to open China to foreign commerce and investment.<sup>9</sup> Though still ideologically committed to the principals of the revolution, Deng recognized that China would be far more successful by engaging economically with the rest of the world and attempting to become competitive. Though he never espoused a capitalist ideology, with key industries still state owned, Deng Xiaoping led the Chinese economy away from a command economic model. Instead, during the nineteen eighties, the Chinese economy transitioned into a mixed economy.<sup>10</sup> This mixed economy, begun under Deng Xiaoping, has continued to benefit China economically and made the People’s Republic of China one of the largest economies in the world.

### **Hong Kong as a British Colony**

Throughout the Late Qing Empire, Warlord Era, Chinese Civil War, and the Cold War, the island of Hong Kong was not an active participant in the affairs of the Chinese mainland or

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<sup>9</sup> Vogel, Ezra F. *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> Vogel, Ezra F. *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013.

the rise and consolidation of the People's Republic of China. This is because, since 1843, Hong Kong had been a colony of the British Empire. British involvement in China dates back to the 1800's when British merchants were becoming involved in the Chinese economy. One point of contention was the British opium trade in China, which the Qing government opposed on the grounds of the harmful effects it had on the populous and the one-sidedness of the trade treaties between China and Britain and France. Tensions came to a head in the 1830s and Britain and France invaded China in the First Opium War. This war, in which the Chinese faced two of the imperialist superpowers of the time, ended in defeat for the Qing.<sup>11</sup> In addition to the indemnities and unequal treaties which the Qing were forced to accept, the British received territory on Hong Kong at the war's cessation. This territory was thereafter administered as a colony of the British Empire.

After continued encroachment in the region by the European powers, a second Opium War, and continued pressure on the Qing government by the European powers, the Qing government was forced into further concessions. In addition to the colony on Hong Kong which the British had held since 1843, the Qing government was forced to grant the British a ninety-nine-year lease on the remainder of Hong Kong through the *Convention for the Extension of Hong Kong Territory*. Thus, Hong Kong became an important bastion of British imperial authority in East Asia. The British began developing Hong Kong as their chief trading port in the region, using it as the staging point for their imports into China. This meant that Hong Kong benefited from British administration during a time when the Qing were not in a position to develop. Hong Kong's status as a shipping port also meant that the colony benefitted from the

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<sup>11</sup> Carroll, John M. *A Concise History of Hong Kong*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

Industrial Revolution decades before the rest of China.<sup>12</sup> Hong Kong’s economic importance began during this period under the guidance of the British imperial authorities.

Except for a brief interruption in British rule during the Second World War, when the Japanese occupied the territory, British control of Hong Kong constituted the vast majority of the twentieth century. During this time, shifts in British politics transformed Great Britain into a model Western, capitalist democracy. This meant that Hong Kong would not be subject to any of the drastic changes occurring on the mainland, through Mao Zedong’s reforms and purges. Instead, Hong Kong was governed through the British model. Refugees from mainland China who were not sympathetic to the Communist government of the Peoples Republic of China arrived in Hong Kong and contributed to the economic and population growth in the British colony. By the nineteen eighties, Hong Kong had developed a political and cultural system that was completely distinct from that on the mainland.

In the post-World War Two era, Britain began the process of decolonization. Britain’s dismantling of its vast colonial empire during the forties, fifties and sixties extended to India, Africa, and the Pacific but did not include Hong Kong, which was still on lease until 1997.<sup>13</sup> Because of the economic boom in Hong Kong, the colony was very profitable and the British were in no hurry to relinquish control. During the years of Margaret Thatcher’s presidency in the nineteen eighties, the British government made overtures to Deng Xiaoping’s government in hopes that Britain might continue to administer the Hong Kong colony past the expiration of the lease. However, recognizing how the reintegration of Hong Kong into the Peoples Republic would accentuate his economic reforms, Deng Xiaoping would not consider letting the British

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<sup>12</sup> Carroll, John M. *A Concise History of Hong Kong*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

<sup>13</sup> Carroll, John M. *A Concise History of Hong Kong*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

retain the colony. Instead, Deng Xiaoping and representatives of the Thatcher government settled on the *Sino-British Joint Declaration*.<sup>14</sup> This declaration is the basis for the establishment of the One Country, Two Systems law in Hong Kong. This agreement stipulated that, while the Hong Kong lease would still expire in 1997, Hong Kong's reintegration into the People's Republic of China would occur under extenuating circumstances.<sup>15</sup>

The agreement guaranteed that Hong Kong could still operate under its capitalist, Western style system of government free from Communist Party interference from Beijing for fifty years. This did not stop anxiety among the Hong Kong population from mounting in the years leading up to the expiration of the lease. The Chinese Communist Party's harsh crackdowns on dissenting movements in Sinkiang, Tibet, and Tiananmen Square were well known to the people of Hong Kong and the One Country, Two Systems law did not placate some people's fear of a brutal adjustment to Communist rule of Hong Kong. In the years leading up to the expected handover in 1997, some in Hong Kong immigrated to the United States and Great Britain, not wanting to be reunified with China. As British subjects from a British colony, the British government granted British residency to those who wished to leave. With the negotiations complete and the lease expired, the British government handed control of Hong Kong over to the

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<sup>14</sup> Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons. Treaty Series No. 26 (1985). *Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Peoples Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong with Annexes*. Cambridge: Proquest LLC, 2007.

<sup>15</sup> "A Brief History of Hong Kong: From Quiet Backwater to Modern-Day Metropolis." Hong Kong Free Press HKFP. June 29, 2017. Accessed December 12, 2018. <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2017/06/29/brief-history-hong-kong-quiet-backwater-modern-day-metropolis/>.

People’s Republic of China on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1997.<sup>16</sup> The British colonial governor departed, and Hong Kong was under the authority of the Chinese for the first time in a century and a half.

### **Deconstruction of the Joint Declaration**

Formally known as: *Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People’s Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong Annexes*, the joint declaration is a rather unique document to People’s Republic of China’s government. In several instances, like Hong Kong and Macau, China has taken over “Special Administrative Regions” (SAR.) Effective 01 July, 1997, Hong Kong was to be returned to China, but it had to be allowed to follow common law and practice capitalism. It essentially would run very similar to the way it did under British rule years prior. Under section 3 of the joint declaration describing the basic policies that Hong Kong would follow, subsection 12, notes that “...they [Hong Kong] will remain unchanged for 50 years.”<sup>17</sup> Therefore, 2047 opens way too many different options in regard to the governmental and economic ruling of Hong Kong. The way of Basic Law was to be created by and protect by the National People’s Congress of the People’s Republic of China also effective 01 July, 1997. The

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<sup>16</sup> "A Brief History of Hong Kong: From Quiet Backwater to Modern-Day Metropolis." Hong Kong Free Press HKFP. June 29, 2017. Accessed December 12, 2018.

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2017/06/29/brief-history-hong-kong-quiet-backwater-modern-day-metropolis/>.

<sup>17</sup> Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons. *Treaty Series No. 26 (1985). Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Peoples Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong with Annexes*. Cambridge: Proquest LLC, 2007.

joint declaration created man support groups for Hong Kong's transition from British territory to "Hong Kong, China."<sup>18</sup>

### **Post-Mao Zedong China**

After the 1970's when China moved on from Mao Zedong most government officials has become well versed and educated in engineering. Since 1993, all of the presidents have held a degree in engineering.<sup>19</sup> "of the 20 government ministries that form the State Council, more than half are headed by persons who have engineering degrees or engineering work experience."<sup>20</sup> While China is known popularly as "Communist China," they soar to the forefront of many forms of technology. Being one of the world's super powers in regard to technology shows that there are many differences between Mao Zedong China and Post-Mao Zedong China. There has been privatization in the Chinese economy showing that despite the communist ideals that reign supreme, capitalism is no true enemy of China. Throughout the years, all of the government officials that hold degrees in engineering, about 50% of government officials, have shifted China to a technocracy, a technocracy that is a mix of communism and capitalism.

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<sup>18</sup> Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons. *Treaty Series No. 26 (1985). Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Peoples Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong with Annexes*. Cambridge: Proquest LLC, 2007.

<sup>19</sup> Yongmou, Liu. "The Benefits of Technocracy in China." *Issues in Science and Technology*. September 20, 2018. Accessed November 15, 2018. <https://issues.org/perspective-the-benefits-of-technocracy-in-china/>.

<sup>20</sup> Yongmou, Liu. "The Benefits of Technocracy in China." *Issues in Science and Technology*. September 20, 2018. Accessed November 15, 2018. <https://issues.org/perspective-the-benefits-of-technocracy-in-china/>.

One of the greatest causes for economic success for China can be linked to the fact that there is only one political party allowed to be in charge of the government. The Communist Party of China (CPC) is the dominant political party of China that is accompanied by 8 lesser political parties: China Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang, China Democratic League, China Democratic National Construction Association, China Association for Promoting Democracy, Chinese Peasants’ and Workers’ Democratic Party, China Zhi Gong Dang, Jiusan Society, Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League. These eight parties are not allowed to actually compete with the CPC though.

The biggest complaints of China, though, are their extremely low ranking on the freedom scales. The blatant acceptance, or promotion, of censorship truly damages the reputation of China. However, after interviewing Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung of Hong Kong University, it became apparent that not everyone under Chinese rule requires the total freedom of press and internet. In Macau, another Special Administrative Region somewhat comparable to Hong Kong, people do not mind censorship. The people of Macau can access the internet for the things they need, they can spend money like a capitalist society, and they even have Chinese reality television shows; ergo, the people of Macau really do not have much of a problem with the situation they are in. This perspective never crossed my mind as a westerner, but there are many people in Hong Kong that do not mind to be ruled by China’s authoritarian regime.

### **Hong Kong Government**

“One country, two systems,” a confusing, complicated term. Hong Kong is ruled by China, they are one country, but Hong Kong is guaranteed the freedom to run their government how they would like, i.e. capitalism, for 50 years. Since China agreed to the 50-year joint



declaration, Hong Kong has been allowed to enjoy the luxuries of: a Chief Executive (president), continued Basic Law, a Legislative branch, and a Judicial branch. The Chief Executive is elected by a broad vote of all the people in Hong Kong. The current chief executive is Carrie Lam. As of November 2018, Carrie Lam's approval rating has decreased, but it is still positive at 50.2%. Freedom of press is another luxury found only in Hong Kong within the Chinese rule. Hong Kong media openly criticizes the Chinese government and Hongkongers themselves have staged protests against the mainland, recently and very controversial the Umbrella movement. This massive protest occurred because the chief executive is nominated by a committee of 1,200 people (still voted in by Hong Kong citizens) that are mostly pro-Beijing, and this impedes on the democracy many people from Hong Kong would like to keep secure. Therefore, these peaceful protests took place to show that they did not want this governing style to continue, a style that erodes their freedoms. The implications of the protest will be further explained in the Analysis Section.

## **Shenzhen**

Shenzhen is a region that often borrows ideas and systems from Hong Kong. It is very interesting because it is considered an SEZ or Special Economic Zone. "Because the land resources are almost all developed, the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) looks to move up the value chain and seek closer economic integration with Hong Kong in order to build a modern service economy using the latter's management and regulatory expertise."<sup>21</sup> The heads of Shenzhen even believe

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<sup>21</sup> Cheung, Peter T. Y. "Whos Influencing Whom? Exploring the Influence of Hong Kong on Politics and Governance in China." *Asian Survey* 51, no. 4 (2011): 713-38. doi:10.1525/as.2011.51.4.713.

that it can both serve and learn from Hong Kong. Ergo, it is somewhat incredible to witness a shift that Communist China seems to be pushing more areas toward capitalism.

### **Macau vs Hong Kong**

Macau and Hong Kong can often be compared, but not in many ways other than the fact that they are both Special Administrative Regions of China. It will be further discussed in the Analysis Section below, but Macau is a very small region, that was previously controlled by the Portuguese rather than the English. The people do not speak a world language like English in Hong Kong, but they still speak Portuguese. It is populated by a large portion of native Chinese, and is often looked at as a tourist destination due to the Americanesque casinos and hotels. Technically, many of the casinos in Macau are owned by American companies.<sup>22</sup> It is even the second largest vacation spot within China for most Chinese, after Hong Kong.<sup>23</sup> Its system is not quite as complicated as Hong Kong’s, though, because the English had invested much more into Hong Kong in regard to common law and infrastructure. Hong Kong’s infrastructure has continued to grow as well. Meanwhile, the Portuguese were at the end of their tyranny of the sea and were not granted the opportunity to invest as much into their Chinese trade port as their

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<sup>22</sup> Gopalan, Nisha. "Chips Are Down in Macau for America’s Casino Kings." Bloomberg.com. Accessed December 10, 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2018-12-08/macau-s-american-casino-kings-sweat-on-u-s-china-trade-war>.

<sup>23</sup> Smith, Oliver. "The Unstoppable Rise of the Chinese Traveller – Where Are the Going and What Does It Mean for Overtourism?" The Telegraph. April 11, 2018. Accessed November 18, 2018. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/comment/rise-of-the-chinese-tourist/>.

counterpart England had. Macau is also less demanding on China in regard to freedoms. The biggest freedom granted is the fact that it is the only place in China to gamble in casinos; therefore, there is quite a bit of wealth within Macau. There is also a massive wave of propaganda and Chinese nationalism being instilled, but this is not seen in Hong Kong.<sup>24</sup>

## **Analysis Section**

### **Interviews**

After receiving approval from La Salle University's Institutional Review Board, 4 interviews were conducted by Christopher Spalding. There were several more willing interviewees; however, due to time constraints, not all were able to be interviewed. The two most influential interviews were conducted with Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung and Nicholas Gordon. Both are academics with great recognition within their respective fields. Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung has numerous publications in regard to public policy and opinion with regard to Hong Kong. Nicholas Gordon is a scholar specifically with the "One Country, Two Systems" policies. Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung was identified as a scholar not only by his colleagues at Hong Kong

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<sup>24</sup> "Why Macau Is Less Demanding of Democracy than Hong Kong." *The Economist*. September 15, 2017. Accessed November 11, 2018. <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2017/09/15/why-macau-is-less-demanding-of-democracy-than-hong-kong>.

University, but is also renowned in the field. Nicholas Gordon, also extremely well-known by his publications, was actually boasted by a journalist at the *South China Sea Morning Post*.

Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung of Hong Kong University was of several interviewees that supported the hypothesis that Hong Kong will continue to be granted the same level of freedoms from economic status to press by Mainland China. Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung is an associate professor at Hong Kong University in the Department of Politics and Public Administration. He first earned his Bachelor of Social Science from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Here at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, he also received 1st class honours. He went on to earn an M.A. from Indiana University, Bloomington, and then received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Washington, Seattle.<sup>25</sup> He is a leading scholar in the field Hong Kong politics.

The first and most important point made by Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung actually changed the perspective of a Western citizen of the United States of America. In the United States, the country as a whole has the power to do as it wants, and can, in general, control the path of its future within its own hands. There are not many countries that can force the United States to commit to certain actions, but Hong Kong does not have the luxury of that power. Hong Kong is similar to just one state in the United States. It is a part of the larger mainland China, and is, of course, heavily influenced. “Social and political interactions are mutual. Hong Kong is increasingly influenced by deepening socioeconomic integration with the Mainland and Chinese national policies. As an SAR (Special Administrative Region), Hong Kong cannot easily

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<sup>25</sup> "Hong Kong University Faculty: The Department of Politics and Public Administration: Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung." Hong Kong University. Accessed August 13, 2018. <https://www.ppaweb.hku.hk/f/cheung>.

influence high politics in China.”<sup>26</sup> Hong Kong is slightly smaller than the state of Rhode Island at 1,106.34 square kilometers, but has seven times the population of Rhode Island.<sup>27</sup> The key take away from this point can be summed up as “adapt.” Hongkongers are forced to adapt to the power of mainland China, which is not necessarily a bad notion, but it, again, is very different than the experience in the United States. Due to this lack of certainty of the future, Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung believes that Hongkongers are not extremely concerned with the expiration of the current system because it is not yet at the halfway point, but did note that this is a speculative point considering he has not polled the people of Hong Kong on this point.

In regard to the system itself, Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung spoke about how it is obviously an ever-evolving system. The Special Administrative Region (SAR) is a very unique system in and of itself. Hong Kong and Macau are the two SARs under Chinese rule. However, Macau and Hong Kong differ in many different ways. Macau is smaller than 1 region in Hong Kong, and Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung pointed out that Macau is more compliant than Hong Kong. Macau, while it does not have as many freedoms as Hong Kong, really do not perceive it as a problem. The people of Macau have everything from Chinese reality television, e-commerce, to the ability to spend money. They are also extremely patriotic of China. China has seen an unrivaled boost economically that has never been experienced before in history, and that is looked very favourably upon in Macau. Xi Jinping’s 19th Congress also has been of concern though due to a

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<sup>26</sup> Cheung, Peter T. Y. "Whos Influencing Whom? Exploring the Influence of Hong Kong on Politics and Governance in China." *Asian Survey* 51, no. 4 (2011): 713-38. doi:10.1525/as.2011.51.4.713.

<sup>27</sup> GovHK. "GovHK: Hong Kong – the Facts." GovHK 香港政府一站通. Accessed October 29, 2018. <https://www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/facts.htm>

stagnating economy within their communist system.<sup>28</sup> Hongkongers have varying views of mainland China, and they are often separated by generations. “Hong Kong remains the only place in China that allows the Chinese to enjoy access to materials on Chinese politics written from different perspectives. According to the activist Hu Jia, Mainlanders experienced unprecedented freedom in Hong Kong, visiting uncensored websites and bringing home a touch of freedom via the banned books and newspapers they carried back.”<sup>29</sup><sup>30</sup> As the quote says, Hongkongers experience more freedoms which lead to stronger opinions about protecting their freedoms.

In regard to differing opinions, Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung pointed out that the Umbrella Movement was unfortunate because it is one of the greatest dividers in regard to the people of Hong Kong. Some people want confrontation, but many do not. This caused a bit of a crackdown from mainland China since protesting is a red line. If the mainland compromised with Hong Kong, then there would be massive amounts of protests that would breakout throughout the mainland causing many more problems.

Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung also pointed out that there are many stresses within the Hong Kong government stemming from this. Hong Kong is a very unequal society with low socio-

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<sup>28</sup> Hart, Melanie, and Blaine Johnson. "Pulling Back the Curtain on China's 19th Party Congress." Center for American Progress. October 19, 2017. Accessed October 13, 2018. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2017/10/19/441096/pulling-back-curtain-chinas-19th-party-congress/>.

<sup>29</sup> Cheung, Peter T. Y. "Whos Influencing Whom? Exploring the Influence of Hong Kong on Politics and Governance in China." *Asian Survey* 51, no. 4 (2011): 713-38. doi:10.1525/as.2011.51.4.713.

<sup>30</sup> Jia Hu, “Hu Jia: One Country Does Not Need Two Systems,” <[http://www.bowenpress.com/cn/2007/comment/59\\_1.shtml](http://www.bowenpress.com/cn/2007/comment/59_1.shtml)>, accessed September 13, 2010

economic mobility.<sup>31</sup> Globalization is also a clear stress upon Hong Kong. The most wealthy and intellectual people from China are able to immigrate to Hong Kong and secure jobs, leaving a small, densely populated area giving jobs to people from outside Hong Kong. Ergo, this leads to many anti-government and anti-mainland sentiments from some of the Hongkongers. This is what truly led the youth to take a different approach, and actually protest.

Nicholas Gordon has published numerous studies in the field of Hong Kong, specifically in regard to the Sino-British Joint Declaration. He earned his Bachelor of the Arts from Harvard University, then proceeded to receive his M.A. in Philosophy, International Relations from the University of Oxford. At the University of Oxford, he graduated with merit. He currently is a researcher at the Global Institute For Tomorrow; therefore, he is an absolutely illustrious candidate to interview.

Nicholas Gordon was the next important interview, and he was able to share many similar opinions, and some diverse opinions. While again, not supported by actual polling data, Nicolas Gordon believes that there is a great deal of caution in regard to what happens next for the SAR of Hong Kong. Everything is very undefined for Hong Kong because, as Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung stated, Hong Kong does not have ultimate power over its future since it is a region under Chinese control. He personally believes that China has to weigh out the gains and costs of changing Hong Kong's system. The post-2047 system, in his opinion, will look like the current system, but perhaps without much progress. This was, admittedly, a speculative thought. In regard to Nicholas Gordon's perception of the media, there really has not been much media

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<sup>31</sup> Kang-Chung, Ng. "Social Mobility in Hong Kong 'getting Harder', Poll Says." South China Morning Post. October 26, 2016. Accessed November 17, 2018. <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1177243/social-mobility-hong-kong-getting-harder-poll-says>.

coverage concerning the expiration of the “One Country, Two Systems.” However, there is constant coverage of how the system is currently, it is the main political problem of the time.

Immigration could become more fluent between Hong Kong and the mainland, but it could also continue to be restrictive. Due to globalization, as Dr. Peter T.Y. Cheung pointed out, housing prices have increased almost exponentially.<sup>32</sup> This has caused much of the youth to try and leave Hong Kong for either the United States, the mainland, or other countries with good higher education systems. It also feeds into the lack of socio-economic mobility that Hong Kong has been suffering.

Nicholas Gordon, from his perspective, said that the Umbrella Movement was rather unexpected. There had been an occupy central movement, but the Umbrella Movement moved much more rapid. For Hong Kong, protesting has had a few major success stories. In 2003, the people of Hong Kong marched to oppose the passing of a national security act called “Article 23.”<sup>33</sup> Again in 2012, the people of Hong Kong protested a national education bill, and blocked it. It was known as a, “10-day siege of government headquarters called off after chief executive, on eve of Legco poll, says curriculum no longer mandatory”<sup>34</sup> These were monumental, and

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<sup>32</sup> Saiidi, Uptin. "Here's Why Hong Kong Housing Is so Expensive." CNBC. April 10, 2017. Accessed October 28, 2018. <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/04/09/heres-why-hong-kong-housing-is-so-expensive.html>.

<sup>33</sup> Kellogg, Tom. "Legislating Rights: Basic Law Article 23, National Security, and Human Rights in Hong Kong." *Columbia Journal of Asian Law*. September 24, 2015. Accessed December 08, 2018. <https://cjal.columbia.edu/article/legislating-rights-basic-law-article-23-national-security-and-human-rights-in-hong-kong/>.

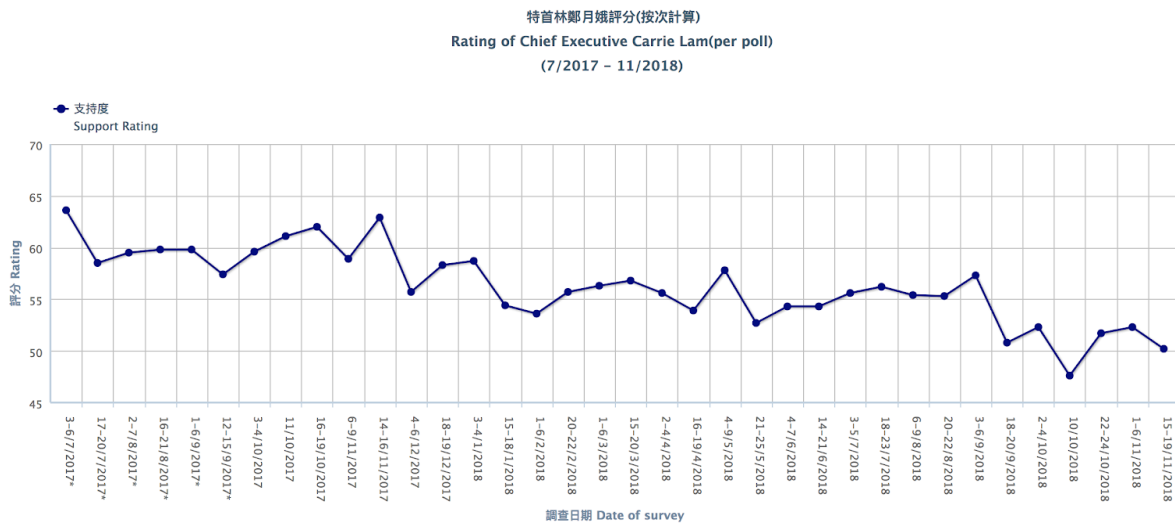
<sup>34</sup> Lau, Stuart, Amy Nip, and Adrian Wan. "Protest against National Education to End after Government Climbdown." *South China Morning Post*. September 09, 2012. Accessed December 08, 2018. <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1032535/protest-against-national-education-end-after-government-climbdown>.



protested clear policy; however, the Umbrella Movement protested a Chinese recommendation of reform to the electoral system.

## Polling Data (All Graphs From Hong Kong University Pop Polls)<sup>35</sup>

### Rating of Chief Executive Carrie Lam (per poll)



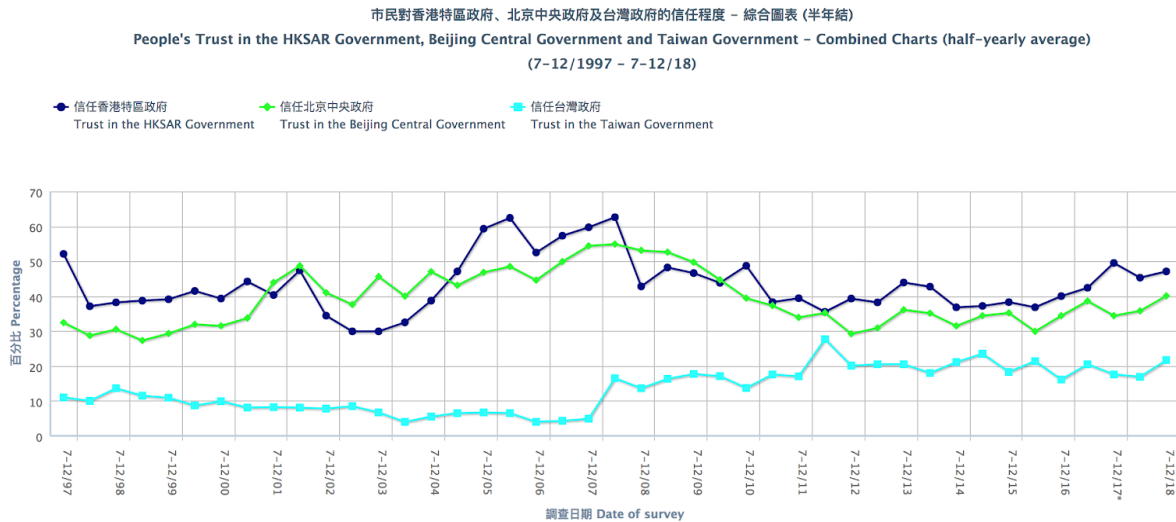
The above graphic represents approval ratings for Carrie Lam, the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region from July of 2017 (when she took office) through November of 2018. The graph indicates a gradual downward trend in approval, offset by intervals of higher approval. These intervals of higher approval have been short lived, and approval of Lam's tenure as Chief Executive reached their lowest points yet in October and

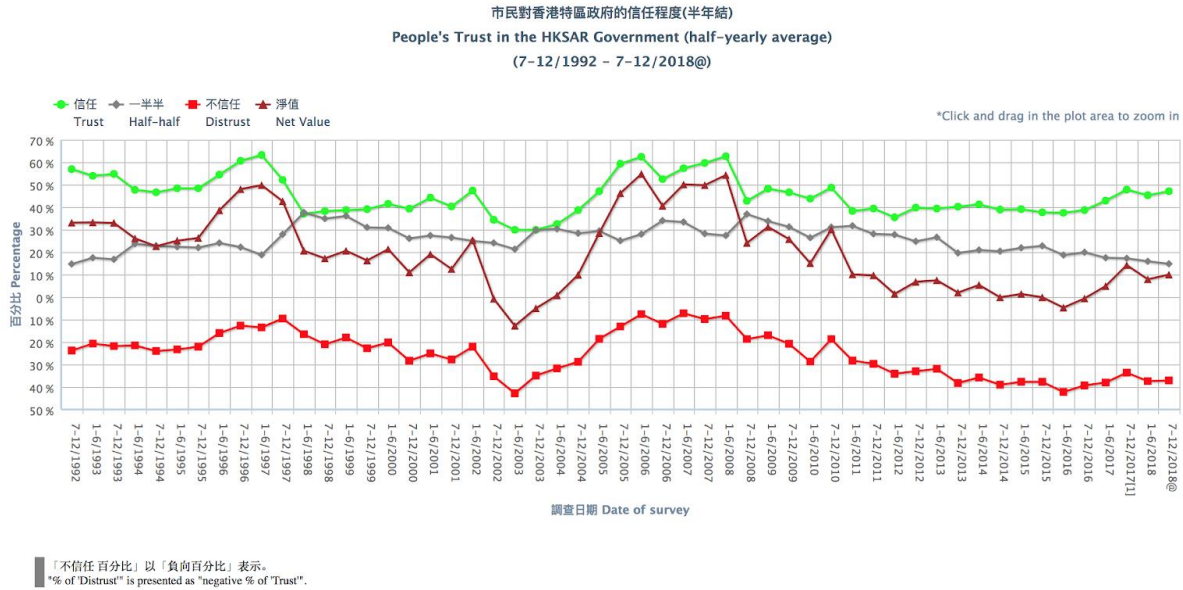
<sup>35</sup> "POP Polls." Frequency Tables - 港大民研 HKUPOP. Accessed November 29, 2018.

<https://www.hkpop.hku.hk/english/popexpress/>.

November of 2018. The decline in Lam’s approval does not parallel other polling data concerning the greater Hong Kong government, with trust and approval of the Hong Kong government in general not subject to the same decline. At the conclusion of the polling data time frame in November 2018, Lam’s approval rating had sunk to around fifty percent from a starting high of around sixty-five percent.

**People’s Trust in the HKSAR Government and Taiwan Government - Combined Charts (half-yearly average) and People’s Trust in the HKSAR Government (half-yearly average)**



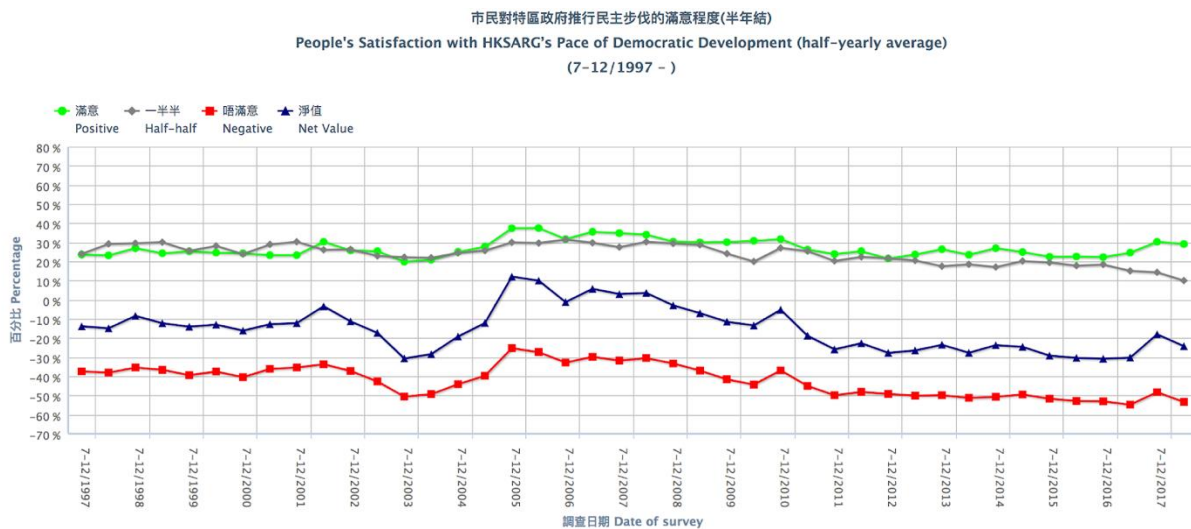


The above two graphics, representing the people’s trust in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region’s government, both standing alone, and as compared to trust in the central governments of the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of China. The combined chart covers the period of time from July of 1997 to July of 2018 and indicates a consistently higher level of trust in the government of Hong Kong than in both the governments of China and Taiwan, at almost fifty percent in Hong Kong, as opposed to forty percent in mainland China and twenty percent in Taiwan as of 2018. The graph also indicates significant fluctuation in the people’s trust in the governments of Hong Kong and China, but less so in Taiwan. One might expect there to be significantly greater trust in the government of Hong Kong as opposed to the government of China, but the levels have remained close throughout the years of the study, including periods of time such as in the early 2000s when trust in the Beijing government was actually higher than in the Hong Kong government.

The second graph looks solely at people’s trust in the Hong Kong government from July of 1992 to July of 2018. It should be noted that this graph spans the last years of the British occupation of the territory, as well as its modern status as a special administrative region of

China. The chart indicates that trust in the Hong Kong government was at its highest levels in the years before the handover. There is then a noticeable decline in professed trust and rise in professed distrust in the immediate aftermath of the handover. After some drastic fluctuations in public trust in the 2000s, the people’s trust levels in the government have stabilized, with the graph’s timeline ending with a polled result of a net positive trust rating around ten percent. Throughout the 2010s, trust and distrust have been more or less static, with distrust decreasing slightly and trust increasing slightly. There has also been a decline of people who indicated their position as “half and half”, or half trust and half distrust, which has continuously represented the second highest response to the polling. The graph indicates that most people who harbor feelings of distrust in the Hong Kong government preferred to respond “Half and Half” as opposed to outright “Distrust”, given the far greater number of respondents stating Half and Half as opposed to Distrust.

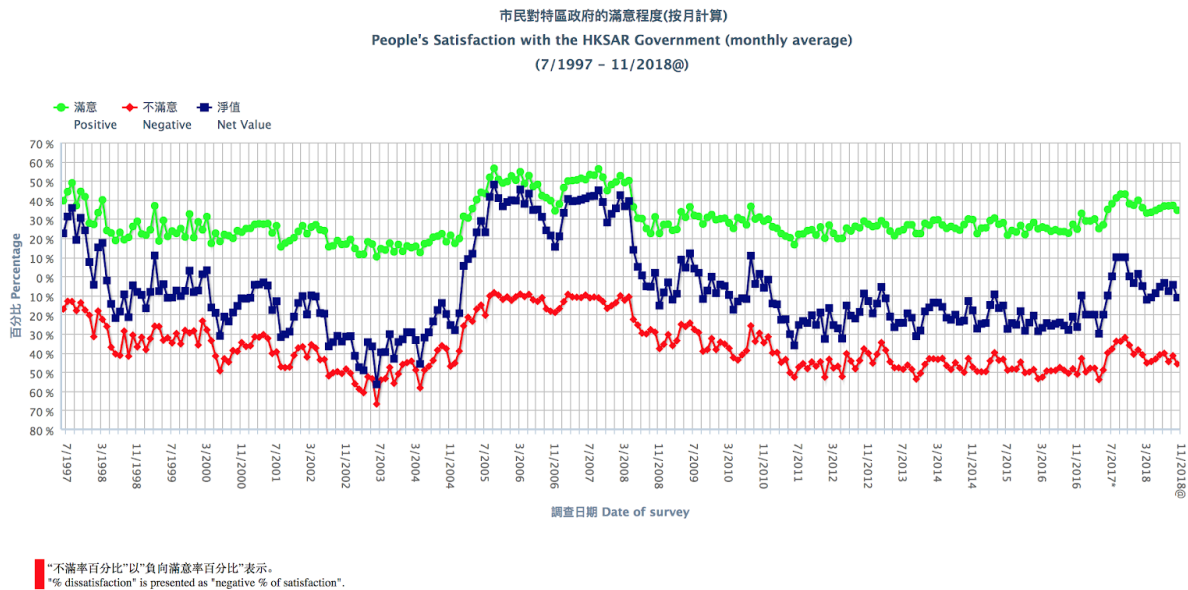
**People’s Satisfaction with HKSARG’s Pace of Democratic Development (half-yearly average)**



「唔滿意」百分比以「負向百分比」表示。  
 \*% of "Negative" is presented as "negative % of Positive".

The next graphic is an indicator of people’s satisfaction regarding the Democratic Development in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region from July of 1997 through December of 2017. These responses are much more static than the previous graphics regarding trust in the government itself. However, this graphic indicates a net negative of around ten percent for most of its span, with some exception during the mid-2000s. As this polling data covers nearly the entire span of time since the Hong Kong Handover, it indicates that the majority of people do not feel positively about the progression of democracy in Hong Kong. Though it is not an overwhelming deficient, it does indicate a continued feeling among polled respondents that democracy in Hong Kong was and is not where it should be since the Hong Kong Handover.

**People’s Satisfaction with the HKSAR Government (monthly average)**



The final graph concerns people’s reported satisfaction with the government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region from July of 1997 until November of 2018. This graph indicates a

fairly constant positive rating of around forty-five percent, coupled with a more fluid negative rating. Though the net value reached an all-time high of around fifty percent positive during the early 2000's, the net satisfaction rating dropped into the negatives for much of the 2010s. At the conclusion of the graph's timespan, the net satisfaction rating was centered around zero, suggesting neither positive nor negative. The fact that overall satisfaction can be neutral, while trust in government is positive and the belief that democracy is progressing is negative is telling. This results that the people of Hong Kong do not collectively view these different facets as interdependent, with the polling data suggesting that the people of Hong Kong can trust their government and be more or less satisfied, while acknowledging that Democracy is not progressing as well as it could be.

## **Conclusion**

Hong Kong's retrocession to the People's Republic of China in 1997 was an event watched by the world, as the western-style, Democratic Hong Kong fell under the control of the Communist People's Republic of China. Through the One Country, Two Systems laws enacted in Hong Kong, any changes to the Hong Kong government were postponed until the expiration of that system in 2047. The upcoming deadline of 2047 is being watched with similar anticipation as the original 1997 handover, the results are anticipated to be just as average. According to media reports, analysis of data, and expert opinions from Hong Kong natives, the 2047 expiration is not projected to mean much change in Hong Kong, for better or for worse. Though the ruling Communist Party in Beijing will certainly not be entertaining any notions of independence, they are unlikely to risk any unreasonable crackdowns which jeopardize Hong Kong's status as an economic hub and important world city.



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