

One Country, Two Systems: Understand the Paradox of the Last Hong Kong Crisis

*By António dos Santos Queirós**

This essay analyses the Historical Evolution of Hong Kong, from the colonial period to the return to China sovereignty in 1997, according to the political philosophy of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, and the principle “one country, two systems”, which means that Hong Kong is part of China and enjoys a high degree of autonomy, except in foreign and defence policy, as stipulated by the Basic Law of The Hong Kong Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China. The political system implemented in HKSAR corresponds to the matrix of the People’s Republic of China, but its economic base and legal system remained untouched in essence; an extreme model of liberal capitalism, deregulated and functioning on the margins of international law, with deep social inequalities, millions of new poor (workers and students in a situation of necessity) and a serious problem of access to housing. This essay analyses the political nature of the conflict around the extraction laws, distinguishing internal causes, and external interferences. At least, this essay analyses the system of political representation of HKSAR, the government program to overcome crisis and the new legislation after crisis.

Keywords: *history, one country, two systems, paradox, HKSAR, fallacies*

Introduction and the Heuristic Development

This essay, focused on the last HKSAR crises and the youth revolt, proposes to research the concepts of political philosophy from modern China, using a critical perspective to the dominant standpoint that reduces this issue to a single kind of thought, departing from an emotionally conditioned approach that considers and judges other societies by Western culture’s criteria only.

Our perspective of research wants to be scientific, not apologetic, and not ethnocentric, covering all philosophical streams.

If People’s Republic of China represents a new historical experience of democracy and socialism, the Western conceptual framework of political hermeneutics is not convenient to understand the modern Chinese way. In this research paper we will use the two methodological routes pointed by Lakatos, the negative heuristics, which let to reject the propositions already denied and a positive heuristic, which together build a new core of scientific propositions not falsifiable (Lakatos 1970).

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Origin and Historical Evolution of British Colonization

The British East India Company established a factory in the nearby town of Guangzhou.

The England of the XIX century, the leader of the second Industrial Revolution, in the demand for more raw materials at low prices and consumer markets for their industrialized products, occupied India but, in China, she used military force to open the port of Guangzhou.

The economy of this country was not only self-sufficient, but it exported to the West tea, silk, and porcelain, which ensured a high surplus in trade, so that its GDP exceeded eight times that of the English power.

This imperial power, and then with all the other powers of the time, resorted, first, to the illegal export of opium to the Chinese market, which became a national calamity, and then, through two wars led by its Navy, forced the opening to drug trade at the ports of Fuzhou, Xiamen, Ningbo, and Shanghai.

In addition, he occupied Hong Kong and, later, other 50 ports, taking possession of the secrets of tea production, and send them to other colonies, for competing with what China had to offer.

During the Opium War (1839-1842), Hong Kong was occupied by the United Kingdom and in 1898 imposed its delivery to China by 99 years one of the “hateful treaties” that benefited western powers. The Chinese economy fell into ruin and all social classes suffered severely, initiating political movements that knocked down the imperial system and founded the Democratic Republic in 1912

A period of internal civil war followed against military warlords and large owners in North and Northeast China and other remote regions, such as Tibet, which survived the fall of its emperor, the period calling the Revolution Democratic, led by the Kuomintang party, which in its democratic and nationalist phase congregate communists and other democratic tendencies (until 1927).

After 1912 Chinese nationalism was hostile to occupying powers. Between 1925 and 1927 the nationalist government banned English ships from accessing ports in Southern China.

When Japan, one of the foreign powers installed in colonial concessions, occupies the Manchuria region (1931), China was in the midst of civil war, now confronting communists and democratic forces with the new Kuomintang, anti-communist but also anti-liberal, which had joined many of the warlords and made the People’s Liberation Army, his Agrarian Reform and New Democracy program for China, the main enemy.

The Political Framework of World War II

The Japanese occupation of the provinces of East China, on the border with the Soviet Union, rich in raw materials indispensable to the strategy of expansion and preparation of the war by Japan, opening the period of the World War II, first in 1931, with the founding of the Puppet Republic of Manchuria and then in 1935, advancing to the South along the railways and the coast, to conquer all of China.

The policy of neutrality of the other occupying powers, was equivalent to that with which they sought a compromise with Nazi Germany, in the expectation of the confrontation with the USSR.

During World War II, the Japanese occupation took 3 years and 8 months. With the unconditional surrender of Japan (1945), the British reoccupied the territory and resumed their strategic function as a major shopping center for Asia.

The Cold War Period and the Myth of the Hong Kong Citizens Autonomous Identity

During the Korean War in 1950/1953, the United States boycotted trade with China, affecting the colony's commercial activity.

The British government then began a strong textile-based industrialization, using cheap labor, recruited, without any respect to worker's rights, from where millions of workers emigrated, especially from neighboring Canton Province (Guangdong).

Hong Kong has become the world's largest commodity port and extremely important, deregulated and low-tax financial center, one of the first tax havens that anticipated current globalization.

British colonial politics, from its Labour or Conservative governments, had developed an extreme model of economic liberalism, along the 1960s and 1970s, and a fabulous new private real estate business emerged, becoming speculative, concentrating soil ownership and creating a chronic problem of access to housing, for working families and middle-class families.¹

In Hong Kong, the first democratic rights were conquered only in the 1960s and 1970s, by the Chinese population, after massive strikes and violent riots, which forced colonial authorities to pass labor legislation, create some social housing and invest more in public works.²

But the people of Hong Kong, composed of about 95% of Chinese from the continent, representing China's diverse nationalities, continued having no political rights recognized or most of the social rights enjoyed by British citizens.

The fallacy of the identity of the people of Hong Kong in conflict with their Chinese nationality is unfounded in the history of the region and does not have a credible scientific basis. It is a creation of propaganda against the reunification of the Chinese People's Republic _CPR.

¹Housing: The distribution of the land-based non-institutional population of Hong Kong by type of housing for 2014 was as follows: Type of housing population: Public rental housing 29.3. Subsidized home ownership housing 16.6. Private permanent housing 53.5. Temporary housing 0.6. Quoted from the Information Services Department, Census and Statistics Department. <https://www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/factsheets/docs/statistics.pdf>.

²During 1967 rebellion and according to the colonial HK government, 832 people are injured, 51 dead and 1936 arrested. Other source, from the protesters, account 4.939 people was arrested and 1936 convicted. It was a new episode of the continuous opposition of the Chinese people against British colonialism, but the most significant after the 1956 revolt, and many residents sold their properties and migrated overseas (Cheung 2009, p. 123).

After returning to China, the territory received another one million and two hundred thousand compatriots, surpassing 7 million residents, opening out the arrival of other Asian migrants, which today will be about 5%.³

Hong Kong peoples are Chinese and in conformity with Chinese culture, they never forget their ancestral and every year turn they eyes to the mother land, enlarging the long march to homeland celebrations of the lunar new year and spring festivals. All the people? No, from the elite create in the last period of English colonialism, emerged a minority of young people acculturated, but that occupy key battle stations in the land of ideological combat: education, social media, enterprises... Teachers of this group will have an important role in the HK 2014 and 2019 crises.

The Legislative Council_ Legco, only at the end of the colonial regime incorporated some Chinese peoples and rehearsed the first elections of some of its members.

Only at the end of the colonial regime (in 1997), England, in an act inconsequential and therefore of true political cynicism, extended the electoral college to 1/3 of the citizens and created a double passport and nationality for its elite support, 200,000 residents, seeking to leave behind a fifth column, a real “Trojan horse operation” (The main criterion for the assignment of the passport was the place occupied in the social hierarchy).

The Extradition Laws, Fallacy, and Reality

Can we talk about an opposition, or are there different forces in presence? Is there really an organized movement, as the Western press says, pro-democracy? Does this movement or movements present an economic and political program? A common or diverse program?

In February 2019, the government proposed change the two extradition laws _ the Fugitive Offenders and the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters ordinances _in the context of the case of odious murder of a young woman, five months pregnant, murdered and robbed by her boyfriend in Taiwan, as reported by the CNN journalist. The political process that followed will be a missed opportunity to take a step further in favor of combating organized and violent, international crime.

In the context of demonstrations against the extradition laws, West media and the West political propaganda transformed the declarations of some student activists in a program of a global and united movement pro-democracy (the liberal democracy), and transformed those peoples in leaders of the people of HK, and glued circumstantial slogans in a formal political program_ the direct elections for the govern of Hong Kong, ...however, was silenced the claims of the new poor peoples: the low salaries of workers, short students’ subventions, the difficult access

³Non-Chinese comprise just 4% of Hong Kong’s population in 2001. See the survey commissioned by the Home Affairs Bureau and the Census and Statistics Department on Hong Kong’s ethnic minorities, that was conducted by a private consultant. https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/press_release/pressReleaseDetail.jsp?charsetID=1&pressRID=-2429.

to families houses, small business and enterprises survival...that came from the colonial regime of HK.⁴

Politicians, governments, and the media in the West, justify the refusal of legislative reform against international crime, ignoring that the killer, in the light of current legislation, only could be arrested and sentenced to jail a few months: not for murder, only by use in HK the credit cards subtracted from the victim! Because he is a citizen of HK and committed the crime in Taiwan. As CNN correspondent testifies, Chinese authorities were forced to release him in October 2019.

The business community was the first opposition against the extradition laws, obtaining the removal of Lam's proposed amendments in the case of extradition for economic crimes, so-called white-collar crimes.

After street demonstrations and violence, the suspension of the bill indefinitely can be understood as a Lam government's tactical and political decision, to weaken the demagoguery of extremists and western media, which justifies impunity for the most heinous crimes with the accusation that China's judicial system is neither independent nor fair. Taiwan's also is not, nor in the opinion of these Western politicians and academics, because extradition in the case was between HKSAR and Taiwan!

As it would not be fair in the justice systems of most countries in the world, if we accept the preceding arguments, because the international cooperation and extradition agreements that Hong Kong has subscribed do not exceed two dozen!

Despite the constraints of the HK Basic Law, its government, with the support of the PRC and its national political institutions, has sought to integrate this Special Autonomous Region in the field of international law.

In the context of judicial cooperation and the issue of the extradition of suspected of crimes, there is an agreement with Portugal and some other countries, but not on regional and global level. The projects of extradition laws copy the model that already was signed with Portugal and the other countries.

We quote the agreement made with Portugal, to understand if the accusations against the PRC truth or they was demagogic and fallacy:

“The Government of the Portuguese Republic and the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), having been duly authorized by the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China to conclude this Agreement, wishing to define how the reciprocal delivery of infringers on the run, agreed on:

.../...

Article 6

Mandatory reasons for refusal

1—An infringer on the run shall not be delivered if the requested Party has reason to believe that:

(a) The infringement by virtue of which the person is accused or found guilty is a political infraction

⁴Hong Kong was one of the most densely populated places in the world. The land population density as at mid-2014 stood at 6,690 persons per square kilometer, and Kwun Tong, with 57,250 persons per square kilometer, was the most densely populated district among the District Council districts.

(b) the application for delivery (although allegedly submitted because of a criminal offence by virtue of which the surrender may be granted) is, in fact, presented in order to persecute or punish a person on the grounds of their race, religion, nationality or political convictions; or

c) That the person may, if surrendered, be harmed in the trial, or punished, detained or suffered a private restriction of his or her freedom for reasons which are committed to race, religion, nationality or political convictions.”⁵

Article 2 clearly defines the crimes against physical integrity and property

We must stress that this agreement was signed by HK on behalf of the People’s Republic of China and its government, which authorized it. Conclusions: The accusations are fake news; many peoples are mobilized with a real lie! But this fact does not can justify why hundred thousand of young people’s take the streets.

The reason is that they had other justifications. We must distinguish the majority of young people from the radical political groups, that cannot be characterized by age, but by a strategy of confrontation, disorder, and looting, by the aim to bring HK to great economic loses and near the chaos, with the objective to provoke a violent response of authorities!⁶ And, consequently, a new cycle of violence, economic loses, international condemnation and sanctions, that could be transformed in more discontentment, loss of deputies by the forces that support government of HKSAR, and, in the end, block Hong Kong’s Legislative Council_ Legqo.⁷

⁵Agreement between the government of the Portuguese Republic and the government of the special administrative region of Hong Kong, of the People’s Republic of China, on the delivery of infringers on the run.

http://gddc.ministeriopublico.pt/sites/default/files/documentos/instrumentos/acordo_portugal_hong_kong_china_entrega_infractores_fuga.pdf.

⁶What accompanied the violence was extensive destruction across the city. Rioters targeted different social institutions, including the city’s Legislative Council Complex, government bodies, police stations and courts. On July 1, rioters stormed the Leg-Co Complex and caused mass destruction, forcing it to shut down two weeks before summer recess. Besides a repair cost of HK\$40 million (\$5.1 million), it also led to the delays in numerous livelihood-related bills and funding requests. Over the past months, the emblem of the SAR and the national emblem have been defaced, with national flags trampled, burned, and thrown into the sea. There has also been a far-reaching effect on people’s lives. Traffic has ground to a halt, with the special administrative region’s airport forced to shut down operations and the subway system paralyzed. By the end of November, at least 147 of the 161 subway stations had been damaged. The havoc also extended to campuses. In November, radical protesters had turned the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University into their strongholds and had pitched battles with the police near campus entrances. There was also extensive damage to the city’s public facilities. Nearly 21,000 square meters of paving blocks from footpaths have been ripped up and used as weapons to attack police. The HKSAR’s government predicted that Hong Kong’s economy would contract by 1.3 percent in 2019, marking the first year of recession since the global financial crisis 10 years ago. Latest data showed Hong Kong’s unemployment rate had risen to 3.2 percent by the end of November, the highest level since 2017.

⁷We will see in this test, later, how the government of HKSAR and the government of PRC solve the dilemma, and the connection of that strategy of confrontation, assumed by the radical groups is linked with the new legislation after 2019.

There is a double lie, that includes the manipulation of the history of the crime. However, it was not the case of the journalist James Griffiths. The following text is quoted from Hong Kong CNN correspondent, James Griffiths.

“Murder suspect whose alleged crime sparked Hong Kong protests walks free!”

Updated 1356 GMT (2156 HKT) October 23, 2019

.../...

“But as the global consequences of almost four months of unprecedented unrest continue to be felt, the story that started it all has slipped from the headlines. On Wednesday, one of the central players in that story walked free from a Hong Kong prison on minor charges, after authorities say he confessed to killing his girlfriend but, so far, avoided prosecution for it.

Chan Tong-kai was sentenced to prison by a judge in April 2019. Just over one year earlier, authorities say the then 19-year-old admitted to killing his girlfriend, 20-year-old Poon Hiu-wing, while the pair were in Taiwan. Poon would have been about 15 weeks pregnant at the time.

Though Chan was arrested in March 2018 and soon confessed to the killing, according to police, that wasn’t why he was before a judge in April. Because Hong Kong and Taiwan have no extradition agreement, and do not usually provide cross-border legal assistance -- and because they could not prove the alleged murder was planned in Hong Kong beforehand -- prosecutors in the city were unable to charge Chan with murder. Instead, he was charged with the more minor offense of money laundering, in relation to cash and other valuables he stole from Poon after allegedly killing her.

.../...

In February 2019, the government proposed to amend the city’s two extradition laws _ the Fugitive Offenders and the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters ordinances _ in a bid to enable Hong Kong to surrender fugitive offenders on a case-by-case basis to other jurisdictions that have no formal long-term agreements with the SAR.”

Internal Causes and Foreign Interference

The Diffusion of Liberal Ideology in the Educational System and the Omission of History of New China

The British system of education in the colonial period, formed an elite of teachers with the values of liberal capitalism and from a sectary vision about the people’s Republic of China. The colonial education regulations stipulated that teachers and students were not allowed to use words such as “motherland” and “nationality”. History curriculum was focused on the ancient period of China’s history and avoided the struggle against feudalism, war, and occupation by imperial countries, and the historical conditions that conduct to the New Democracy: The People’s Republic of China confiscated the ownership of the monopolists_ the bureaucratic capital of the “four families”, ended the privileges of foreign capital that took over three-quarters of China’s industry and transport, reversed the requisitions, occupations and expropriations that the Japanese invasion imposed on businessmen and landowners and abolished feudal exploitation in the countryside. The Agrarian Reform takes the land to 350,000 peasants.

When HK return to the motherland 1997, they are the majority of the teachers in an open system, private and public, with liberal guidelines. As citizens, they are accultured persons, from the mainland and its history and culture. They controlled the Syndicate with 90,000 members, the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union,

“Liberal studies” is a compulsory subject in the Diploma of Secondary Education (DSE) curriculum, composed by six modules - personal development and interpersonal relationships, Hong Kong today, modern China, globalization, public health, and energy technology and the environment. Its textbooks are published by different publishers locally, and schools can choose whichever textbooks they prefer.

Unlike those for the other three compulsory subjects - Chinese, English and Mathematics - textbooks of “liberal studies” do not need approval from the Education Bureau of KHSAR.

Those teachers profited from this free choice, to choose the textbooks that correspond with their own political preferences. Two episodes can support this fact.

In 2012, the campaign against the proposed introduction of the Moral and National Education curriculum in our schools. The curriculum had been proposed by former chief executive Donald Tsang Yam-kuen in his 2010 Policy Address. Yet the publication of the booklet Teaching Manual of the China Model for Understanding China immediately caused a tumult of protests: Critics said it was political propaganda intended to brainwash students and did not offer a balanced view of China. The government proposed to include parents and teachers in the committee set up to analyse the text but withdrawn Moral and National Education curriculum from schools.

In 2019, in the West media, everyone could see, during the demonstrations, groups of very young peoples with the USA flag, appealing to the Trump government as a symbol of the defense of Human Rights!

USA Aggressive Strategy

If the protest demonstration in 2014 were a decisive battle between the government and opposition forces in Hong Kong, the riots in 2019 have an international strategic dimension, confronting the Chinese Socialism strategy for a New Age and anti-China forces, associated with the U.S. Strategy of The United States And the U.S. National Defense Strategy, on which the battlefield is Hong Kong.

The National Security Strategy, ESN [National Security Strategy (NSS)] of the Trump government states that “China and Russia defy the power, influence, and interests of the U.S., trying to erode U.S. security and prosperity.”

The Trump government’s National Defense Strategy, EDN [National Defense Strategy (EDN)] states that China “seeks regional hegemony in the Indo-Pacific in the short term”.

It is no longer about the propaganda defense of the values of the West or the free world, slogans of the cold war, but of American hegemonic interests, in the

direct language of the Pentagon, which in the two Chambers of U.S. power are covered with the diaphanous mantle of democracy and human rights.⁸

China accused the last U.S. government to search for to degrade the image of the People's Republic of China in the world and thus block the development of Chinese proposals for a New Era of International Relations based on a fairer trading system, peaceful cooperation and the right of each nation to choose its own path to progress, democracy and socialism, as are the BRICS projects, the political reconfiguration of ASEAN, the New Silk Road for Peace and more recently of South-South Cooperation, expanded in Africa and into the American Continent, that Monroe doctrine consider private domain of US.

And difficult or even block China's peaceful unification, once again fostering Taiwan's tendencies of secession, to which UN resolutions put the end.

The theorists of World War III, seated in Trump's administration, place the South China Sea as one of the epicenters of this threatening conflict.

The danger of evolving from the current economic and political disputes to a military probe was also signaled at the recent conference of old Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in Beijing.⁹

The last act of U.S. interference in the sovereignty of the PRC, after several student leaders (who commonly have their passage through Western universities) were received as if they were representatives of the people of Hong Kong, was the approval of a Hong Kong Law adopted by the House of Representatives by 417 votes against one, the day after the Senate unanimously vote, without any distinction between peaceful movements and violent and xenophobic actions against individuals and property. Those laws threaten to withdraw HK's special status in trade with the U.S. and exercise reprisals over its authorities. This almost unanimity demonstrates that the policies of the two parties that monopolize the government of the great American nation are not true opposite, when the denominate American interests or opposition to socialism are in the political equation.

An inauspicious Human Rights Watch_ create, with other name, to win the Cold War, balancing the USA politic, wrote in the WORLD REPORT 2021:

“In recent decades, the arrival of each new White House resident has brought wild oscillations in US human rights policy. George W. Bush's “global war on terror,” with its systematic torture and Guantanamo detentions without charge, was an earlier nadir. Barack Obama rejected important parts of it, although he maintained and even expanded such elements as unlawful drone attacks, intrusive surveillance, and arms sales to unsavory autocrats...”(Roth 2021, p. 1).

⁸“...The Trump administration did impose targeted sanctions and other punishments on the Chinese government and corporate entities for their involvement in human rights violations, but its own weak record on human rights, its evident mixed motives in criticizing Beijing, and Trump's scapegoating of China for his own pandemic failings left these interventions anything but principled, making working with allies difficult” (Roth 2021, p. 1).

⁹Kissinger said during the opening session of the Bloomberg New Economy Forum, adding that military technologies available today would make such a crisis “even more difficult to control” than those of earlier eras. The veteran diplomat said that the two sides should “agree that whatever other conflict they have, they will not resort to military conflict.”

In contrast to the fundamental line of the Chinese strategy, which, by the voice of Xi Jinping, states: “Only with the progress of developing countries and the least developed countries in the world, can China grow. Only with the prosperity of developing countries, can China be more prosperous” (19th CPC Congress).

Although HKSAR’s internal conflict is mainly due to the paradox of a socialist country having committed itself to maintaining a part of its territory for 50 years under an extreme and antisocial capitalist economic regime, Taiwan’s influence is equally evident.

Taiwan Interference

Media reports that dozens of Hong Kong violent protesters fly to Taiwan and are protected by Democratic Progressive Party of Taiwan, who have not denied that it wants to discredit the principle of “one country, two systems”. Ma Xiaoguang, spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council of PRC, warned the Democratic Progressive Party of Taiwan to stop harboring violent Hong Kong activists fleeing arrest.

“They also openly claimed to shelter criminals and make Taiwan a ‘safe haven’ for lawbreakers”, denouncing the double intention of that island’s leader, Tsai Ing-wen, and other authorities that have recently said that “humanitarian assistance” should be given to some Hong Kong residents. The case is that Cho Jung-tai, the DPP chairman, slander the principle of “one country, two systems”, “He was trying to stir up trouble in Hong Kong. He also wanted to smear the mainland and the principle of ‘one country, two systems’ so as to gain votes for the coming election. Such attempts are doomed to fail,” Ma added.

The Political and Economic Regime, One Country, Two Systems

The territory, composited by 1,104 km² of area (1,054 km² of land and 50 km² of water) consists principally of Hong Kong Island, Lantau, Kowloon Peninsula, and the New Territories, as well as about 260 other islands.

The postcolonial Chinese government legally protected 60% of this land, with the status of parks of nature and ecological reserves. 25% were already urbanized. The rest stay in possession of a small number of private homeowners and real estate speculators, who enriched it with a new China deal.

“Hong Kong returned to China in 1997, under the principle of ‘one country, two systems’, which means Hong Kong is part of China and enjoys a high degree of autonomy, except in foreign and defense affairs, as stipulated by Hong Kong’s Basic Law.”

The implemented political system corresponds to the matrix of the People’s Republic, but its economic base and legal system remained untouched in essence, a model of extreme liberal capitalism.

The People’s Republic of China claims to be a new-type democracy born from China’s modern history, by the struggle, sacrifice, and hard work of its people, with

56 nationalities: neither a new capitalist state, nor a semi-democratic hybrid system, as Western journalists, politicians, and academics!

PRC rejects that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights impose one single model of democracy, the liberal democracy, and quote the Article, 21^o, UDHR who postulate that each nation can choose its own path to progress and configure its democratic state.¹⁰

The Chinese Constitution define "...socialist democracy: the system of people's congresses, the system of multiparty cooperation and political consultation, the system of regional ethnic autonomy, and the system of self-governance at the primary level of society..."

How Hong Kong's Legislative Council Evolved

Let's characterize the pathway from a Legislative Council under the dominance of a colonial governor to a real Legislative Council.

The colonial times. From its establishment in 1843... to the first partial elections, on October 30, 1985, 24 members of Legco were returned by indirect elections. Twelve were returned by 12 electoral college constituencies – comprising members of District Boards, Urban Council, and the Provisional Regional Council. The other 12 were returned by functional constituencies made up of various professions.

Chinese language was used for the first time in Legco, with simultaneous interpretation, on October 18, 1972.

1991 marked the first time in the city's history Legco members were returned by direct elections. Eighteen members were elected by the public in nine geographical constituencies. The first female legislator is directly elected.

Legco in the last of colonial era. In 1995, among the 60 members, 30 were from functional constituencies, 20 were returned by direct elections in geographical constituencies, and 10 were elected by the election committee constituency.

The last governor declared 2.7 million voters (from a population of a 6,6 million of Chinese peoples), that never could exercise their vote to cast a ballot in 150 years of colonial dependency. This was a generous offer in the end of the mandate to a minority of HK Chinese people that had done nothing concerning effective political rights for the people.

People's Republic of China set up a Provisional Legislative Council. Sixty members were elected by a 400-member selection committee on December 21, 1996. Hong Kong's first chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa, was elected on the same day.

The first meeting of the Provisional Legislative Council convened on January 25, 1997, to elect its first president, Rita Fan Hsu Lai-tai. She was also the first woman to hold the office.

¹⁰The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the UN on 10 December 1948 (A/RES/217). Drafted mainly by J. P. Humphrey of Canada, it had in Dr. P.C. Chang, representative of the single-front government of China (later government of the People's Republic of China) and representative of the positions of the Asian countries, the main mediator of the consensus established in its principles and 30 articles.

The Provisional Legislative Council operated from July 1, 1997 to July 2, 1998. Elections for the first post-colonial Legco were held on May 24, 1998.

The size of the number of geographical constituency legislators increased in subsequent Legco sessions: from 20 in 1998, to 24 in 2000, to 30 in 2004.

An electoral reform package was passed on June 25, 2010, increasing the size of the legislature to 70 members by adding five geographical constituencies and five functional constituencies.

The five functional constituency are elected by district councilors and eligible to run by being elected by district council members. The winners were then to be elected by Hong Kong's entire voter base. The Universal suffrage arrived at the Chinese people of HK.

The seats are called "super seats" as candidates stand for election before many voters and hence command a more significant mandate than other Legco member.

Enlarging Democracy, a Mixed System of Direct Participation and Representation

Uninterrupted expansion of electoral democracy, based on universal suffrage and representative democracy, based on the direct election of representatives from all HK social sectors and multi-party consultation and cooperation.

Already in 2007, 28 constituencies were established with the power to elect the Legislative Assembly, (one more, which represents the Districts Councils Second) composed of approximately 226,000 representative voters (a kind of great elector), for a total of about 7 million inhabitants. That number includes near 210,000 individual representatives and near 16,000 board representatives.

Hong Kong's leader, the chief executive, is currently elected by a 1,200-member election committee (2010, Amend), state:

1. The Election Committee to elect the fourth term Chief Executive in 2012 shall be composed of 1200 members from the following sectors:

Industrial, commercial, and financial sectors 300

The professions 300

Labour, social services, religious and other sectors 300

Members of the Legislative Council, representatives of members of the District Councils, representatives of the Heung Yee Kuk ("Rural Assembly" is a statutory advisory body representing the indigenous or rural inhabitants of Hong's New Territories), Hong Kong deputies to the National People's Congress, and representatives of Hong Kong members of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference 300

The term of office of the Election Committee shall be five years.

2. Candidates for the office of Chief Executive may be nominated jointly by not less than 150 members of the Election Committee. Each member may nominate only one candidate.

With the Electoral Reform implemented at the SARHK in 2010, the Legislative Council was composed of 70 members, 35 elected by direct suffrage and 35 elected by indirect suffrage.

On another hand, all citizens (individuals) voters of Hong Kong also have the right to vote in direct elections for the “District Assemblies”, electing 452 members.

With the support of only 10 voters, any HK citizen can run for district deputy.

In 2016, in compliance with the precept of progressively increasing the democratic representation prescribed in the HK Fundamental Law, the Legislative Assembly with 70 members, 35 elected by direct suffrage and 35 elected by indirect suffrage, represent all the social sectors of Hong Kong,

This reality contradicts the false thesis widely disseminated in the media to the West, that after the 2014 incidents, the HK government restricted democracy in electoral processes and its parliamentary representation.

These 35 elected by all community sectors, from the University to Business and Trade Federations, are a new model of participatory/ representative democracy, which allows these different social sectors to choose, to control and to evaluate its deputies during the mandate, or even replace them in the case of serious infringement of their political duties. This means that parties do not have the exclusivity of representation, as they complain in the West the new democratic movements! (What a paradox!)

A model certainly more democratic than that we currently have in Portugal (and in European Union), in which members are chosen by the head of their party and negotiated only with their barons. We, Portuguese citizens militants or without party, do not vote for members committed to defending our direct interests and have no control over their activity. And we, European citizens, when vote for our on-deputy circle, have no right to choose the man or the woman, and let in the party the decisive authority for balance their mandate.

But if we are American citizens and don't constitute a part of the 100 million of US citizens excluded from all elections, we can legally buy our place in a political carrier, given the correspondent donative to the respective party ballot or reserve a place, with a millionaire gift, in the top of the administration, up to the presidential staff.

The Basic Law of HK states that the ultimate aims are the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage upon nomination by a broadly representative nominating committee in accordance with democratic procedures, and the election of all the members of the Legislative Council by universal suffrage_ the “dual universal suffrage”.

The Political-electoral Map of Hong Kong

Since the 2016 elections in HK, the constitutional field (identified with the Constitution of the PRC and the Basic Law of HKSAR) is usually represented by about 40 elected members, half of which have been elected by direct suffrage. They are parties very different from the mainland democratic parties and, obviously, from the Communist Party, as the DAB. The Centre-Left or the Business and Professionals Alliance for Hong Kong _ BPA, the Centre-right.

In 2007, 28 constituencies were entailed with approximately 212,000 representative voters for a total of about 7 million inhabitants. Moreover, among these voters,

210,000 are individual representatives from 17 social sectors (Rural Assembly, Education, Financial Services...), elected directly by their peers to represent them as great voters, but the remaining 16,000 voters are collective entities + individual representatives, elected by other sectors (e.g., Textiles and Garment are represented by 3,579 large corporate voters and 130 by individual ones), which makes the process more complex but also more Representative. The list does not include District Council (Second) Functional Constituency, which consisted of all other individual registered electors do not belong to one of the other 28 functional constituencies.

But this scheme is only a simplified way for approaching the diverse and complex reality of parties and political groups of HK. In the post-colonial era we can identify many political acronyms having in common the word democracy, representing parties and alliances, with representation in the Legislative Council and District Councils, where a great number of independents win the sets.

Evolution of Hong Kong's electoral map reveals the growing loss of electoral weight of political forces that have historically been the support and opposition of the government, well proved by the electoral evolution of the two largest parties, the DAB and the Democratic Party (oppositionist) in the main elections, for the Legislative Council: The DAB went from 25% of the vote in 1998 to 16% in 2016 and the Democratic Party (opposition) from 42% to 9% in the same period.

And, consequently, the proliferation of ever-changing political parties and forces.

In the November 24 poll to the District Councils, western press connects with the opposition around 50 political acronyms, including parties and other associations, traditional parties, and new political association - and dozens more were presented as supporting the government.

The same west press associates with the opposition 1 million votes in independent candidates, without demonstration of these connections. Consulting the registration of the pool, could find in large majority, independent young people, without program or ideology.

National Peoples' Conference_ NPC and HKSAR Political Representation

Hong Kong is represented in the national institutions of the People's Republic of China, the People's Congress, and the Chinese People's Consultative Policy Conference, with a weight of electoral representation proportionally much higher than its number of citizens.

The PRC has a population of 1.360 million, to HK's 7.8 million Chinese.

2,980 Members of National Peoples 'Conference_ NPC; 175 Members of NPCSC (The Standing Committee).

Hong Kong's contingent to the country's legislature, the National People's Congress: Some 49 candidates ran in the small-circle election to be among the chosen 36 delegates who represent the city in the legislature.

Electoral method:

Article 21 of the Hong Kong Basic Law stipulates:

Chinese citizens who are residents of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be entitled to participate in the management of state affairs according to law. In accordance with the assigned number of seats and the selection method specified by the National People's Congress, the Chinese citizens among the residents of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall locally elect deputies of the Region to the National People's Congress to participate in the work of the highest organ of state power.

A 1,989 strong electoral college composed of the following:

Members of the previous electoral college that had elected the Hong Kong deputies to the National People's Congress.

Hong Kong delegates of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee (CPPCC);

Members of the Election Committee (which elects the Chief Executive) who are Chinese nationals, except those who opt out; and

The Chief Executive of the SARHK.

Result by party

DAB (5) _ Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB)

FTU (2) NCF (1) Roundtable (1)

The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and HKSAR Political Representation

"The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, a broadly based representative organization of the united front which has played a significant historical role, will play a still more important role in the country's political and social life, in promoting friendship with other countries and in the struggle for socialist modernization and for the reunification and unity of the country. The system of the multi-party cooperation and political consultation led by the Communist Party of China will exist and develop for a long time to come." Preamble of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China

Some 200 delegates from Hong Kong are on the 2,158-strong member list for the 13th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference /2016), the country's top political advisory body...

Invited Hong Kong Dignitaries (124)

Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (25)

Business and Professionals Alliance for Hong Kong (4)

Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions (2)

Liberal Party (Hong Kong) (4)

New Century Forum (1)

New Territories Association of Societies (2)

HK Electoral Changes to Ensure “One Country, Two Systems” and Safeguard “Patriots Governing HK”

Remember Trojan Horse operation!

The National People’s Congress, China’s top legislature, adopted a decision on Feb 3 2021 on improving the electoral system of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The decision has the following nine articles (condensed):

1. Improving the electoral system of the HKSAR must fully and faithfully implement the policy of “one country, two systems”...and safeguard the right to vote and the right to stand for election of permanent residents of the HKSAR.
2. The HKSAR shall establish an Election Committee which is broadly representative, suited to the HKSAR’s realities and representative of the overall interests of its society. The Election Committee shall be responsible for electing the chief executive designate and part of the members of the Legislative Council. The Election Committee shall also be responsible for nominating candidates for the chief executive and Leg-Co members as well as for other matters. The Election Committee shall be composed of 1,500 members from the following five sectors: industrial, commercial, and financial sectors; the professions; grassroots, labor, religious and other sectors; Leg-Co members and representatives of district organizations; and Hong Kong deputies to the NPC, Hong Kong members of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference and representatives of Hong Kong members of related national organizations.
3. The chief executive shall be elected by the Election Committee and appointed by the Central People’s Government. Candidates for the office of the chief executive shall be nominated jointly by not less than 188 members of the Election Committee...
4. The LegCo of the HKSAR shall be composed of 90 members in each term. Members of the LegCo shall include members returned by the Election Committee, those returned by functional constituencies and those by geographical constituencies through direct elections.
5. A candidate qualification review committee of the HKSAR shall be established. The committee shall be responsible for reviewing and confirming the qualifications of candidates for the Election Committee members, the chief executive and the LegCo members...
6. The NPC Standing Committee is authorized to, in accordance with the decision on improving the electoral system of the HKSAR...
7. In accordance with the decision and the Basic Law’s Annex I and Annex II amended by the NPC Standing Committee, the HKSAR shall amend relevant local laws and organize and regulate election activities accordingly.
8. The chief executive of the HKSAR shall submit in a timely manner reports to the Central People’s Government on relevant important situations

including the institutional arrangements for elections of the HKSAR and the organization of the elections.

9. ...

Youth and Revolts: HKSAR Government Program to Overcome Crisis

“Hong Kong residents, including those who have made mistakes, are not our enemies”

Carrie Lam’s government, despite the progress made in several areas, Hong Kong’s ecological environment in creative technology has been continuously improved under the great support of the SAR government and such as the unemployment rate, which is reduced to 2.9%, sub estimate the problems and complaints of the people, especially young people.

It did not advance sufficiently in the democratization of Hong Kong’s economy. It displayed the general numbers and did not take due account of the antisocial nature of HK capitalism.

But his stance of self-criticism and the containment of violence deserves applause, as does the democratic reform program, she announced:

“Hong Kong residents, including those who have made mistakes, are not our enemies.” This is the official position of the HK government and also the government of the PRC.

The Hong Kong government has announced a program of democratic reforms, unprecedented in the last 20 years: The Hong Kong government has announced extra budget measures valued at HK\$19.1 billion (\$2.4 billion), including relief for small businesses, more student subsidies and benefits for low-income households. Land supply for public housing, “About 700 acres of private land will be resumed, of which some 400 hectares is expected to be resumed in the next five years – significantly more than the 20 hectares resumed in the past five years,” she said. raise the minimum wage

Lam proposed raising all payment rates of the working family allowance. “There will be a 16.7 percent to 25 percent increase in the working-hour-linked household allowance under the program, while the child allowance will be raised substantially by 40 percent,” she said.

And create more well-paying jobs to improve social mobility for young people.

Integrate itself into the national innovation system and explore the innovation-driven development models cooperated with other cities in the Greater Bay Area.

Other government adviser suggest increasing taxes on millionaires and property transactions and that the government can also consider raising taxes on those making HK\$2 million a year or more and increasing taxes on property transactions valued at HK\$10 million or more.

These measures removed from the streets the large masses of discontent and left the extremists isolated. They chose to endure intense violent activity, with fires and destruction of establishments, public services, communication axes and even the University, attacking the police with lethal weapons, bleeding and burning other Chinese citizens, harassing, and intimidating students from other countries, emerging in trained groups, and equipped for urban guerrilla. Continuing to drag same groups of young and young people to violent clashes.¹¹

The Elections of November 24 and the Meaning of its Results

The president of the government of the Hong Kong Special Autonomous Region said in her first public statement that she accepts the results of the elections to the District Assemblies, which were clearly unfavorable to her, and she hope that the people of Hong Kong can continue to express their views in a peaceful manner.

“The HKSAR government will listen to the opinions of members of the public humbly, and seriously reflect (on its performance),” conclude Lam. The first note is that if the government loses elections so largely, it is because, after all, in Hong Kong there are free and democratic elections, contrary to what has been intensely stated in the West.

The BBC and the Western press soon talk of a wide victory for the “pro-democracy” movement, as if these candidates represented an organized and united political front with a program and a common structure.

Candidates for the seats of District Council elections, were able to participate in the polls based on a one-name list signed by only 10 HK citizens, a legal provision granting a democratic, participatory, and plural dimension to these elections and to these elected officials, which has nothing to be compared with the schematic and biased view of a homogeneous political movement.

Analyzing the last pool emphasizing that pro-democracy movement win the streets and after poll 17 of 18 districts or saying that political forces that support government only have a reduced percent of the 452 seats, is an intentional deflection to induce in error the public opinion.

The defeated candidates were not only those representing the oldest and diverse democratic parties and social forces supporters of HKSAR government, but also other independent citizens and old opposite parties, who together show us that the consignment of philosophy China’s classic politics, taken up by Mao, remains alive in the People’s Republic of China and is favored by its electoral laws: “Let a hundred flowers bloom; let a hundred schools of thought contend”.

Now we can measure the dimension of the defeat of government without associate them to the victory of an inexistent electoral platform or united front of opposition. From an electoral framework compared between the two elections

¹¹Police records show that among the hundreds of people arrested for taking part in violent protests have been under the age of 16. Among the over 6,000 arrested in the anti-government protests, many are university students. Police records show that some 40 percent of those detained are students, with more than 900 suspects underaged. Charges include rioting, possession of offensive weapons, assaulting police officers and taking part in unlawful assemblies.

2015/2019, with an electoral turnout of 47% of voters against the current 71% (2.9 million out of a total of 4.1 million), DAB went from 118 to 21, BPA fall from 19 to 3 and the FTU from 30 to 7. This framework shows an overall drop from 169 to 31 among these parties and political forces that support Lam govern and regularly present themselves to these elections, but at the same time, that already in the last elections 2015, most elected candidates have not party affiliation or there are representants of traditional so-called democratic parties.

The Winner's: Pluralism, Diversity, and Independents

In common, these candidates and especially these voters criticize the HK government policy, based on the same claims that brought to the streets the first democratic movements of their Chinese citizens in the 1960s and 1970s in the midst of colonial era: poverty wages of workers and their families, the terrible housing shortages in a mega city subject to private housing concentration and speculation, insufficient support for students and promising jobs, small business owners' difficulties in a business sea where they hunt without control the great sharks.

We can better understand the evolution from the past colonial period to the Hong Kong administration of "one country, two systems", from a standing testify of a senior research fellow at Pan Sutong Shanghai-Hong Kong Economic Policy Research Institute at Lingnan University, Professor Lok-sang (2019a):

"Hong Kong people have struggled through difficult times. During the 1950s and early 1960s, most Hong Kong people were struggling to make ends meet. Many of us were living in subdivided flats in very crowded conditions. Many lived in unsafe squatter camps that were not only unhygienic but also dangerous. Corruption was rampant, as were robberies. There was no democracy to speak of. English was the only official language even though very few Hong Kong people at the time could speak or understand English...

Hong Kong people did not enjoy free compulsory primary education until 1971. It was in 1978 that Hong Kong started to have nine years of free compulsory education and also the Home Ownership Scheme. It was not until 1991 that Hong Kong had a third university. The old-age allowance, when it was first introduced in 1973, was available only for those aged 75 or above.

While the percentage of low-income earners, defined as making HK\$10,000 (\$1,280) or less a month at 2018 prices, among young people aged 21-25, had risen for the cohorts born after 1980, a recent study by me and a scholar at the Education University found that for those born in 1991-95, an unprecedentedly low 12 percent was poor. Even for those born in 1986-90, the percentage of low-income earners dropped from 36.3 percent to 5.3 percent by the time they reached 26-30!"...The fact is, under "one country, two systems", life is actually getting better in Hong Kong. Not only are we economically better off than our forefathers, but we are having more democracy, less corruption, fewer crimes, a higher rule-of-law rating, and even the top life expectancy ranking in the world." Ho Lok-sang, concludes.

The defeat parties and other political forces are not the emanation of the government politics or from China mainland, they are genuine creation of the diversity of political choices of the HK Chinese Peoples' in different historical contexts, agree and disagree frequently with the political orientation and measures of Lam government (a story about that disagree of DBA leader opposition face to Lam decision of retreat extradition laws, run in HK public opinion), defending in common the Basic Law of HKSAR..

Once again, West press says nothing about their origin, political program, and social composition.

DAB: The Centre-left for a Virtuous Democracy

Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong _ DAB was founded in the end of colonial period, 1992, only with 56 members defining themselves as “a cross-sectoral party” and in 1997, when HK return to the motherland, establish a political program that wanted to correspond to the main aspirations and needs of the common people and all the social classes, believing that “...the common interest of all sectors of the society is to implement One Country, Two Systems, Hong Kong people Administering Hong Kong and a high degree of autonomy, to maintain Hong Kong’s stability and prosperity while continuously improving our resident’s quality of life.”

It was a program with concrete measures, that reacts against to the dark side of the colonial heritage, but defends a moderate way to reform the capitalism of HK:

Business and Professionals Alliance for Hong Kong _ BPA, the Centre-right

BPA will be classified in the West as a Centre-right party, representing since 2012 the business world. Defends the primacy of private economy, the responsibility of the government to create a competitive environment for business and to promote welfare and well-being of middle-class and assistance for the disadvantaged.

Federation of Trade Unions

The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions (HKFTU) was founded in 1948. HKFTU represents a total of 251 affiliated and associated unions, covering a wide spectrum of sectors, including all means of transport (land, sea and air), government organizations, public utilities, clericals and professionals, tourism, catering and retailing industries, service industry, manufacturing, shipbuilding and machinery manufacturing, and construction, etc. With a membership of over 410,000 (as of December 2016), HKFTU is the largest labor organization in Hong Kong.

Epilogue

The Western press and its political scientist (or propagandist?) omit and try to forget that the political principle of “one country, two systems”, forces the government of SARHK and the People's Republic of China to maintain for 50 years which it was one of the most antisocial capitalist regimes of our time_ a colonial regime, tax haven for the landless capital, realm of real estate speculators, refuge from international white-collar crimes or even the most hateful blood crimes committed by the worst of its citizens, which the Chinese authorities have gradually and peacefully reforming, following the principle of “one country, two systems” and in the fulfilment of the strategic political contract signed by Hong Kong’s Basic Law.

The program that Carrie Lam recently presented it is a program of democratic reforms that respond to peoples’ claims, which, of course, arrive late, but paradoxically will be reinforced with these results.

On other hand, the Greater Bay Area Plan reinforce the key to innovation. Is based on agglomeration economies from the city cluster and on the access to great ports of Guangdong, Macau, and Hong Kong, involving policy makers of 11 cities in the area. Its design shows that it does not go against market forces but instead works with them, creating diversity, new jobs and sustainability. The difficulties caused by the three different market, with different legal systems will be remove or at least alleviate, with a synergic and solidary process of integration, based in high technologies, ecological transition and open up to the world.

Hong Kong Security Law, approved by unanimity by the Committee Permanent of National People Assembly, is resumed by BBC in four points: “It criminalizes any act of:

- secession - breaking away from the country
- subversion - undermining the power or authority of the central government
- terrorism - using violence or intimidation against people
- collusion with foreign or external forces.”¹²

All the sovereign states have a similar Law. But BBC use a new argument: “It gives Beijing powers to shape life in Hong Kong it has never had before.”

Analyzing the accusation against China about the violation of the agreement with London for the handover and the Basic Law, the French diplomat Lionel Vairon, says:

Yet, in Article 23, this Basic Law, which at the time had not aroused any indignation, already stated that “The R.A.S. of Hong Kong must adopt its own laws to prohibit any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People’s government, or the theft of state secrets, prohibiting any political activity in the Region of foreign organizations or organizations. , and prohibit political organizations or organizations

¹²<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-52765838>.

in the Region from establishing links with foreign political organizations or organizations” (Vairon 2020).

The principle of “One country, two systems” would be rendered null and void by the vote by the Beijing People’s Assembly of the National Security Act. Washington has announced its decision to no longer recognize Hong Kong’s special status, a decision that will penalize U.S. companies and investors in the first place.

However, Leonel Vairon arrives at an opposite conclusion:

Hong Kong is merely a pretext for the United States, supported by a European Union too follows in this case, to increase the pressure on China (trade war, “laws” of congress on Xinjiang, Hong Kong, refusal of visas for Chinese students, etc.) and try, in a last desperate effort, to contain the emergence of China in the international order and preserve a rapid decline in American hegemony (Vairon 2020).

The National People’s Congress, China’s top legislature, adopted a decision on Feb 3 2021 on improving the electoral system of the Hong Kong Special Administrative to ensure “one country, two systems” and safeguard “patriots governing HK”.

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