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Chapter 1
Political Context

Lam Wai-man

Following China's military defeat at the hands of Britain in the first and second Opium Wars (1839–42 and 1856–60), Hong Kong was placed under British colonial rule. It was within this context that Hong Kong experienced World War I, World War II, postwar refugee influxes, the embargo on young Communist China in the 1950s, two significant riots in the 1960s, and an economic upswing in the 1970s. By the time of China's resumption of sovereignty on 1 July 1997, in accordance with the Sino-British Joint Declaration, Hong Kong had become one of the world's leading cities.

The first chief executive (CE), Tung Chee-hwa, launched the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) administration by setting up grand development plans for the city and producing commitments to these plans. From a pledge to resolve housing needs by providing 85,000 housing units each year to proposals for a Cyberport science park and a Chinese medicine centre, Tung attempted to institute longer-term visions for a city renowned for transience and pragmatism. Unfortunately, many of these plans or policies were derailed or modified because of objective problems or reluctance among the people of Hong Kong, who were either not ready or of a different mind from Tung. Various crises, ranging from economic to epidemiological, plagued the city during his term in office.

Economically, Hong Kong suffered from the Asian financial crisis, which began in Thailand soon after Hong Kong's handover in July 1997, and generated a period of economic turbulence and decline in the city. The unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) rose from 4.7% in 1998 to 7.9% in 2003, though by September 2005 it had fallen back to 5.7%. If economic prosperity had served the colonial government well as a buffer against political challenges, the Tung administration was not so fortunate. Furthermore, social inequalities appear to have increased over the years. The Gini coefficient, commonly used to indicate income inequality, is a value between 0 and 1 with 0 representing a state of absolute equality and 1 of absolute inequality. In Hong Kong, it went up from 0.518 in 1996 to 0.525 in 2001, ranking the city above only 16 developing countries in South America and Africa (World Bank 2001, Table 2.8).

In terms of politics, it is commonly believed that political space in Hong Kong has been greatly constricted since 1997. For example, attempts of the HKSAR government to legislate Article 23 of the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, were widely perceived as having negative effects on individual freedom and subsequently aroused substantial public controversy. The arguments culminated in a demonstration on 1 July 2003, in which half a million Hong Kong people took to the streets to voice their grievances. People accused the government of missteps leading to Hong Kong's economic decline, deterioration of the rule of law, and sluggish development of democratization. Data collected by the Civic Exchange showed that in June 1997, 66% of respondents were satisfied with the overall performance of the government. Satisfaction then plunged to 30% in August 2000, and to 20% in November 2003 (Civic Exchange 2004, Tables 9 & 10). Added to these difficulties were some unprecedented health considerations, notably the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which exposed the government's inability to cope with crises and a lack of coordination between departments.

On 10 March 2005, while Hong Kong appeared to be well on the road to economic recovery, rumours about Tung's resignation for health reasons were finally confirmed. By gaining the nomination of more than 700 members of the 800-member Election Committee (EC) that is entrusted with electing the CE under the Basic Law, Donald Yam-kuen Tsang, formerly chief secretary of the HKSAR government and, as commonly called, a "long-term old battery" of the Hong Kong colonial government, replaced Tung as the second CE without competition. In 2007, Tsang was re-elected to a second term, to last up to 2012.

Having been a civil servant for almost 40 years, Tsang is renowned for his pragmatic governance. He pronounced his aims as delivering strong governance and promoting progressive development, which were to be realized by promoting economic development, pushing ahead large scale infrastructural projects, reducing the energy intensity of Hong Kong, promoting community development and social harmony, and resolving the problems of Hong Kong's democratic development during his term of office. From 2005, Hong Kong's economy, which was adversely affected by the global financial crisis in 2008 and 2009, has entered the stage of recovery. Over the past few years, unemployment rates have been maintained at about 4%. Undoubtedly, Tsang has been luckier than Tung with the support of a more favourable economic environment for his governance. Nevertheless, the Gini coefficients have remained high with a score of 0.488 in 2006, 0.428 in 2007, 0.533 in 2008, 0.432 in 2009, and 0.535 in 2010. The percentage of people who felt very satisfied and quite satisfied with the overall performance of the HKSAR government has also gradually decreased from 49.6% in January 2006 to 22% in August 2011 (Hong Kong

University Public Opinion Poll (HKUPOP)), which are worrying signs. This chapter outlines the general context of changes in Hong Kong since 1997 and lays out the volume's structure and each chapter's materials.

Sino-British negotiations and the Basic Law

Negotiations between China and Britain about the sovereignty transfer began informally in 1979, when Hong Kong Governor Murray Maclehose made an official visit to Beijing. In 1984, the two countries signed a Joint Declaration stating that the British administration of Hong Kong would end in 1997. Hong Kong would become a special administrative region under Chinese sovereignty without British intervention. In addition, its way of life, system of laws, and justice would be maintained for at least 50 years. A Sino-British Joint Liaison Group was subsequently established to ensure the effective implementation of the Joint Declaration. In 1990, the Basic Law was promulgated, restating the principles of "high autonomy" and the unprecedented model of "one country, two systems" for ruling Hong Kong (Box 1.1). The general framework of governance laid down by the Basic Law is highly similar to the colonial government's: continuing elitist rule, executive-led government, laissez-faire economic policy, a capitalistic way of life, protection of individual freedoms, and limited democracy (Box 1.2). The belief enshrined in the Basic Law is that there is much value in the colonial legacy, which includes clinging to the social goals of stability and prosperity, administrative efficiency, political neutrality of civil servants, the rule of law, and gradual political reforms. The interesting question for post-1997 governance is to what extent "one country, two systems" can be successful given the legacy and the constraints of the Basic Law.

Although the Central People's Government (CPG) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) planned to maintain stability and continuity in both pre-handover and post-handover governance in Hong Kong by promulgating the Basic Law, its plans were interrupted by the arrival of Chris Patten as Hong Kong Governor in 1992. Patten made significant political and administrative reforms in response to citizens' demands for quality governance, which also indirectly resonated with the people's desires for democracy. For example, government departments and agencies were required to publish annual performance pledges to enhance their accountability to citizens. Also, in the 1995 Legislative Council (LegCo) election, Patten deliberately redefined the functional constituencies (FCs), making more than 1.1 million individuals eligible to vote. In the 1991 election, only around 70,000 people had been able to vote in the FCs. China viewed all of these proto-democratic moves with concern. As tensions heightened in 1996, China appointed a Provisional LegCo, which soon reversed all of Patten's pro-democratic reforms that they viewed with suspicion.

Relations with China

Since the handover, the principle of high autonomy has been basically respected and the Hong Kong people's trust of the CPG is high. When asked whether they were satisfied with the performance of the CPG in dealing with Hong Kong affairs, 45% of the respondents expressed satisfaction in June 1997, 68% in June 1998, and even amidst the Article 23 controversies in mid-2003, the CPG still enjoyed a satisfaction rate of 57% (Civic Exchange 2004, Table 38). Other polls conducted by the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies showed that, in 2007, 68.8% of respondents evaluated the policy of the CPG on Hong Kong after the political handover as "good". The percentages decreased to 47.3% in 2011 (*Hong Kong Economic Journal* 20 October 2011, p. A21).

China has been highly self-controlled in ruling Hong Kong in the early post-handover years, and criticisms of governance in Hong Kong has generally not come from the CPG but rather from pro-Beijing elites in Hong Kong, such as certain Hong Kong delegates of the National People's Congress (NPC) and a few individual Chinese officials. Still, the relationship between Hong Kong and China has been one of mutual testing of limits and mutual accommodation. In particular, since the massive demonstrations in 2003, China has had a growing tendency to get involved in Hong Kong's affairs. For instance, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (SCNPC) has intervened in public controversies over whether Hong Kong can have universal suffrage. Although the Basic Law makes universal suffrage an ultimate goal, it does not set a date for achieving it. Immense mobilization from the pro-democracy camp sought to make this effective in the 2007 CE election and the 2008 LegCo elections. However, in April 2004, the SCNPC decided that Hong Kong would not have universal suffrage for either election. The SCNPC's ruling aroused public worries about the violation of Hong Kong's autonomy and about the ruling as a precedent for Beijing's intervention into Hong Kong's reforms of voting rights.

Public concern was heightened following the resignation of several radio talk show hosts in 2004 who had been highly critical of the CPG and HKSAR government. All of them alleged that they had received threats from Mainland government officials whom they understood were conveying to them the CPG's messages. In addition, it is widely believed that the Liaison Office (LO) of the CPG has been active in arranging potential co-optees in Hong Kong to visit Beijing and meet with Chinese officials for building collaboration. In recent years, the LO has also become heavily involved in coordinating pro-Beijing forces in Hong Kong's elections. In the latest negotiation between the HKSAR government and the pro-democracy camp over the reform package of Hong Kong's constitutional development in

2010, Beijing even jumped in and arrived at a compromise on the future arrangements with the Democratic Party (DP).

If political intervention from Beijing is like a "stick" attempting to rectify "political incorrectness" in Hong Kong, economic advantages presented to Hong Kong are like "carrots" serving to pacify the people. In fact, there has been growing economic integration between Hong Kong and China, particularly since 2003. For example, the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), signed in June 2003, is an economic agreement between Hong Kong and the Mainland that aims to strengthen trade and investment cooperation between the two. By signing the CEPA, the two sides agree to progressively reduce or eliminate tariffs, non-tariff barriers, and other discriminatory measures on all trade and services, and to promote trade and facilitate investment. In 2011, Chinese Vice Premier Li Keqiang visited Hong Kong in a gesture to expand financial and trade cooperation, with the CPG's plan to establish an off-shore yuan centre in Hong Kong.

Global relations

Hong Kong's global relations are particularly important with regard to Taiwan, where it serves at least two political functions. On the one hand, Hong Kong was supposed to represent a showcase of the model of "one country, two systems" to Taiwan. However, this has failed, partially because of Taiwan's inherent mistrust of the PRC government, and partially because of the series of economic, social, and political problems that have besieged Hong Kong since 1997. On several occasions, politicians from Taiwan criticized the model and pointed to Hong Kong's situation as evidence that Taiwan should maintain its political autonomy. In 2003, for example, former Taiwan president Lee Teng-hui commented that Hong Kong's plight "should serve as a warning to Taiwan that freedom and democracy can never coexist under China's authoritarian regime" (*Taipei Times* 18 August 2003, p. 1).

On the other hand, Hong Kong was to help pave the way for national reunification by serving to bridge the gap between China and Taiwan. Instead of effectively playing out the role of a good example, the development of relations between Hong Kong and Taiwan since 1997 has become relatively restricted. In particular, during the rule of Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party, the HKSAR government had maintained only "pragmatic contacts" with Taiwan, acting quite cautiously and frequently refusing visa extensions or entry visas for important Taiwan politicians. With the election of the Nationalist Party's Ma Ying-jeou as the Taiwan president in 2008 and the improved relations between Taiwan and China, the Hong Kong government has also modified its no-official contact policy with Taiwan. In 2009, secretary for constitutional and mainland affairs Stephen Lam paid an

unprecedented official visit to Taiwan, while CE Tsang has also indicated his interest to pay a personal visit to Taiwan during his term of office. In 2011, Taiwan announced that the Taiwan government's representative office in Hong Kong, which has operated as the "Chung Hwa Travel Service", will be renamed the "Taipei Economic and Cultural Office" with its functions and status upgraded. Moreover, in the near future, Taiwan's representative office in Hong Kong will be able to directly liaise with relevant agencies of the Hong Kong government. Meanwhile, the Hong Kong government will also establish the "Hong Kong Economic, Trade and Cultural Office". All these signify progress in the recent Hong Kong–Taiwan relations.

Even after 1997, the world maintains an active interest in Hong Kong because of its economic and strategic value. In fact, unabated world attention on Hong Kong has put additional pressure on post-1997 governance. The United States passed the Hong Kong Policy Act in 1992, which reiterated US support for democratization and pledged an active role in maintaining Hong Kong's confidence and prosperity. A Hong Kong Policy Act report is periodically prepared by the US Department of State. Similarly, in Britain the government presents reports to the Parliament every six months on the implementation of the Joint Declaration in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong continues to maintain trade relations with various countries. Regarding inward direct investment, China has maintained the largest proportion in 2009 (HK$2,644.5 billion) (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hong_kong_statistics/statistical_tables/index.jsp?charsetID=1&tableID=048). With regard to outward direct investment, in 2009, most of it went to the Mainland (HK$2,731.5 billion). Also, in 2009, a lot of the funds were channelled via the British Virgin Islands (HK$2,829.3 billion) before they arrived at the final destinations within China (chapter 16, www.censtatd.gov.hk/hong_kong_statistics/statistical_tables/index.jsp?charsetID=1&tableID=050). While China's significance in Hong Kong's trade is incontrovertible, there are growing worries about the over-dependence of Hong Kong's economy on China, and the trend of "sinicization"—making the city more "Chinese" and thus diminishing its cosmopolitan character.

Government institutions

Executive

The executive-led principle has continued to guide the government since 1997 although its feasibility and desirability are open to doubt (Cheung 2002; 2007). Under the Basic Law, the executive is in control of the legislature, while the legislature is not equipped with reciprocal powers. Article 48 of the Basic Law entrusted the CE with the power to sign bills, to sign budgets, to decide on government policies, to appoint or remove holders

of public offices and judges in accordance with legal procedures, and so on. Also, he can veto the laws passed by the LegCo, and dissolve the LegCo in order to resolve deadlocks between the LegCo and himself (Articles 49 and 50). Given the design of the Basic Law, good governance will only be achieved under several conditions, including the capable leadership of the CE (Scott 2000). However, the Tung administration was obviously not popular and suffered from governance and legitimacy crises, which led subsequently to its premature termination.

Tung made some attempts to augment his leadership, notably by introduction of the Accountability System for Principal Officials (ASPO) in 2002. The ASPO aimed to facilitate coordination of the formulation and implementation of policies, to select the best individuals to hold principal positions, and to enhance cooperation between the government and the LegCo. With the implementation of the ASPO, the membership of the Executive Council (ExCo) comprised 14 principal officials who were directors of bureaus appointed under the accountability system and 5 non-officials (Loh 2002, pp. 13–37). Principal officials are employed under non-civil service contracts. The most senior civil servants in each of the bureaus were renamed "permanent secretaries", and their main role is to provide full support to the principal officials in running the bureaus and departments. Also, the role of the Central Policy Unit (CPU) was strengthened. In the colonial government, the CPU had functioned as a relatively neutral policy-advising body but, under the ASPO, it emphasizes the roles of policy advising and government image building, as well as actively participating in the making of public opinion.

There is much evidence that the ASPO has not really succeeded. ExCo members had vested interests and political allegiances, which made it difficult for them to work as one body. In the Article 23 saga, for example, James Tien, former chairperson of the Liberal Party (LP), withdrew from the ExCo to avoid having his party support the government's unpopular legislation. This demonstrated that the ExCo, even after restructuring, was unable to strengthen the political support for the executive and the executive's capability of rule as expected.

When Tsang took office as the second CE of Hong Kong in July 2005, he was generally welcomed by Hong Kong citizens. In February 2006, he obtained 67.4% public support. The levels of public support for principal officials also reached historic heights, with almost all of them attaining a rating above 50% (HKUPOP 2006).

In order to achieve his goals of strong governance and social harmony, Tsang restructured the ExCo in November 2005 by appointing eight new non-official members, including Anthony Cheung, an academic who was once active in both the Meeting Point, one of the earliest political groups formed in Hong Kong during the political transition, and the DP, and

was formerly the chairman of SynergyNet, a policy think tank. Tsang also reintroduced the position of convener, hoping that this arrangement would facilitate better communication within the council. The membership of the Commission on Strategic Development, tasked with discussing political reforms, was substantially expanded to 158. Nevertheless, in 2010, Leung Chun-ying, convenor of non-official members of the ExCo, openly criticized the government for its failure to act earlier on the housing problem and its lack of policy vision. Leung's move was commonly interpreted as a strategy to attract public support in the event that he ran for the 2012 CE elections. In addition, Tsang further developed the political appointment system in 2008, by which undersecretaries and political assistants were appointed to assist the work of bureau secretaries. However, the new appointees have been widely criticized for their lack of political experience and there were complaints that their remuneration packages were not commensurate with their qualifications. Recent polls further showed that only 5% of respondents could correctly name the undersecretaries whom they were most familiar with (HKUPOP 2010).

With regard to the election method of the CE in 2012, the government's constitutional reform proposal passed in the LegCo in June 2010 resolves that the number of the EC members in the 2012 CE Election shall increase to 1,200. This implies that the election will continue to be a small-circle election.

Legislature

The HKSAR's first LegCo lasted from 1998 to 2000, and comprised 60 seats, including 20 directly elected seats returned by geographical constituencies (GCs), 30 FC seats, and 10 seats returned by members of the 400-member Selection Committee, which also elected the first CE. The second LegCo had a term of four years running from 2000 to 2004. In this term, the number of GC seats increased from 20 to 24, while the number of seats returned by members of the 800-member EC decreased from 10 to 6. The number of FC seats remained unchanged. The third LegCo functioned from 2004 to 2008, whereas the current LegCo served from 2008 to 2012. In both the third and the current LegCo, out of the 60 seats, 30 were returned by GCs, and 30 by FCs. Based on the government's constitutional reform package, the number of seats of the 2012–16 LegCo will increase to 70 with half of them to be elected by GC elections and the other half by FC elections.

The post-1997 LegCo in Hong Kong has been hindered in its effectiveness notably by two restrictions stipulated in the Basic Law imposing restrictions on private members' bills, and creating separate voting mechanisms. Since 1997, while legislators can present private members' bills, they are

forbidden to propose bills that involve public expenditure, issues of political structure, or operation of government. Also, bills related to government policies need the written consent of the CE (Article 74, Basic Law). Researches pointed out that between 1991 and 1997, the private members' bill was a powerful tool for legislators to push for substantial policy change. However, the number of private members' bills significantly decreased after the political handover (Sing 2003, pp. 30–32; Ma 2007a, pp. 117–18).

Regarding the separate voting mechanism, legislators can propose bills, motions, or move amendments to government bills. However, such issues are not decided by a simple majority of the votes of the members present. Since 1997, members are divided into two blocks: GC and FC members. Before a motion or an amendment to a government bill can be passed, it must be supported by a simple majority of the votes of both blocks' present members (Annex II, Basic Law). The effect is to further diminish the power of directly elected members, as the votes of 16 FC members are currently sufficient to block any amendment. FC legislators tend to represent narrow interests, and are in general conservative in their political outlook. When the executive raises motions, bills, or amendments to bills, legislators do not need to vote according to this procedure. They can be passed by a simple majority of all members who are present. In 1998–2004, the LegCo had 287 motion debates. Among the 99 motions vetoed, 50 of them had received simple majority support but were vetoed because of the separate voting rule (Ma 2007a, p. 119). In 2004–08, the LegCo had 209 motion debates, and 38 were vetoed because of the same reason whereas in 2008–10, likewise, 6 motions were vetoed out of 117 (SynergyNet 2010, p. 13).

The constraints placed on the legislature have adversely affected not only its effectiveness, but also cooperation among legislators and political camps, as well as the legislative-executive relationship. In essence, the past few years have seen the LegCo divided into the pro-democracy, pro-Beijing or pro-establishment, and non-affiliated camps, which compete for public publicity and engage in confrontations and mutual name-calling—all of which have decreased the popularity of the legislature in the public's eyes. Poll results in September 2008 showed that only 26% of respondents felt very or quite positive about the performance of the members of the third LegCo (HKUPOP 2008). Fairly speaking, although the LegCo has been rife with confrontations during the last few years, it has also served as a good venue for expressing distinct political views, thus maintaining a good tradition of political pluralism in Hong Kong.

The legislative-executive relationship has been tense in the post-1997 period. Although the elected legislators have a mandate and the executive does not, the elected legislators are in a permanent minority position under the design of the Basic Law. The concerns for the LegCo remain

how to improve its effectiveness and the legislative-executive relationship. However, the possibility of improvement appears remote given the existing imbalances in the structure of power within the LegCo.

Local government

At the local government level, the period since 1997 has seen the abolition of two municipal councils (the Urban and Regional Councils) by the government amidst public controversies at the end of 1999 on the grounds that the structures were unnecessary. Before their abolition, the councils were valuable venues for public participation, and served as the second tier of government administration between the first tier (the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary) and the third tier (the District Boards, renamed the District Councils in 1999). The District Boards were established in 1982. In Patten's time, all official and appointed seats in the District Boards were abolished, but that was reversed after 1997. The term for the first post-handover District Councils lasted from 2000 to 2003, the second one lasted from 2004 to 2007, and the third one from 2008 to 2011. The present District Councils are composed of 68 appointed members, 27 ex-officio members, and 412 elected members.

The District Councils have remained an advisory mechanism in the government. However, with the passage of the government's constitutional reform package in June 2010, five new FC LegCo members will be added to the District Council FCs, and be elected by registered voters of the general electorate who do not otherwise have an FC vote. This means that together with the existing one District Council FC seat, there will be six such seats in the 2012–16 LegCo. In addition, in the election of the CE in 2012, more seats will be allocated to the directly elected district councillors to sit on the EC. With all these changes, the political importance of the District Councils will certainly be boosted.

In reviewing the overall development of government institutions since 1997, the core question is whether or not Hong Kong's government institutions have adapted and developed in a way that helps governance. It appears that, in spite of the experience gained over the past years, there is still plenty of room for improvement. This question will be addressed more fully in the chapters that follow.

Governing ideologies and public policy ethics

After 1997, Hong Kong witnessed a series of transformation of the HKSAR government's governing ideologies and public policy ethics. The following sections give a general outline of developments in these areas.

Executive-led principle

Since 1997, the executive-led principle has remained dominant in Hong Kong's governance. However, the meaning of an executive-led government appears to be evolving. On the one hand, it could mean a government led by the CE and ExCo, with an apolitical civil service responsible for policy implementation. This is a more presidential style of executive government. On the other hand, it could mean a government led by the CE and civil servants, where members of the ExCo are only advisers. This is an executive government dominated by bureaucrats (Cheung 2002).

While the executive-led principle assumed leadership by the governor and civil servants during colonial times, during former CE Tung's time, it was more often taken to mean governance by the CE and the ExCo. For instance, after the introduction of the ASPO, the chief secretary had little opportunity to make final policy decisions, in contrast to the power of that position during colonial times (Cheung 2002, p. 63; Loh 2002, pp. 16–17; So & Chan 2002, p. 377). Nevertheless, CE Tsang has gradually altered this situation by reinstating the importance of the political appointees and senior civil servants in the policy process.

Despite the fact that many political actors are no longer willing to take what the executive offers, both Chinese officials and the HKSAR government have reiterated the importance of maintaining an executive-led government. While alteration of this principle of governance would have significant implications for the executive-legislative relationships and the political system of Hong Kong, with mounting public pressure for a more democratic government, a review of the principle is deemed necessary.

Rule of law and soft authoritarianism

It is widely believed that, on the whole, the rule of law has remained relatively intact in post-handover Hong Kong in the sense that the pre-1997 legal system has been preserved, more than 99% of the pre-existing laws are still in force, and lawyers and judges continue their professions in exactly the same manner as before (Chen 2002, p. 83). Nevertheless, some developments in the post-1997 period have caused public concerns about whether the HKSAR government has sufficient commitment to the rule of law.

The most commonly discussed example in this regard is perhaps the right of abode issue in 1999. In this incident, the Hong Kong government actively solicited the SCNPC's interpretation of the Basic Law provisions so as to overrule the HKSAR Court of Final Appeal's earlier decision to grant right of abode in Hong Kong to children in the Mainland whose parents have Hong Kong permanent resident status. Consequently, the

SCNPC interpreted the provision of the Basic Law, and the court had to follow the SCNPC's interpretation in its future rulings on cases that involve that specific provision. The incident shows that the government had little respect for the court's judgement, and had failed to assert the jurisdiction and autonomy of the Hong Kong courts.

Along with the above are the HKSAR government's increasing instances of soft authoritarian practices (So & Chan 2002, pp. 380–81; So 2002, pp. 413–17). For instance, after the political handover, the Provisional LegCo had revived certain repressive and unpopular provisions of the Public Order Ordinance and the Societies Ordinance that had been repealed by the colonial regime before 1997. The laws then stipulate that demonstrations with more than 30 participants must seek a no-objection notice from the police; associations should register for governmental approval; and the concept of national security is introduced as a criterion for the police to decide whether or not a demonstration or an association should be approved.

Moreover, it has become common for the police to deploy a disproportionately large amount of force and videotape the demonstrators during demonstrations, use pepper spray on protestors, and make public threats that the government reserves the right to prosecute law-breaking protestors in the future. Lately, the police has also been under heavy criticism for arresting reporters and human rights observers, and violating freedom of the press. On the other hand, in recent years, some activists were concerned about letting their political demands known to the CPG, which has made the LO, the CPG's representative agency in Hong Kong, a common final destination of many protests. The police has been very sensitive to this development. For instance, the police prosecuted six activists who had protested against the arrest of Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo by the CPG outside the LO in December 2009.

In addition, episodes such as the Citizens' Radio issue in 2007 have caused increasing worries about the police's tendency towards selective prosecution. The Citizens' Radio was established by well-known democrats in Hong Kong including Tsang Kin-shing (nicknamed "the Bull"). Owing to the pending of its application for a license for broadcasting under the Telecommunications Ordinance (section 23), the broadcasts of Citizens' Radio was illegal. On 25 May 2007, guest speakers were invited to deliberate in a programme on the 1989 Beijing Tiananmen Incident. Eight of the guest speakers including several democrats were subsequently prosecuted by the police for participating in illegal broadcasting, but others such as Anthony Cheung and Choy So-yuk, formerly a legislator from the pro-establishment camp, were not.

Self-censorship, political correctness, and press freedom

Post-1997 Hong Kong saw a tendency on the part of the HKSAR government to become more "politically correct" in the eyes of the CPG. For instance, in the handling of Falun Gong followers in Hong Kong, one secretary for security labelled them as preaching heretic teachings, even though they had not committed any legal infringements or caused harm to other people in society. The passage of a CE Election Bill in 2001 that explicitly empowers the CPG to dismiss an elected CE "under any other circumstances" than those specified in the Basic Law is commonly seen as a unilateral surrender of Hong Kong's local autonomy. In 2011, prominent Chinese dissidents Wang Dan and Wuer Kaixi were denied entry to Hong Kong to attend the 29 January funeral of the democrat Szeto Wah, which is another example illustrating the highly cautious attitude of the HKSAR government in being politically correct or the CPG's involvement in the government's decision-making process.

Freedom of the press has sometimes seemed to be under threat too, as seen from the trends in the media and the attitudes of the government. Researches pointed out that there have been increasing trends of self-censorship in the media, and the growing affiliation of the Hong Kong media owners and the various authorities in China both economically and politically has dampened media autonomy (Lee & Lin 2006; Chan & Lee 2007; Ma 2007b). Regarding the role and principle of editorial independence for Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), a government-funded radio station that has produced many programmes critical of government policies, criticisms from pro-Beijing figures in Hong Kong certainly played a part in leading to the Review of Public Service Broadcasting in Hong Kong from 2006 to 2010. Since the RTHK has been commonly perceived as a barometer of Hong Kong's press freedom, the final decisions of the review that a Charter of RTHK would be made and the Board of Advisers of RTHK would be formed in 2010 have aroused public criticism and worries. In September 2011, the government announced its appointment of Roy Tang, deputy secretary for labour and welfare (welfare), an administrative officer who has no media experience, to be the director of broadcasting. The appointment attracted widespread criticism from the Hong Kong community. For example, the Civic Party called for the replacement of Tang and denounced the appointment as the government's blatant attempt to control the RTHK (http://rthk.hk/rthk/news/englishnews/news.htm?main&20110914&56&784122).

Nationalism and depoliticization

The HKSAR regime has been active in cultivating nationalism among the people of Hong Kong and promoting a "thicker" set of common memories designed to increase the public's sense of community by introducing nationalism as a correlate of ideal citizenship (Lam 2005). For example, subsequent to its establishment, the HKSAR government carried out a series of measures to strengthen Chinese elements in the existing school curriculum. School textbook publishers were provided with "guidelines" advising them to observe the "one China" policy. Since 1998, Putonghua, the national language of China, has been taught in all primary schools (Morris et al. 2000, p. 249). China tours for Hong Kong students and youngsters, and cultural exchanges between students from Hong Kong and the Mainland, have been highly encouraged by the HKSAR government and frequently organized by schools and youth organizations. In 2011, the Curriculum Development Council recommended introducing a compulsory subject of moral and national education starting from primary schools and then expanding to secondary schools.

In recent years, notably after the massive protests against the legislation of Article 23 of the Basic Law in 2003, the HKSAR government has taken steps with the CPG to further promote patriotism at a society level. For instance, Chinese medallists of the 2008 Olympic Games and Chinese astronauts were arranged to visit Hong Kong.

Ironically, in parallel to the attempts of renationalization, the government simultaneously embarked on depoliticization measures to contain political conflicts. The strategy was driven notably by Tung's fear of politics, and his belief that in Hong Kong, economic goals should precede political ones (Lau 2002; Lam 2005). Another example comes from chief secretary Henry Tang's remarks on the "post-80s" activists in 2011. In one occasion, he stressed the need for compromises, warned the youngsters to pay heed to responsibilities and rational ideas, and hinted at the danger of youth political activism in Hong Kong by citing the shooting of a US congresswoman in Arizona as an example in his speech.

Ethics of self-reliance and economic efficiency

In post-1997 governance in Hong Kong, an increasing emphasis has been placed on good citizens as productive, independent, and "proactive" in acquiring economic skills so as to be useful to Hong Kong's economic recovery. This emphasis on the concept of self-reliance explains why Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) recipients who are able-bodied people and could work are perceived as a problem, and welfare recipients have been stigmatized. The CSSA is a type of government

financial assistance providing a safety net for the unemployed and poor. Driven by the fear that such recipients will become dependent on the government, the Active Employment Assistance Programme under the Support for Self-Reliance Scheme has been implemented to help them to become self-reliant again, offering them job retraining and job-search assistance.

The above analysis indicates another imminent question for Hong Kong's governance today: will the development of governing ideologies and ethics bring about a more effective and just government? It is evident that the HKSAR government has undergone tremendous changes in these areas and is still adjusting to achieve the best fit to meet the demands of the people, the CPG, and the requirements of efficient and effective governance.

Civil society, political participation, and political parties

Despite all the problems that have confronted the HKSAR since 1997, its civil society remains vibrant. Several trends are evident in its development over the past few years. First, the political strategies adopted by the people to express their political views have become more action oriented and diverse. Demonstrations have become an extremely popular way to express opinion to the extent that Hong Kong has often been referred to as "a city of protest". According to the statistics of the police, there were over 5,600 protests in Hong Kong in 2010. Second, the participation of social and professional groups in politics has increased, including groups of accountants, property agents, legal professionals, and so on. Third, the younger generations, commonly called the "post-80s", have become very active political actors in particular since the protests against the demolition of the Star Ferry clock tower in 2006.

Fourth, forms of political participation have expanded. From ordinary means such as demonstrations, voting, and developing contacts with government officials, the period has also witnessed the growing popularity of discursive participation via some radio talk show programmes that served as a mouthpiece for the people. As the political space for these programmes has gradually diminished since the resignation of several popular talk show hosts in 2004, digital activism has grown as an alternative venue for the expression and articulation of political views. Facebook, Twitter, personal blogs, and citizen journalism have rapidly developed as alternative means of political participation.

Fifth, because of the competition between different political camps and political ideas in the post-1997 period, civil society has had a chance to reconsider its political values. There is a growing articulation and diversification of overall social and political goals in society, as witnessed by the

large proportion of people demanding a quicker pace of democratization of Hong Kong's political system. Another illustration is the call for a defence of Hong Kong's core values, such as freedom of speech and democracy, by a group of professionals and academics in 2004. During the past few years, activists have also been active in striving for better preservation of local cultural heritage and old communities as well as environmental conservation, and challenging the perceived widespread cronyism and the development-oriented governance in Hong Kong.

By contrast, the development of political parties in Hong Kong has not been as positive. The increase in the number of political parties and groups in the last few years has rendered the political society even more divided. In 2010, the resignation of the five legislators of the Civic Party and the League of Social Democrats (LSD) to demand for universal suffrage in 2012, which was not supported by other pro-democracy forces in the LegCo, created divisions in the democratic camp. The subsequent support of the DP for the government's constitutional reform package further generated mutual suspicions in the camp. An internal dissension in the DP itself due to party members' diverging views on the government's constitutional reform package led to the walk-out of the dissenters and the formation of the Neo Democrats in 2011. Furthermore, the factional conflicts in the LSD have caused the withdrawal of Raymond Wong and Albert Chan, founders and legislators of the party, in 2011, and the establishment of another new political party, People's Power. On the other hand, the Hong Kong Labour Party, organized by legislators including Cyd Ho and Lee Cheuk-yan, was formed in December 2011.

With regard to the pro-establishment camp, a split in the LP has given rise to the formation of another pro-business political group, the Economic Synergy, in 2009. Nevertheless, in 2011, it was announced that a new alliance of 12 business and professional-sector legislators, headed by Jeffrey Lam from the Economic Synergy, was established, which marks a restructuring of the power distribution in the LegCo. In addition, the New People's Party led by former secretary for security Regina Ip was also formed in 2011.

Poll results show that political groups and parties in Hong Kong are in general not very popular. In August 2011, the recognition ratings of various political groups and parties ranged from 71.2% (Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood) to 89.4% (DP), while their support ratings ranged from 32.6% (LSD) to 50.8% (Federation of Trade Unions) (HKUPOP 2011b). Overall, the differences of the political groups and parties in the recognition and support ratings were only marginal.

Although political parties have failed to meet the expectations of many, they themselves are not solely to blame. Scholars pointed out that the various legal and institutional constraints on political parties, and the antipathy of the governments of Beijing and Tung towards pro-democracy politi-

cal parties and party formation in Hong Kong generally, have contributed to their marginalization (Lau & Kuan 2002; Yep 2003).

Structure of this book

In the chapters that follow, we aim to provide a comprehensive and critical analysis of Hong Kong's government and politics since the 1997 handover. This volume consists of four main topic areas: political institutions, mediating institutions and political actors, policy environment, and the political environment. On each topic, this volume analyzes whether the model of "one country, two systems" and post-1997 governance have been successful, and the reasons for success or failure.

Part I, Political Institutions, contains five chapters. Chapter 2 examines the establishment and functions of the executive, its relations with the LegCo, and the challenges ahead. Chapter 3 discusses the LegCo's history, composition, powers and functions, constraints and effectiveness, as well as ways to strengthen its capacity. Chapter 4 reviews the hopes, doubts, and challenges faced by the judiciary in the post-1997 period, and analyzes whether the Hong Kong judiciary will be able to maintain its independence and other fundamental principles. Chapter 5 examines the distinctive features of the Hong Kong civil service and traces the development of civil service reform over the post-handover years, and offers an evaluation of its overall effectiveness and possible new directions of development. Chapter 6 examines the development, contribution, and significance of the District Councils, advisory bodies, and statutory bodies to governance and their limitations.

Part II, Mediating Institutions and Political Actors, contains five chapters. Chapter 7 traces the development of the democracy movement in Hong Kong since 2003. It further examines the problems encountered by the movement and its possible future under the influence of the CPG. Chapter 8 describes the development of political parties and the electoral system in Hong Kong, and analyzes the problems that have confronted their development. Chapter 9 studies the characteristics of civil society and important civic and political organizations in Hong Kong, and examines the challenges of enhancing the effectiveness of Hong Kong's civil society. Chapter 10 traces the development of the political identity, culture, and participation in Hong Kong before and after the political handover. Chapter 11 provides an analytical account of the concept of public opinion, and the media's role and performance in the process of public-opinion formation in Hong Kong. Further, it investigates the effects of the media, and the relationship between public opinion, media, and social formations.

Part III, Policy Environment, contains three chapters. Chapter 12 traces the development of economic policy in Hong Kong since 1997, and

explores the economic challenges confronting the government. Chapter 13 introduces the basics of the areas of social policy, and investigates into the pragmatic origin and main features of Hong Kong's social policy. Chapter 14 uses the urban political economy approach to examine the factors that have influenced urban policy development in Hong Kong, and cites important examples of urban policy as points of political contestation in the post-1997 period. It argues that institutional support for public interest articulation in urban policy has been inadequate.

Part IV, Political Environment, contains two chapters. Chapter 15 provides a brief overview of the changing political context in Hong Kong since 2003, examines the key aspects of Beijing's strategy toward Hong Kong, and provides several observations about the prospect of this relationship. Chapter 16 studies the changing international role and status of Hong Kong after 1997. Although Hong Kong remains a part of the international community, there have been observable degrees of "sinicization", which lead to the worries about the potential conflicts between the processes of internationalization and sinicization.

The concluding chapter presents a summary evaluation of Hong Kong governance since 1997, and provides a roadmap of possibilities for achieving a more effective, fair, and legitimate governance for Hong Kong in the future.

Box 1.1 One country, two systems

The principle of one country, two systems was proposed by the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in 1984 during the Sino-British negotiations over the future political arrangements of Hong Kong. It stipulates that Hong Kong can continue to practise capitalism with a high degree of autonomy for 50 years after 1997, and that its basic way of life shall remain intact.

Box 1.2 The Basic Law

The Basic Law is the constitutional document for the HKSAR. It was promulgated by China in 1990 and came into effect on 1 July 1997 when Hong Kong, formerly a British colony, was returned to China. The Basic Law consists of nine chapters with 160 articles, and three annexes. The enshrined principles include "one country, two systems", "a high degree of autonomy", and "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong". Also, it stipulates the systems practised in Hong Kong, such as the continuation of its capitalist system and way of life, and protects the rights and freedoms of its residents.

Questions

1. How would you describe the overall political context in Hong Kong after the political handover in 1997?
2. In what ways should governance in Hong Kong be further improved? What are the areas (e.g., government institutions, governing ideologies, the rule of law, local political culture, relations with the CPG) deserving particular attention?

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Useful websites

The Hong Kong SAR government
http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/
The Hong Kong Transition Project
http://www.hkbu.edu.hk/~hktp
Hong Kong University Public Opinion Poll
http://www.hkupop.hku.hk

Further reading

Chan, MK 2008, *China's Hong Kong Transformed: Retrospect and Prospects beyond the First Decade*, City University of Hong Kong Press, Hong Kong. The book is a good introduction to the changes and development of Hong Kong politics and society after the political handover.

Chan, MK & So, AY 2002, *Crisis and Transformation in China's Hong Kong*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, New York. The book contains a critical review of Hong Kong politics before and shortly after the political unification.

Lau, SK (ed) 2002, *The First Tung Chee-hwa Administration: The First Five Years of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region*, The Chinese University Press, Hong Kong. The book contains an analysis of various areas of governance up to 2001 in Hong Kong.

Miners, N 1998, *Government and Politics of Hong Kong*, 5th edn with post-handover update by James T.H. Tang, Oxford University Press, Hong Kong. The book provides a comprehensive review of government and politics in colonial Hong Kong.

Sing, M (ed) 2009, *Politics and Government in Hong Kong: Crisis under Chinese Sovereignty*, Routledge, London and New York. The book analyzes the development and problems of governance and civil society in Hong Kong notably after 2003.

Conclusion
Looking to the Future

The Editors

As Hong Kong enters the second decade after the return of its sovereignty to China, this book has attempted to provide an updated, comprehensive, and critical analysis of the development of its governing institutions, major policy areas, and relationship with China and the world, in the context of governance and the experiment of "one country, two systems". Along with this attempt, topics related to political parties and the electoral systems, the mass media and public opinion, political culture and identity, and civil society in Hong Kong were also examined with regard to how successful they have worked in promoting a more effective, accountable, and legitimate governance.

Political institutions

In the section of political institutions, five key political institutions in Hong Kong are examined critically: the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, the civil service, District Councils, advisory and statutory bodies. All these institutions are facing different changes and challenges as Hong Kong continued its journey of political development under the experiment of "one country, two systems". They are under pressure for changes in order to adapt to the changing political reality and contribute to good governance.

In comparing the design and actual impact of the executive, Li Pang-kwong has found the notion of executive-led government has gradually evolved into the executive-driven government. Under this system by default, the HKSAR government has to maintain a majority coalition in the LegCo by persuasion and performance. This highlights the importance of building up a structural and stable linkage between the executive and the legislature. Pushing this argument further and deeper, there is an urgent need for Hong Kong to construct a viable and workable governing system that is conducive to the effective governance of Hong Kong. Unfortunately, the lack of an institutional push for both a mature party system to develop and a pool of professionalized political leaders to emerge have crippled the

effective governing of Hong Kong. If Hong Kong is to strengthen its governing capacities, a properly designed mechanism and a series of related measures aiming to address these structural limitations should be in place.

The importance of the involvement of the legislature in ensuring effective governance is echoed by Percy Luen-tim Lui's chapter on the LegCo. To provide better governance in Hong Kong, instead of following the old path of limiting the role and power of the LegCo which has been proved as not working from the experience of the last decade, Lui suggests three ways to strengthen the capacity of the future LegCo, including: (i) amending Article 74 of the Basic Law to allow legislators greater latitude to introduce private member's bill; (ii) reforming the committee and panel systems to assist the proper functioning of the LegCo; and (iii) strengthening the staff support system to provide sufficient staff support to the members of the LegCo. If the LegCo can institute all these reforms, it is highly probable that it can strengthen its capacity to perform its functions and roles at a more satisfactory level.

The analysis of the judiciary, one of the institutions most central to the question of "one country, two system", is taken up by Benny Y.T. Tai. As he points out, one of the greatest challenges in the future is how the CFA will reframe its constitutional jurisdiction to review the compatibility of legislative acts of the NPC and the SCNPC with the Basic Law. After the handover, the struggle of the HKSAR judiciary focuses on how it should resolve the inherent conflict between the Hong Kong and Mainland legal systems. While the HKSAR judiciary is still able to protect the principle of rule of law and human rights of the Hong Kong people, this is mainly possible when the matters concerned do not involve the interests of the central authorities. Judicial autonomy in Hong Kong in the long run depends on the development of constitutionalism in the Mainland China.

In the civil service chapter, Wilson Wong considers the civil service as one of the key governing institutions in Hong Kong but its power and influence are frequently challenged by the post-1997 reforms. When Hong Kong was a British colony, the political system was a bureaucrat-dominated system. One advantage of this is the construction of the "conscience" of Hong Kong—the civil service system is designed to ensure that civil servants can make the best policies based on their own expertise and judgment, without being threatened or biased by internal and external pressures. However, in the reforms after the handover, including the Accountability System for Principal Officials (ASPO), public sector reform, and civil service reform, the "conscience" has been weakened and threatened. One of the major implications of those reforms is the shift of power from the career bureaucrats to the politicians who are not popularly elected but often have a pro-business background, especially linked to the land-based elites. While it is

still too early to judge if the reforms are able to lead to more efficiency, its negative political consequences are much clearer.

Jermain T.M. Lam studies the HKSAR's local government system and its complex web of local, advisory, and statutory bodies. One major observation he has made is the transformation of the role of those bodies, from being mainly advisory in nature into political entities with increasing political influence. For example, he argues that the passage of the government's constitutional reform package in June 2010 has transformed a District Council from a simple advisory body to a dynamic arena for power struggle. Lam further notes that the context within which the District Councils, advisory and statutory bodies operate has changed from consultative politics to democratic and electoral politics. If these bodies cannot adapt to the changes in the external political environment; they would not be able to make contribution to governance.

Mediating institutions and political actors

With the limitations of the institutional politics in Hong Kong, mediating institutions have played some important functions by default to compensate for the structural deficiencies of the governing institutions. However, their healthy development and proper functioning are often constrained in Hong Kong. Furthermore, given the changes in the political landscape, it is doubtful how long political stability and effective governance can be maintained without real and significant reforms of the political system.

In analyzing the democratic reforms in Hong Kong in Chapter 7, Sing Ming and Tang Yuen-sum pointed out the greater intervention of the CPG in Hong Kong's democratization after the July 1 rally of 2003, such as the SCNPC's 2004 decision to rule out universal suffrage for electing the CE and the legislature in 2007 and 2008 respectively. Adopting a delaying strategy for political reform in Hong Kong, the CPG has contributed to the rise of new political groups who favour more confrontational tactics to pressurize Beijing to implement genuine universal suffrage in Hong Kong. Should the structural contradictions remain unresolved, there is still fertile ground for fanning greater public support and intensified confrontational strategies in Hong Kong despite the split in the democracy camp.

In his chapter on political parties, Ma Ngok argues that despite their long history, political parties are weak and divided, and their development is hindered by a number of factors, including the CPG's anti-politics stance. In line with this, other legal and institutional constraints have also deterred, instead of attracted, talents to join political parties. For example, the CE Ordinance has stipulated the non-partisan character of the CE. Most of the executive positions are not open for electoral competition. Parties in

Hong Kong are also fraught with their own internal problems of succession, resources, and development, with many citizens disappointed with the performance of the parties. The legislature is restricted in its power, which lessens people's incentives of joining political parties. This creates a paradox for HKSAR governance: the political grouping that enjoys majority public opinion support is rendered a permanent minority, which will continue to create pressures for electoral and political reform for years to come.

Elaine Y.M. Chan agrees that Hong Kong has a sizable and vibrant civil society. However, a good amount of its organizations are weak in structure and have inadequate resources. The Hong Kong society is by no means submissive to the government. Signature campaigns, rallies, and demonstrations have become common expressions of public discontent. Moreover, in the last few years, the Web and electronic devices have become effective means of mobilization. Information dissemination, discussion, and debate that took place on the Web resolved the time and space limitation of face-to-face meeting. The Web has certainly revolutionized public participation and facilitated movement mobilization. However, similar to the situation of other mediating institutions in Hong Kong, Hong Kong's civil society also faces different environmental and structural constraints such as its lack of resources and depth of participation, and its relatively marginalized status in the political system. All these have limited its effect on facilitating the building of a more equal, just, and harmonious society.

In Lam Wai-man's chapter, she points out since the political handover, political activism has surged and political participation has also been on the rise. Parallel with government attempts to cultivate patriotism and social harmony, people have also been well on the way of defending their core values and aspired way of life. The massive protest against Article 23 in 2003 is a good example. Despite people's lingering feelings of political powerlessness, they have continued to seek to influence the government through various means including innovative non-institutional means, such as the use of confrontational tactics, digital activism, citizen journalism, and judicial review actions. Alongside these, increasing political involvement is found among the younger generations, the so-called "post-80s" and "post-90s". All these developments have added new elements of activism and idealism to local political culture and participation.

Joseph M. Chan and Francis L.F. Lee provide an analytical account of the definitions of public opinion, the roles of the mass media, and how they have influenced the government and politics of Hong Kong. As argued, public opinion in Hong Kong is discursive and political in nature. In the absence of democracy, the media has served a surrogate democracy function as a forum for the discursive struggle to mediate public discourses and reflect the public opinion. Because of the high levels of social pluralism

in Hong Kong and the operation of its media market, the media is able to retain relative autonomy. However, some developments are worth attention. For example, the media may censor itself in face of political pressure, ownership influence and advertisers' influence. Further, the rich resources and the unmatched authority that the government has at its disposal have given it an edge in setting the agenda and defining social reality for the media and the public.

Policy environment

The chapters on policy environment focus on "politics in action". It serves the purpose of illustrating how political forces in Hong Kong compete to determine "who gets what, when and how" in each policy area. Although the three chapters are written independently by different authors, similar conclusions are found. They conclude that public policy should be approached as conscious and rational choices by policymakers with political considerations. Furthermore, many policies in Hong Kong are dominated by those who enjoy more power and representation in the system.

A central theme in Wilson Wong and Raymond Yuen's chapter is that economic policy is shaped by more than economic forces. The image of a "market economy" constructed by the HKSAR government is found more like a myth than the reality as political considerations often override economic logic in shaping economic policy. The making of economic policy in Hong Kong is often biased towards the benefit of the more privileged groups. The best example of how power distribution shapes resource allocation is its fiscal system under which the politically powerful are often taxed less but benefit more. The political system dominated by the rich and powerful also deprives the government of sufficient state capacity and state autonomy for carrying out effective industrial policies to transform and restructure the economy.

Wong Hung described the social policy in the post-1997 era as no more than "old wine in new bottles". Social policy of the HKSAR government still has the same economic pragmatism origin as its colonial past. Moreover, the Hong Kong government has to follow the decisions of the British colonial government before 1997 and the HKSAR government has to follow the guideline of the CPG after 1997. The practical and piecemeal responses produced are inadequate for addressing the fundamental needs and problems, leading to sharp deteriorations of the social conditions in Hong Kong, which include deepening of poverty, widening wealth gap, rise of class conflicts, and anti-rich sentiment. More alarmingly, the HKSAR government seems to lose its will to govern and tends to wait for the CPG to take political leadership in handling the rising class conflicts.

In his chapter on urban policy, James Lee points out urban policy should not be approached simply as finding technical means for technical problems in urban area. Its general domain has long expanded from physical concerns to social and community concerns in which politics has a key role to play as competitions of interests and conflicts of values are involved and inevitable. In this process, ideally, government should fulfill the important function of interest intermediation to maintain fairness and justice. Unfortunately, opposite to what the theory suggests, Lee finds that the "growth machine thesis" under the urban political economy approach provides the most useful and powerful framework in understanding the urban policy in the HKSAR. He has seen a network of powerful interest groups, all linked up to the property market, exert a dominant influence on the urban policies in Hong Kong for their own interest maximization.

Political environment

As a global city and part of China, the politics of Hong Kong is undoubtedly shaped by its external environment apart from domestic forces. We have devoted the last two chapters of this book to the political environment of Hong Kong, including its relations with the Mainland and the wider world.

In his chapter on relations between Hong Kong and the Mainland, Peter T.Y. Cheung argues that the CPG has recast its strategy toward Hong Kong and exerted increasing influence in its governance since 2003. This poses both opportunities and challenges for Hong Kong. Politically, discontents erupted in July 2003 have prompted the CPG to adopt a much more preemptive and interventionist strategy towards the HKSAR. Economically, the HKSAR is increasingly relying on the economic opportunities offered by the Mainland. However, the HKSAR government still lacks a comprehensive, multi-faceted, and coordinated strategy to engage the social and political actors at different levels of the Chinese political system. Nor is there a consensus in the Hong Kong community about how to utilize the opportunities and meet the challenges arising from the growing social and economic integration between the two areas. Further, there may well be a huge gap between how the elites and the other social sectors in Hong Kong view the growing connections with the Mainland. In short, whether Hong Kong can maintain its special status under "one country, two systems" and a high degree of autonomy in the future remains a key challenge for both the Hong Kong people and the CPG.

Ting Wai and Ellen Lai analyze the role and place of the SAR in the wider world. Closer economic integration with the Mainland was an inevitable development after Hong Kong became part of China, but this has also posed a problem for Hong Kong's external relations and international status. A major challenge that the HKSAR has to face is the "provincialization" of

the HKSAR as all major coastal cities of China seek to become more international. While Hong Kong's economy is more and more integrated with China, the dilemma is that Hong Kong has to prove to the outside world that it is very different from the Mainland, due to its international character and separate identity, but it is not politically correct to explicitly say so. Hong Kong, as an international city, always wants to benefit from globalization and internationalization. It is definitely in the interests of Hong Kong if the economic and political liberalization of China continues, and the further integration of China into the international community is the best guarantee for the future of the HKSAR.

Discussion

Is it possible to achieve a more effective, fair, and legitimate governance in Hong Kong? This question does not have a straightforward answer. As a matter of fact, multiple factors and their interplay have affected the governance in Hong Kong over the past years since the handover. The path trodden has not been smooth, and Hong Kong's adjustment to its new identity is nothing simple. The possible reasons contributing to such a bumpy road of adjustment are many, as eloquently put forward in various chapters of the book. However, drawing from the lessons and analysis from the chapters in the book, several common and major factors can be identified.

First, the CPG's attitudes towards politics play a significant part in deciding the political development of post-handover Hong Kong. Renowned for its anti-politics stance, the CPG, together with the HKSAR government, have hoped to confine the scope and speed of politicization in Hong Kong. Such a depoliticized stance is embodied in the Basic Law, and subsequently elaborated in the Chief Executive Ordinance and in certain government policies. The institutional and political framework thus set for Hong Kong includes the requirements of the CE to be non-partisan, an executive-led government, a limited legislature in its composition and various other constraints, and the abolition of the Urban Council and Regional Council. Also, the institutional and political makeup has directly discouraged political parties' development in Hong Kong, and the anti-politics stance of the governments has reinforced the tendency of self-censorship of the media.

Second, the "economy first" ideology of both the CPG and the HKSAR government has constituted the major beliefs related to social policy, and the CPG's dealings with Hong Kong. The ideology is supported by a deep-seated view of Hong Kong as an economic city and its people as economic animals, and its effects are notable. For example, with regard to social policy, the ideology has facilitated the growth of an anti-welfarist tradition and other key economic beliefs discouraging to welfare development.

The fact that Hong Kong is valued predominantly for its economic utility explains the Mainland's emphasis on economic measures in trying to win the hearts and minds of the local population, and in nurturing a sense of economic dependence on China among them. Further, the emphasis on economy has indirectly shaped Hong Kong into a place deprived of alternative visions of a better society apart from economic advancement.

Third, the "business first" attitude of the HKSAR government and the monopolistic position of business in politics have dampened the government's ability to upgrade and transform the economy and to have fairer distribution in resources. Scholars point out that the government's biased attitude and the growth of crony capitalism in Hong Kong have created unequal opportunities in economic competition, and made the city less attractive for doing business. Further, this "business first" attitude reflects the government's insensitivity to public sentiments, and has worsened the relationship between the government and the people.

Fourth, the idea of "one country, two systems" is a contradiction in itself, and consequently requires an immense amount of creativity and collaborative effort to make it work. The years since the political handover have witnessed attempts from both the Mainland and Hong Kong to bridge the gulf between them. With regard to the judiciary, the SCNPC's interpretations of the Basic Law, and the CFA's responses to the SCNPC's interpretations in the right of abode issue, are examples of mutual accommodation to resolve the inherent conflict between the two different legal systems. Furthermore, the contrast between Hong Kong and China is vividly exposed in several other incidents, such as the electoral arrangements for the CE and LegCo beyond 2007–08 and the political reform for the year of 2012, in which Beijing became heavily involved in Hong Kong's affairs. While the inherent discrepancy between China and the Hong Kong public on issues such as the rule of law and democratization seems inevitable, the governments' rejection of politics and their one-sided view of Hong Kong as an economic city have certainly deepened the crises.

In conclusion, it appears that reconstructing the governing system into one that is conducive to effective governance in Hong Kong is imminent. The current executive-led government has placed the CE in a web of power relationships in which he has to strike risky but not always effectual trials of balance. Consequently, the relationship between the executive and the legislature is tense, government policies are accused of being biased towards the business circles, and the system is non-congenial to the development of political parties and not viable to nurturing a vibrant civil society in Hong Kong. As Hong Kong enters the second decade since its handover, the failure of the current system has already seen the worsening of many social problems, the rise of non-institutional and confrontational politics, and the repeated emergence of legitimacy crises. In addition to institutional

reforms and changes, there is also a challenge of attitudes, as scholars have rightly put. For governance to be effective in a cosmopolitan Hong Kong, it has to come to terms with new visions of a better society, new ideas, and new challenges. After all, cosmopolitanism encompasses not only economic success but also excellence in other areas of governance such as a clean and efficient public administration, a democratic and pluralist political environment, a tolerant culture, and an equitable social environment. To achieve these, Hong Kong will have to rethink and come to grips with its identity and priorities.

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