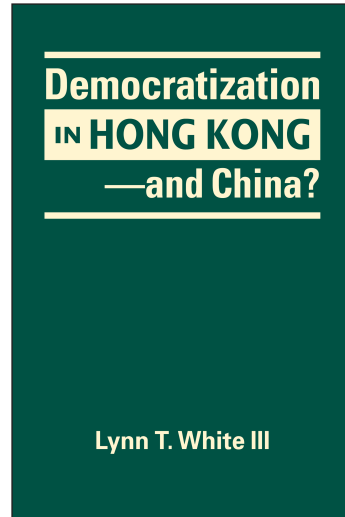


EXCERPTED FROM

Democratization
in Hong Kong—
and China?

Lynn T. White III

Copyright © 2016
ISBN: 978-1-62637-535-2 hc



LYNNE RIENNER PUBLISHERS

1800 30th Street, Suite 314
Boulder, CO 80301 USA
telephone 303.444.6684
fax 303.444.0824

This excerpt was downloaded from the
Lynne Rienner Publishers website
www.rienner.com

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
1 Can Comparative Democratization Theory Help Explain Hong Kong's Politics?	1
2 Exploring Fears of Asset Redistribution	15
3 Exploring British and Chinese Legacies	53
4 Exploring the Impact of Modern Wealth	111
5 Exploring Elite Decisions	129
6 Exploring Social Protests	165
7 Exploring International Norms	189
8 Could Further Democratization in Hong Kong Affect China?	203
<i>List of Acronyms</i>	247
<i>Bibliography</i>	249
<i>Index</i>	263
<i>About the Book</i>	275

1

Can Comparative Democratization Theory Help Explain Hong Kong's Politics?

How does a “democratic” system work amid inequality of resources?
—Robert A. Dahl¹

Hong Kong is not an independent polity. Its people are unlikely to have much more popular sovereignty soon, but they will continue to push for more. Eventually, these pressures will affect both the local and national elites, albeit in ways that are not surely unidirectional for democratization. Beijing insists that Hong Kong is a capitalist “system.” China’s Communist Party considers this city separate from the purportedly socialist mainland establishment in economic type—and thus in terms of the “class” that should rule there. Chinese national leaders also stress that any constitutional change in Hong Kong requires consent from the sovereign government, which is run by their centralized Leninist party. Does this mean that usual theories of democratization, developed on the basis of experiences in other places, are irrelevant to the political evolution of Hong Kong?

The book in your hands answers that question empirically. Each of the central six chapters concerns a factor that researchers of comparative democratization have found to be important elsewhere and relates it to local evidence from Hong Kong, with the aim of seeing when, whether, and how it is likely to influence the local regime type. Then a final chapter concerns possible pressures for mass electoral democracy that might later move northward from Hong Kong into the China mainland, a much larger place that is still quite different from Hong Kong but is in the same nation.

There is considerable consensus among academic students of politics about the factors that have led toward or away from democratization in many countries. The best relative weighting of these potentially causal variables is not agreed by all social scientists, who also differ on the best ways to connect them logically with each other. They affect changes in the degree to which “the people” control government. Timings of political changes that may conduce

for or against greater democracy are particularly difficult to predict. Factors that are crucial over the short term may lose effectiveness over long periods. Those that will determine eventual regime types may be weak in the immediate future. Influences that affect elite decisions to increase or decrease popular voice in policy can be loosely summarized in phrases such as “fears of more equal asset distribution,” “legacy practices,” “modern diversity and prosperity,” “pacts,” “social protests,” and “international norms.” Each chapter of the book starts by looking at comparative theories relevant to such factors (e.g., of Boix, Huntington, Lipset, Pareto, Tarrow, or the United Nations). A list of the issues raised by each chapter can be abbreviated telegraphically by a short phrase in bold type below. The question in each case concerns the effect of that factor on Hong Kong’s movement toward or away from popular sovereignty.

Inequality. Hong Kong has the least equal *distribution of wealth* among all sizeable political economies in the world. The issue of potential wealth redistribution is salient in Hong Kong because economic assets in this polity, more than any other, are unequal between very rich people (normally called “tycoons”) and others. Does tycoons’ fear of asset redistribution crucially prevent unfettered universal suffrage to choose rulers, since rich elites do not want poor people to vote for higher taxes? A comparativist named Carles Boix has mooted this issue comparatively (not in Hong Kong), trying to create a unified non-eclectic theory of democratization. The book in your hands is not quite that ambitious theoretically. China’s communist leaders give the very richest Hong Kong capitalists effective veto power over the city’s local government, ensuring a low-tax regime. This guarantees that surprisingly few Hong Kong people have much power in local affairs, despite elections. Protests by 2014–2015 show public discontent with official unwillingness to act in fields such as price regulation, housing maintenance, and assurance of traditional freedoms. This threatens the social stability that Beijing wants in its largest far-south port—but China’s need for the Hong Kong tycoons’ capital and trade networks is decreasing. Many in Hong Kong believe that if the local government permitted a greater allocation of wealth to purposes that affect poor and middle-income people, the city’s politics would be less restive. Most elites’ dislike of income redistribution still remains an important short-term predictor against local democratization, although this factor may well not be determinative in the long run.

Legacies. How do *British and Chinese habits of political practice* create—or instead delay—greater public sovereignty in Hong Kong? This question about “path dependencies” is inspired by the institutionalist works of political scientists such as Samuel Huntington, and by historians of political development especially in former British colonies. Hong Kong’s British and Chinese dual political legacies have both persisted. A few past colonial governors had a

surprising degree of independence from London and from China's capitals, while Hong Kong's local people maintained strong traditions of free speech. Tensions between traditions of political hierarchy in China, on one hand, and the parties and debates that have emerged in Legislative Council elections, on the other, provide contending models of government. Hong Kong's post-handover voting is held under an electoral law that disadvantages majoritarian parties and efforts to reform social or constitutional policies. But competitive campaigns have created a local political culture in Hong Kong that is unique among the places under Beijing's control. The British and Chinese legacies of practice, and the strains between them, are more important in making accurate predictions about medium-term changes of regime type than about either immediate or long-term reforms. Logical links between this historical-institutionalist factor of development and the other analytic factors affecting regime type are highlighted in the book's second chapter, and they naturally affect all the chapters.

Modernity. Is Hong Kong's high level of *prosperity and diversity*, with an average gross national product per person that exceeds that of either the United States or Britain, conducive to make Hong Kong's political economy democratize, regardless of other factors countervailing that tendency? Seymour Martin Lipset and many others (Huntington, Przeworski, Boix and Stokes, and recently Teorell) have initiated, debated, and extensively refined efforts to explain why all states with high per capita incomes and populations over 10 million are unapologetic liberal democracies.² Hong Kong is not sovereign, but with 7 million people it is not tiny. It ranks highly on any index of modernization. Beijing's sovereignty makes the city an outlier as a rich modern non-democracy, but exploration of Hong Kong's unusual situation throws light on socioeconomic pressures that have made most populous rich polities liberal. This 'modernity' factor may be almost useless in assessing short-term propensities to democratize, but it affects medium-term calculations of elites' net costs, and it may well determine the long-run regime type of this city.

Leadership. What *elite decisions* in Beijing and Hong Kong are likely to veto or initiate democratization? Dankwart Rustow and others, especially Latin Americanists who study elite "pacts," have convincingly shown that socioeconomic and cultural factors, such as are mentioned above, are insufficient either to start or reverse democratizations. Specific decisions by specifiable leaders are crucial in the establishment of any regime type. The costs and benefits to elites of such selections are affected by objective socioeconomic factors and by their own ideal norms. But a change requires a choice. When committing themselves to elections they might lose, incumbent chiefs make a jump into political uncertainty. Why would they ever do this—as in many places they have actually done? Elite decisions to extend popular sovereignty are normally required before democratization occurs, when and if it happens. Habits of

4 Democratization in Hong Kong—and China?

election, even in dubiously democratic institutions (such as Hong Kong's mass balloting for half the members of the Legislative Council), can establish lively politics and parties—albeit with minimal results for governance. Elections may also accustom elites to a realization that some loss of power does not always mean a total end of influence. This factor could shape future decisions on Hong Kong's regime, even though many leaders there or in Beijing explicitly rue the syndrome of democratization. Any short-term prediction of what is likely to happen in this respect, for either Hong Kong or China, depends on choices by elites that in these cases in effect remain anti-democratic despite some rhetoric to the contrary. Socioeconomic factors are more important for medium- and long-run changes of regime type, because even proud elites that can hold together in the way conservative social theorists such as Pareto prescribe acquire costs and benefits from socioeconomic changes. But at each point in time, leadership is crucial.

Movements. How do *protests* such as Hong Kong's "Occupy Central" in 2014 affect democratization or resistance to it? Workers' or students' movements have been important in the democratizations of many places, as analysts such as Tarrow, Piven and Cloward, Rueschmeyer with his coauthors, and many historians have argued. Although worker/capital, left/right politics has not yet strongly developed in ideologically capitalist and anti-leftist Hong Kong, protest movements by students are salient. Chinese political traditions give a special role to intellectuals, even young ones. Hong Kong educational reforms that preceded the 2014–2015 protests made liberal studies a required subject in senior secondary school and made liberal arts courses a requirement in all university programs.³ The effectiveness of movement politics in this modern and "economic" city is somewhat moot due to the allergy of China's very ex-revolutionary (in fact conservative, not "leftist") leaders to quick change in Hong Kong's system of rule. Still, the protesters vow, "We will be back." That is likely in part because they can mobilize peers with social media, and because their articulate young leaders have extensive experience organizing such campaigns.⁴ Hong Kong was populated by refugees from revolutionary protest movements in China. Most Hong Kong families are sharply anti-communist, and youths there have been educated in critical thinking. The constitutional Basic Law legitimates a sure recurrence, in regular five-year intervals for the next three decades, of the same issues that motivated the protests in 2014, until these ongoing disputes are settled. Will the protests remain effective for their purposes over time? They sway, albeit in diverse ways, elites' views of what should happen in Hong Kong. They may prove either slightly influential or perhaps counter-effective for their short-term aims, but they combine with Hong Kong's free-speech legacy and its socioeconomic diversity to create a repertoire of action that gives people memories of claims about democratization.

Globalism. Do *international norms* of modern legitimacy matter in Hong Kong's situation? China's very official refusal to adopt "Western-style" politics ignores whether Hong Kong people think there is anything desirable about the liberal-democratic state form. Some of them do, and others depict this idea as unpatriotic or incompatible with "Asian values." Important non-Western places have democracies that are as credible (or not) as those in the West. Taiwan and South Korea are regional examples. Chinese people and elites, both in Hong Kong and the mainland, often talk about rights as well as duties. Modern China is republican. Its top leaders sometimes act like emperors, but they say that era has passed. There is also a national tradition of allowing policy experimentation in parts of China, trying ideas in test areas before deciding whether to adopt them more broadly. China's official adherence to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is hesitant, though legally less so in Hong Kong than on the mainland. Many Chinese elites admit an interest in international norms and hope to make national contributions to them. Hong Kong's adherence to global norms might, in the long term, affect the city mainly through intermediate effects on the sovereign power, which is China.

And China? The last chapter, after these six concerning factors that affect Hong Kong, asks about possible later effects in mainland China. Hong Kong is likely to democratize further in an electoral sense, but does comparative politics suggest any relevant conditions under which China might do so? Or instead, could mass elections on the mainland legitimize a patriotic illiberal demagogue, as could not happen in Hong Kong but as has happened in some but not all early democratizations in other countries? This has occurred especially when voters saw a need to reverse past humiliations, and when popular resentment of external powers or domestic oppressors was evident. Might courts enforcing "rule of law" on the mainland become strong enough to obviate this possibility, which could quickly reverse any liberal drift in China, including Hong Kong? Comparative legal research suggests they could not. Judges seldom overturn elections, even corrupt ones. In places as different as Germany, the Philippines, Peru, and Thailand, past competitive elections gave "democratic" legitimacy to diverse strongmen who later turned out to be violent illiberals. If law courts are not adequately insulated from politics to prevent that kind of evolution, can some larger socioeconomic process, such as legitimate conflict between labor and capital, make democracy safe for pluralism? Are there links between evolution in China's most modern city and political development in the huge but less modern mainland?

A chapter of this book is devoted to each question asked in the seven preceding paragraphs. I am well aware that some readers will initially think it a fool's errand to explore Hong Kong's democratization in terms of theories that have been induced by comparative political scientists from the experiences of

sovereign countries. Hong Kong is not independent, even though Beijing still claims (with decreasing evidence) that it is a distinct “system” inside China. Many empirical findings about Hong Kong’s political development can be understood in terms of factors that scholars of comparative politics have shown to be important in assessing democratic or authoritarian trends in other parts of the world. Each polity’s situation is unique in specifiable ways, and Hong Kong’s is strikingly so. It is useful to look at common factors of change, before deciding which of them are relevant or irrelevant in a particular place.

“Democracy” is not a bad word in China, even though democracy is generally not practiced there. A party system has developed in Hong Kong (and Taiwan) despite claims of mainland elites that multiparty conflict in electoral politics is un-Chinese. People’s Republic of China (PRC) conservatives describe public debate as mere troublemaking, so that any serious public contention is unpatriotic. The Chinese central government’s position on this matter has not been consistent over time. According to Hong Kong’s Basic Law, which was passed by the National People’s Congress, democratic development is a policy aim for Hong Kong, which is distant from Beijing and a possible site for experiment in political reform. Another Beijing law, passed in 2007, vaguely moots the possibility of abolishing the functional constituencies that currently elect half of the seats in the Hong Kong’s Legislative Council. These are minoritarian and non-democratic. That law moots such a change, however, only as a possibility after a first mass election for the territory’s Chief Executive, which was earlier scheduled to occur in 2017. “Pan-democrats” in Legco were able in mid-2015 to delay that mass election, because the procedure to choose nominees was effectively controlled by the Communist Party of China. Many people think that the office of the Chief Executive has a legitimacy problem, and this has diminished the effectiveness of Hong Kong’s executive-led government. Abolition of “functional” Legco seats, which is very unlikely soon, would tend to delegitimize the radically minoritarian committee that nominates or elects the Chief Executive, perhaps later making it “broadly representative” as the Basic Law says it should be, although it clearly is not.

No book about democratization anywhere can be definitive. The slow and partial growth of popular sovereignty—to the extent it ever occurs at all—emerges from elite decisions that are taken in the context of perceived inequalities and injustices, revolutions, civil wars, protests, changes of power distributions, and other political struggles.⁵ Hong Kong governance is very much a work-in-progress. Democratization or reversals of it always have that status. Every polity has leaders who are not the same as ordinary people. As Occupy Central protesters withdrew, at least temporarily, a political pollster said, “The vociferous, extreme passion of the opponents has clearly been sparked.” He described a “much more volatile” split in the city than had previously been seen. A political scientist born in Hong Kong opined that, “Society has been deeply divided among families, between friends, between political parties; so

the movement has had a destabilizing impact. . . . With a deeper penetration of mainland Chinese political influence on Hong Kong, these social tensions will continue.” Another local analyst claimed, “Xi Jinping is a hardline leader—since he came to power he has been stoking the flames of nationalism. . . . Real democracy is just not possible.” A law professor said, “While the umbrella movement [which evolved from Occupy Central] has not been able to secure any tangible concession on democratic reform, it has galvanized a significant portion of Hong Kong’s population around the ideas of freedoms and democracy. . . . The movement has changed Hong Kong forever, as people have sent a clear message to the Chinese government that it cannot steamroll everything.” Yet another said, “What will remain is a political culture for a whole generation . . . even a shift of Hong Kong’s reputation, which before was seen as merely interested in money, marked by political apathy.”⁶ The protesters, departing from their main camp, displayed a large yellow banner proclaiming they would be back if their aims were ignored (and not quite all of them left the street, so police dragged them away after peacefully arresting many others, including elites). Incompleteness is always a trait of democratization. That process, when it begins, is never finished—just as no book about democratization can ever be final.

Politics in Hong Kong presents urgent problems of policy for several types of actors. In the last chapter of this book, the strategies of four kinds of people will be explored: Hong Kong democrats, Hong Kong businesspeople, the leaders of China, and (because this book’s readership is likely to be partly American) the leaders of the United States. Strategy mooting is not usual. As Christine Loh has observed, Hong Kong has “little tradition of explaining why decision-makers choose to do what they do.”⁷ Government and party leaders speak of “measures” and “projects.” They are more committed to “do things” than to conceive coherent policies that serve identifiable interests. This is a pattern among politicians in many places, but by 2015 it was salient in Hong Kong. The local government vowed to continue its efforts to “lobby” pan-democratic Legco members to vote for Beijing’s reform to adopt limited nomination with universal suffrage, but in January its official “Consultation Document” made no concessions, such as eliminating corporate ballots for Nominating Committee members, expanding the functional subsectors for either that committee or Legco, or having more nominators chosen by direct election. On the contrary, it suggested official doubts about

whether such adjustments are practicable, whether the NC would remain [*sic*] broadly representative, materialise balanced participation of various sectors, conducive to maintaining the capitalist system, and facilitate subsectors to elect persons who could genuinely represent their subsectors; besides, the wish of each subsector should be respected and widespread support from the relevant subsectors should be obtained, otherwise politically it would be difficult to forge consensus.⁸

Democrats mostly responded in kind, eschewing compromises and renewing their vows to veto Beijing's reform package. Democratic Party politician Nelson Wong, who doubted this policy, was purged from his party's central committee. Pan-democratic Civic Party legislator Ronny Tong wanted a "moderate power" platform, and he remained in Legco to cast a "no" vote on the limited-nomination plan—but soon resigned from both the council and his party, whose top leaders he considered too radical. Comparative theorists Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter suggest that democratization depends on compromise among four types of actors: authoritarian hardliners, authoritarian moderates, oppositionists willing to compromise, and radical oppositionists.⁹ Thus far, Beijing has ensured that Hong Kong has no "authoritarian moderates," and temperate oppositionists such as Tong cause few other democrats to compromise. Purist patriots and purist democrats prevent serious negotiation about the local regime type. Among young elites, too, students are split between university groups that maintain support for democracy throughout China and others whose aims are now localist. Beijing and the tycoons are still sufficiently comfortable with this stasis.

So in June 2015, pan-democrats faced a policy choice on whether to vote in Legco for or against Beijing's plan to hold a universal suffrage election for the Chief Executive in 2017—with a public ballot that would offer two or three nominees chosen by a committee whose membership is unrepresentative of Hong Kong and is controlled from Beijing. The Basic Law requires that two-thirds of Legco had to approve this plan, in order to enact it. Democrats were more than one-third of the legislature, 27 of the 70 members. In August 2014, 26 of them had vowed individually to vote "no." In the actual vote, ten months later, all 27 (plus a usually pro-establishment functional delegate) voted "no"—and because of a severely self-embarrassing parliamentary gaffe by most of the pro-government members, the final vote count was 8 "yes," 28 "no," and 37 "present."¹⁰ The official bill, lacking two-thirds approval, was not passed. All but one of the "yes" votes were cast by legislators from functional constituencies.¹¹ So the next Chief Executive will presumably be chosen by the Beijing-controlled committee, with no further public input.

Legco democrats expected to defeat the government's reform bill, but nobody expected that so many potential "yes" legislators would not participate. Democrats' calculations are complicated, however, because their rivals in future Legco elections (next presumably in September 2016) will accuse them of hypocrisy for voting against universal suffrage. Polls show that most Hong Kong people would like ballots for the top leader in their city's executive-led polity if the nominees could cover a representative political spectrum. A second issue is that even limited-nomination elections allow voters to express some preferences. As the 2102 HK CE election (or the 2013 ayatollah-limited Iranian presidential election) showed, the dynamic of any campaign gives candidates incentives to differentiate themselves; so electors end up with partial

choice although they cannot change the system immediately.¹² A third reason is a 2007 Beijing law decreeing that, after a mass election for Chief Executive, a later reform might be abolition of the “functional constituency” seats in Legco. This provision may well be disingenuous, because tycoon representatives in the legislature are numerous enough to veto it. But getting rid of the functional seats would, from a democratic viewpoint, tend later to delegitimize the elitist method by which the Chief Executive nomination committee is constituted, perhaps spurring street demands to make it “broadly representative.” Also, a mass vote would elect a Chief Executive less likely to be seen as totally dependent on Beijing. Such a leader would be more credible than a committee-elected executive in voicing Hong Kong’s interests to Beijing, even confidentially, and even if the executive were a secret member of the Chinese Communist Party. These are considerations for the future. Decisions in Legco and in Beijing will determine which of them become important.

It is possible that pan-democrats will lose Legco seats in the future, but it is also possible that they will do well. Turnout rates among young voters, who tend disproportionately to support “pan-dems,” have been rising in both Legco and district council elections. The “Hare-quota-and-remainder” method of counting votes, which is anti-majoritarian and was instituted in 1997, raises the electoral chances of candidates who convey strong images of any kind, including those who can claim to stick up for democratic principles. Surveys quoted in later chapters show that most Hong Kong people share Legco democrats’ admiration for liberal ideals, but conservative rivals blame “pan-dems” for lack of patriotism and for risking economic instability. As a general student of governance wrote, “the political analyst who wants to choose a wise course of action should focus less on assessing the objective consequences of actions and more on how the interpretations will go. . . . Political reasoning is metaphor-making and category-making.”¹³ Some “democrats” and “patriots” will, after the protests of 2014–2015, try to portray themselves as moderate bridge-builders, because many people wish them to be so. They may or may not do well in future elections. A pan-democratic moderate, Ronny Tong, resigned his seat shortly after casting his “no” vote in Legco against the government’s reform bill, ruing his inability to persuade other democrats and Beijing to compromise with each other. Socioeconomic divisions within the city, especially among youths, will almost surely continue to create contentious politics.

Policy dilemmas are also faced by Hong Kong’s business representatives, especially those who go into Legco from the small functional constituencies. Like the democratic lawmakers, they constitute more than one-third of that assembly and could veto Beijing’s plan for a mass election of the Chief Executive. Their objective interest in universal suffrage is not obvious, because they like low taxes. Their Liberal Party historically has opposed quick democratization. Their habit has nonetheless been to approve any proposals made by the

government of China, since their wealth depended on mainland trade. They benefit from Basic Law provisions that give them crucial influence in choosing the executive and making laws. If a major political reform were ever likely to pass in Legco, these “pro-China” representatives of the rich would have a sharp dilemma: to reject a plan associated with Beijing, or to accept that plan, which would lead to later protests for abolition of undemocratic “functional” business legislators.

China’s leaders also face policy questions concerning Hong Kong’s constitutional evolution. Despite a lack of public transparency in their deliberations, circumstantial evidence suggests that the top of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has for several decades since the Cultural Revolution included both policy conservatives and policy reformers, with the conservatives generally dominant after Xi Jinping’s rise. These “tendencies of articulation” are not easy to verify—in part because the CCP uses Leninist norms of secrecy.¹⁴ It is nonetheless clear that the Basic Law of 1990, and then another National People’s Congress law of 2007, suggested bolder plans for democratization in Hong Kong than any consensus of current Beijing leaders has yet been willing to implement. The role of President Xi in these discussions is crucial, in part because of his 2007 role in creating the government’s plan for later elections for Chief Executive. After more than one-third of Legco’s members defeated Xi’s plan in 2015, Beijing’s top representative in Hong Kong (Zhang Xiaoming, head of the Liaison Office) said he would “shut up” and not discuss reform any further in public.¹⁵ Does the CCP leadership really want mass elections in Hong Kong, as it has proposed? Is there a tacit expectation in Beijing that either the democrats or the tycoons will surely prevent universal suffrage in Hong Kong, saving the party any need to answer demands for similar procedures on the mainland?

Policy questions for the United States are less obvious but are also important. No foreign government has (or should have) much leverage to decide how Chinese elites will run any part of their country. But all democracies, especially the United States, might save future material resources if the fastest-rising major international power made a transition to the liberal state form. Some reasons that need to be considered are controversial (especially those relating to a “democratic peace hypothesis” that should more modestly be called a “liberal nonaggression conjecture”). Most discussion of this matter will be delayed to the last chapters of the book. During early democratizations even in “civilized” countries, demagogues are sometimes elected, and “rule of law” in politics-dependent courts has often been inadequate to prevent violence by elected dictators. A stabilizing conflict between larger socioeconomic forces, such as labor and capital, may become an effective prophylactic, along with rule of law, against elections that can reverse democracy. These concerns are salient in terms of US *Realpolitik* interests, not just normative ideals.

Electoral democratization in Hong Kong might in the relatively far future increase pressure on CCP leaders to venture mass elections in mainland China, if their domestic costs and benefits in maintaining their authoritarian structure change. But the huge and less developed “Hong Kong North” differs in many ways from Hong Kong. Universal suffrage elections for top offices in China could either aid or hinder US material interests (and also the interests of Chinese liberals everywhere, including those in Hong Kong). An electorally democratic China might become chauvinistic for the medium term, with disruptive results for Taiwan, the PRC, and US-China relations. Violent illiberal demagogues have sometimes been legitimized in early-democratic elections of other countries. Such disruption could occur without mass voting, but elections might raise its danger. Careful policies in both Washington and Beijing can prevent conflict while giving both nations assurances of goodwill in action toward their substantive national interests. With luck and with patience over time, more electoral democracy in China could make that crucial country a reliable partner of the United States, and vice versa. Congress members, who understandably favor electoral democracy, which has benefited them, have recently pressed the State Department to strip Hong Kong of its separate treatment under US trade laws unless it becomes more autonomous locally.¹⁶ Such a move would reinforce frequent false claims by Beijing and its political allies in Hong Kong that protests there are all the work of foreigners—and would not promote the cause of democratization in China’s most liberal city.

Hong Kong is not very large, but if its constitutional evolution eventually proves to be a bellwether of China’s, the need for circumspect US policy will be great. A stable democratic China would accord with American interests—and the means of aiding its development without too many bumps on that road will require research, thinking, and care. I argue in this book that Hong Kong’s democratization will emerge in many stages and will require compromises between authoritarians and liberals. The city’s political development will be driven by the same factors, covered respectively by chapters of this book, that have impelled the evolution of state forms in other places. Hong Kong can be seen as an extreme case because it is not sovereign, but it is not an exception. Its evolution will be strongly influenced by Beijing, whose choices in this far-south port are more constrained by usual factors of democratization than China’s leaders will quickly admit. Hong Kong in turn will influence the rest of China, although an introduction of mass elections on the mainland could legitimate a demagogue supporting illiberal policies throughout the country. This intermediate possibility does not preclude eventual Chinese liberalism.

Notes

1. Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 3, quotation marks in original.

2. Saudi Arabia may be the only exception, but its overwhelming income source (oil) makes it an oddity. Famous Singapore, with just 5 million people, has leaders who remain quite apologetic about the carefully rigged but clean elections that they hold. Chapter 4 notes the international-ethnic reasons for their illiberalism. It also provides bibliography on many refiners of the modernity-and-democracy “Lipset link.”

3. I thank University of Hong Kong professor of education Gerard Postiglione for many insights throughout this text, which explores links between schooling and politics more than do other works on democratization.

4. *Lessons in Dissent*, Matthew Torne, dir. (Hong Kong: Torne Films, 2014), a documentary film about teenage pro-democracy protesters Joshua Wong and Ma Wan Ke, traces the experiences of such leaders in the 2010 campaign against a high-speed railway line (this protest failed), the 2012 campaign against a requirement in schools for “national education” that was deemed by many in Hong Kong to be communist brainwashing (this one succeeded), and the 2014 movement to occupy public roads until the limited-nomination procedure for Chief Executive elections changes. These movements have thus far only obliquely treated the main left-right issue in Hong Kong, which is the constitutional power of tycoons.

5. See a study of the United States that has comparative implications, E. E. Schattschneider, *The Semi-Sovereign People* (Hinsdale, IL: Dreyden, 1960). I would rate this book the best modern “political science” yet written.

6. These quotations, generously forwarded to me by Professor Sonny Lo Shiu-hing of the Hong Kong Institute of Education, are quoted in a December 11, 2014, blog from Agence France Presse, <http://www.afp.com/en/news/hong-kong-left-deeply-polarised-protests-analysts>, reporting by Pedro Ugarte and Isaac Lawrence.

7. I am grateful for Ms. Loh’s comments, quoted here, which were sent to me by e-mail after she read an early draft of this book. I have been helped by many prominent Hong Kong Chinese of various political viewpoints, who have taken valuable time from government and unofficial work because they are interested in the book’s topic. I remain guilty of all errors of fact or judgment anywhere in this text.

8. See http://2017.gov.hk/filemanager/template/en/doc/second_round_doc/Consultation_Document_Eng.pdf; and Simon Young, “Pan-Democrats Must Seek Talks, As a Veto Is Likely to Serve Beijing’s Interests Most,” *South China Morning Post*, January 15, 2015, <http://www.scmp.com>.

9. Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), referenced too in Gary Cheung, “On Political Reform, Beijing Leaves No Room for Moderates,” *South China Morning Post* [hereafter *Post*], June 30, 2015, A13.

10. The first reported reason for this farce was a desire among pro-Beijing legislators to honor one of their colleagues, Lau Wong-fat, who was sick and caught in traffic heading toward Legco. (Lau can coordinate voting blocs in New Territories elections. Chapter 3 describes the electoral law that was passed by a mainland-controlled Provisional Legco before the “handover” from Britain, using a Hare-quota-and-remainder counting system that awards extra seats for vote-coordination, especially in the large multimember New Territories districts.) Most pro-Beijing legislators left the Legco chamber thinking the ballot would be adjourned for lack of a quorum—but they miscalculated, and in accordance with Legco rules the vote was held. Most of the merely “present” members were aghast, some in tears after the gaffe because they had failed to vote “yes.” Pan-democrats hoped the blunder would help their own cause in future Legco elections. It was not clear how deeply Beijing leaders cared about the result, aside from loss of “face” because of their Hong Kong associates’ failure. The enthusi-

asm of some “functional” delegates for universal suffrage may also be doubted—and one of them, Leung Ka-lau, representing medics, joined the democrats in voting “no.” (Doctors do not engage in China trade.) Tony Cheung, Jeffie Lam, and Joyce Ng, “Reform Package Fails, As Does Walkout,” *Post*, June 19, 2015, A1; and by the same reporters in the same issue, “A Very Long Five Minutes,” A4.

11. Five of the eight “yes” legislators won uncontested functional elections in 2012. The sole geographically elected “yes,” James Tien of the New Territories East multimember district, won under the 1997 electoral law with just a 7 percent plurality. Data available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hong_Kong_legislative_election,_2012.

12. In Iran, the least-conservative candidate, Hassan Rouhani, won the presidency in 2013. The 2012 Hong Kong Chief Executive race showed Henry Tang and C. Y. Leung attacking each other vehemently before a closed committee election. Multicandidate elections are conflicts. They are inconsistent with the notion that politics must be essentially administrative or harmonious. Beijing determined that Leung should win, but he did not receive the committee votes of the richest tycoon, Li Ka-shing, or of committee members from the largest business-oriented party, the Liberals. Chapter 4 offers more on these cases.

13. Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*, rev. ed. (New York: Norton, 2002), 9.

14. The term “tendencies of articulation” was used in the path-breaking book *Interest Groups in Soviet Politics*, H. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths, eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

15. Jeffie Lam and Gary Cheung, “Forget Political Reform and Move On, Top Beijing Official Tells Hongkongers,” June 30, 2015, <http://www.scmp.com>.

16. Dui Hua Foundation, “Congressional Action on Hong Kong Set to Roil US-China Relations,” *Dui Hua Human Rights Journal*, January 15, 2015, <http://duihuahjournal.org>.