

## DOCTORAL THESIS

### Soft power and paradiplomacy of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region: a critical appraisal

Chan, Wai Yin

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**Soft Power and Paradiplomacy of the Hong Kong Special Administrative  
Region: A Critical Appraisal**

**CHAN WAI YIN**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**Principal Supervisor:  
Dr CHAN Kenneth K L (Hong Kong Baptist University)**

**September 2019**

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis represents my own work which has been done after registration for the degree of PhD at Hong Kong Baptist University, and has not been previously included in a thesis or dissertation submitted to this or any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualifications.

I have read the University's current research ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures in accordance with the University's Research Ethics Committee (REC). I have attempted to identify all the risks related to this research that may arise in conducting this research, obtained the relevant ethical and/or safety approval (where applicable), and acknowledged my obligations and the rights of the participants.

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## ABSTRACT

This study evaluates Hong Kong's soft power through investigating the relations between the city's paradiplomatic ambits and performance and critically reflects on how the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to further develop its presence in international stage and its identity as an active non-sovereign international actor. This study also enriches the literature of paradiplomacy and soft power of non-sovereign actors since the soft power analysis is still limited to state-centric research. This research also explores new angles to deal with Hong Kong-China relations by highlighting how the paradiplomacy and the soft power of Hong Kong can create space and flexibility for the city's international engagement. A theoretical framework which incorporates new institutionalism and normative theory to explain the interplay of paradiplomacy and soft power is proposed and tested. This study adopts multi-pronged method to investigate Hong Kong's soft power and its leaders' capabilities in upholding the city's international profile under "One Country, Two Systems". Through studying the international indexes, surveys of public opinion, official documents like Hong Kong Policy Addresses and conducting in-depth interviews, this study delineates and evaluates the soft power capacities within paradiplomatic ambits of the city. The key findings of the research indicate the HKSAR government has had a very restrictive understanding of the soft power for the city. In particular, the study proves that both institutions and values of Hong Kong are crucial for boosting the city's soft power. In contrast to the conventional system, the institutions of the HKSAR have limited the fostering of values of Hong Kong, but also the development of the city's soft power. This study shows that the tensions between the government and civil society have weakened some of the potential soft power resources. Moreover, the prevailing policy focus on strengthening the city's financial and economic status with respect to China's rise to power has not done justice to other stakeholders such as the film industry and the civil society who could have made considerable impacts on enriching and enhancing Hong Kong's global attractiveness. The paradiplomatic power of the HKSAR government has not been persistently pursued in the policy implementations. As the HKSAR government claimed it is committed to upholding the city's international profile and to promote its soft power globally, this study intends to make an original contribution to our understanding of the relations of the city's soft power, paradiplomacy and policy implementations.

*Key words:* Hong Kong, Non-Sovereign International Actor, Paradiplomacy, Policy Implementation, Soft Power

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## Table of Contents

DECLARATION.....	i
ABSTRACT .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
Table of Contents .....	v
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	x
List of Diagrams.....	xi
Chapter 1	
Introduction .....	1
1.1 The Global Positioning of Hong Kong.....	2
1.2 Research Objectives.....	11
Chapter 2	
Understanding Soft Power and Paradiplomacy: Towards a Theoretical Framework .....	15
2.1 Soft Power and Its Significance.....	15
2.2 Soft Power and Public Diplomacy.....	20
2.3 The Measurement of Soft Power .....	25
2.4 Paradiplomacy .....	35
2.5 Theoretical Framework.....	39
2.5.1 New Institutionalism - The Institutional Environment for the HKSAR Government to Execute Paradiplomacy .....	40
2.5.2 Normative Theory – Fostering Soft Power for the HKSAR..	42
2.6 Research Methodologies.....	49

Chapter 3	
The Impacts of the City’s Institutions and “Mainlandization” on Soft Power	
Assets.....	53
3.1 Considering the Applications of Paradiplomacy for the HKSAR.....	53
3.2 The Changing Hong Kong-China Relations and Their Impacts on Soft Power.....	72
3.2.1 Hong Kong-China Relations .....	72
3.2.2 Post-Umbrella Movement Era.....	83
Chapter 4	
The Normative Foundations of Soft Power .....	94
4.1 The Civil Society as the Source of the City’s Soft Power .....	94
4.2 Recent Public Polls on How Hong Kong People Perceive Values in the Society .....	107
Chapter 5	
The Prospects and Predicaments of Hong Kong’s Soft Power .....	111
5.1 Leadership and Strategy - Hong Kong Policy Addresses .....	111
5.1.1 Content analysis .....	113
5.1.2 Discourse analysis .....	113
5.1.3 Results .....	114
5.2 Findings from In-depth Interviews .....	127
5.3 Discussion.....	163
Chapter 6	
Conclusion .....	175
Bibliography.....	180

Appendices .....	234
Appendix A: The Interview Procedures .....	234
Appendix B: Transcriptions of interviews.....	235
Appendix C: Public Opinion towards the Central Government, Hong Kong Government, “One Country, Two Systems” and Hong Kong’s Future (1997-2017) .....	317
Appendix D: Annual Expenditure and Staffing of Overseas Economic and Trade Offices (HKETOs), Hong Kong Trade and Development Council (HKTDC), Invest Hong Kong (Invest HK) and Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) .....	319
Appendix E: International or Regional Economic Ranking of Hong Kong (2014-2017) .....	321
Appendix F: The HKSAR’s participation in International Intergovernmental Organizations Limited to States (As at 8 May 2018) .....	322
Appendix G: HKSAR’s participation in International Intergovernmental Organizations Not Limited to States (As at 8 May 2018) .....	327
Appendix H: 39 Massive Collective Actions from 2003 to 2014 in the HKSAR.....	337

## List of Tables

<b>Table 1</b>	Global indexes of Hong Kong (2015-2019) .....	7
<b>Table 2</b>	The success rate of Quality Migrant Admission Scheme and Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP) in Hong Kong.....	8
<b>Table 3</b>	Analysis of global indexes related to Hong Kong soft power.....	29
<b>Table 4</b>	Indicators of Hong Kong’s soft power .....	32
<b>Table 5</b>	The ranking of institutions of the HKSAR in The Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2018.....	41
<b>Table 6</b>	List of Interviewees in the research .....	50
<b>Table 7</b>	Hong Kong’s key practices of paradiplomacy .....	68
<b>Table 8</b>	Worldwide Governance Indicators: Hong Kong and China compared...	90
<b>Table 9</b>	Value articulation in critical events in Hong Kong, 2003-2015 .....	95
<b>Table 10</b>	The relations between the place of birth and identity .....	103
<b>Table 11</b>	The relations between the place of birth and the identification with political camps.....	103
<b>Table 12</b>	Hong Kong’s core values .....	107
<b>Table 13</b>	The differences between the perceived importance and the actual performances of selected social indicators .....	109
<b>Table 14</b>	Incorporating the policy context of Hong Kong’s position “the global” into the “national”.....	117
<b>Table 15</b>	The changes of Hong Kong’s positions throughout 2007-2019 Policy Addresses .....	121

<b>Table 16</b>	The tensions between the HKSAR government and the HKETOs on the works of external affairs .....	137
<b>Table 17</b>	Triangulation of findings: Consensus / Pattern among three groups of interviewees .....	170

## List of Figures

<b>Figure I</b>	The identity poll conducted by HKUPOP .....	106
<b>Figure II</b>	Positioning Hong Kong along global-local nexus: Hong Kong Policy Address 2007-2019.....	114

## List of Diagrams

<b>Diagram A</b>	The nature of soft power.....	17
<b>Diagram B</b>	How the intended outcome stems from soft power resources.....	18
<b>Diagram C</b>	Cool Japan Public-Private Partnership Platform under The Cabinet Office of Government of .....	20
<b>Diagram D</b>	How public diplomacy generates intended outcomes .....	24
<b>Diagram E</b>	Theoretical framework of the study .....	45
<b>Diagram F</b>	Author’s conceptual framework .....	46
<b>Diagram G</b>	Triangulation of qualitative research data .....	52
<b>Diagram H</b>	The “Dual Identity Model” in Hong Kong .....	82
<b>Diagram I</b>	The “Nested Identity Model” which Beijing has always preferred....	83
<b>Diagram J</b>	Social-cultural sources of Hong Kong’s soft power and identity .....	104

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has been established for 22 years. Hong Kong, being one of the most active non-sovereign international actors (Tang, 1993; Mushkat, 1997; Yue, 2007; Hsiung, 1998a & 1998b), was handed over to Socialist China on 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1997 without either establishing a new state or have full autonomy granted to the city. Instead, under the formula of “One Country, Two Systems” stipulated in the Basic Law, the HKSAR is allowed to exercise its autonomy but the issues of foreign affairs and defence (Article 13 and Article 14, The Basic Law, the HKSAR government, 2017). The political experiment of how China manages her capitalist and open SAR under the rationale of Socialism has been commenced in the city under international close supervision.

According to the Basic Law, Hong Kong is granted the rights to exercise its “external affairs” (Chapter VII of the Basic Law), as to maintain its international visibility and personality, understandably, to sustain its identity as international financial centre, which would satisfy the early demands of China to enter the global stage for its national development. The role of Hong Kong in the early stage of the globalizing China indubitably facilitated China’s economic integration with the global community. However, once China became the second world economic power (The World Bank, 2018), the economic role of Hong Kong in China’s national development evidently dwindles to a trifling position.

On the other hand, the policy preferences of the HKSAR government provide a guarantee for a substantial economic reliance by integrating with China. This alters the situation of economic autonomy of the city and therefore, China is able to exert more political and social controls in the HKSAR which are not limited to media freedom, academic independence, and human rights issues. As the HKSAR inclines to invest more resources to integrate with China, questions about the city losing the chance to explore international opportunities and raising the city’s profile in the global community were also generally raised, especially during the last 10 years. This also makes the international audiences curious about the

degree of autonomy and flexibility on how the HKSAR government can manage the city in the future.

A lot of scholars have investigated the international status of Hong Kong (Enright & Scott, 1997; Tang, 1993; Ting, 2007; Ting & Lai, 2012), the roles of Hong Kong in China's development (Song, 1991; Chiu & Lui, 2003; Cheung, 2017), the Hong Kong-China relations (Fong, 2017) and examining the cases of public diplomacy of Hong Kong (Shen, 2016; Fang, 2017). However, their work has been limited to unsystematic analysis with only a few reflective and new methodologies applied. The under-development of the issue did not provide potential solutions for how the city's identity and its crucial status in the international community continue to be a distinctive city under the dynamics of Hong Kong-China relations. Or only concentrating on economic discussion does not equal to a panacea for the city any longer as there is already a structural change of economic interdependence between China and Hong Kong. Hong Kong no longer serves as the only window for China's global outreach (Huang, 2018) as well as the uniqueness and identity of the city is perceived as diluting under the pronounced integration with motherland's national and regional strategic plans like Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

### **1.1 The Global Positioning of Hong Kong**

One can argue that a globalized Hong Kong would enhance Hong Kong's values for China's development in the global context, whereas a "mainlandized" Hong Kong would spell the city's decline that is not in China's interest. Historically, Hong Kong has long been the channel for foreign investments and the economic intersection between China and other countries such as Taiwan, Japan and the United States (Cheung, 1998). Before 1997, Britain took Hong Kong's geopolitical assets into consideration seriously. The "international character" of Hong Kong as an outpost in the Asia-Pacific Region had to be maintained to serve Britain's geopolitical interests (Ting, 1997, p.5-7 &10). Hong Kong, in a nutshell, was "an asset to be cherished by international society" with its financial, cultural and institutional success (Ting, 1997, p.23), paving the way for the consolidation of the city's unique global identity to showcase its soft power assets. This included not

only an open economy but also “a space of negotiation, facilitation and experimental creativity” underpinned by a common law jurisdiction (Duara, 2016, p.211). The colonial government’s primary focus on economic growth led to not only infrastructure investments but also carefully designed policies to attract overseas investments. The resultant business environment was attractive for multinational corporations to set up regional headquarters and head offices in Hong Kong. Such accumulation of international human capital and investments in turn enabled free exchange of knowledge, expertise, values and cultures (Meyer, 2000; Meyer, 2016). Meanwhile, Hong Kong acquired a range of paradiplomatic powers to enhance its presence globally. As Fellows (2016) pointed out, the colonial government was granted autonomy not limited to economic aspect so as to safeguard the city’s the best interests on the international stage.

After Hong Kong returned to China’s sovereignty, the political leaders of China perceived that Hong Kong could help China to “go global”<sup>1</sup> by its widely-accepted systems, institutions, and values. China and Hong Kong are therefore mutually reliant on each other. Hong Kong acts as the middleman for trade between Mainland and the rest of the world, the values of good re-exported via Hong Kong from and to the Mainland was US \$407.0 billion, which was 89.1% of Hong Kong’s total re-export trade value in 2016 (Hong Kong Trade and Industry Department, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2017) and 60% of the outbound investment of Mainland directs to Hong Kong through various types of investment activities (Hong Kong Trade Development Council Research, 2016).

Meanwhile, China has actively incorporated Hong Kong under its successive national development strategies like BRI and regional economic integration projects such as the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone in 2010 (Qianhai, 2018) and the GBA in 2017 (Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2018). However, there was a significant phenomenon which China and Chinese enterprises had become gradually globalized and as it began to have the capability to attract foreign direct investment

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<sup>1</sup> The HKSAR Government started to use the Chinese political expression “go global” in 2012-2013, 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 Policy Addresses to illustrate how Hong Kong could help Mainland China to seek opportunities around the world.

by themselves, China is expected to develop its ability to rely less on Hong Kong as the gateway to reach to the overseas audiences and stakeholders. The change can be seen when Hong Kong's share of China's GDP has shrunk from 27% in 1993 to 2.9% in 2017 (Hong Kong Economic Journal, 2017a).

However, Hong Kong's export to China has increased by 53.7% over the past 10 years, more than 43.9% increase of import from China over the past 10 years (Census and Statistics Department, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2018, p. 3). It is pronounced that Hong Kong's strategic position of being the entrepôt of Mainland China is not yet faded out at all. Furthermore, by the end of 2018, Hong Kong was the largest source of overseas direct investment in Mainland China, with 54.1% of the national total capital inflow from Hong Kong to Mainland and Hong Kong was also the major offshore capital raising venue for Chinese market, with 1,146 Chinese companies listed in Hong Kong which constituted 68% of the total market capitalisation (HKTDC Research, 2019). Hong Kong accounted for 46.3% of the overseas-funded projects approved in Mainland China by the end of 2018. Cumulative utilised capital inflow from Hong Kong amounted to US\$1,098.1 billion, accounting for 54.1% of the national total.

This proves that the values of Hong Kong in a globalizing China still exists. Under the internationalized paradigm, Hong Kong is still valid to provide solutions to address obstacles as China needs to become a global power. Hong Kong is the most globalized city within China's territory and Hong Kong's distinct features such as institutional settings, stable investment environment, rule of law, comprehensive logistics and transportation network, academic freedom and international education, management and professionalism and corruption-free environment may help to compensate the distance between China and global widely-accepted practices. China needs not only people with talents experience with the global market (Ding, 2017) but also an environment to maintain the level-playing field for all. Thus, Hong Kong is well positioned to offer what China needs by branding itself as a unique city with an international heritage and forward-looking global values.

As long as the Renminbi is not fully convertible in the global financial market, Hong Kong will be one of the important global offshore business hubs for

Renminbi<sup>2</sup>. A recent survey has shown that Hong Kong accountants believed that BRI could benefit the accounting profession, but accountants also expected the HKSAR government to make stronger efforts to collaborate with the sector in order to explore new and profitable opportunities for them in BRI (Wenweipo, 2018). Instead of paying lip service to the BRI or promoting BRI in the Policy Addresses, there remain considerable rooms for the HKSAR government to further develop Hong Kong's global profile in BRI. Put it briefly, one of the prerequisites is to maintain its international characteristics and unique identity as a global city. Without the uniqueness, it is likely that many foreign enterprises would leave Hong Kong and to settle in another Asian city such as Vietnam with lower business operating cost, this is what the Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Hong Kong, Dieter Lamlé has warned (Cheng, 2017c). Hong Kong's positions in both global stage and China's national strategy would be significant to determine the future of Hong Kong's global standings and certainly how "One Country, Two Systems" would be perceived in the global community.

Hong Kong's global identity is fully substantiated by its rankings in a wide range of global indicators (Table 1). Hong Kong has continued to enjoy top rankings. Bearing the freest economic system in the world<sup>3</sup>, Hong Kong demonstrates an outstanding performance in economic activities and trade volumes by the support of good performance of rule of law, government integrity, business, and monetary freedom and the transparent open market (The Heritage Foundation, 2018). However, the future of the city is far from certain. The Global Cities Outlook placed Hong Kong at the 54th position for both years 2017 and 2018 and the 52th position in 2019 because Hong Kong shows limited strengths and potentials for development in the future in terms of personal well-being, economic growth, innovation and governance (A.T. Kearney, 2017). The Global Power City Index shows that Hong Kong's performance was relatively weak in the areas of research and development (11th), environment (18th), cultural interaction (22nd) and livability (36th), when compared to other aspects such as the economy (7th) and accessibility (5th) (Institute for Urban Strategies, the Mori Memorial Foundation, 2017). The Smart Cities Index, which is an index for "smart urban growth" with the utilization of

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<sup>2</sup> Details see Hong Kong Monetary Authority, 2016.

<sup>3</sup>The Heritage Foundation ranked Hong Kong as the freest economy in the world for 24 consecutive years (Cheng, 2018a).

technology and innovation as a means to pursue well-being and a better quality of life of the citizens in the city (Easypark, 2018), Hong Kong was placed 68th. Here Hong Kong has failed to show good performances in digitization, transport and mobility, innovative economy, sustainability and experts' perception (Ng, 2018). The latest IMD World Digital Competitiveness Index studied 63 economies and ranked Hong Kong 11<sup>th</sup> in 2018, which was a significant drop from 7<sup>th</sup> only one year before (International Institute for Management Development, 2018). The idea of adopting the technology by a government to enhance financial development is hardly adequate. It is more essential now for the government to extend the benefits of technological innovation to the people at large through appropriate policy coordination.

A recent research report published by the Institute of Public Policy of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology has suggested the HKSAR government to coordinate the academia, the industry, and society in order to boost technological development of Hong Kong in the region. Still, the HKSAR government has shown its limited imagination to take up a more proactive stance (Su, 2018). All the above indexes and elaborations serve as a gentle reminder to the HKSAR government and the elites that it may have to start cultivating and accumulating soft power capital and explore pathways for future development of Hong Kong as a global city. This is beneficial for Hong Kong to diversify its capitals and resources to comparatively weak areas such as technology and innovation<sup>4</sup>. For instance, the insufficient talents in the field of technology and innovation in Hong Kong can be a point of reference for the HKSAR Government to explore the ways of attracting human capitals from overseas. Constructing or fine-tuning the government's policies in accommodating innovation and education can also be the keys to reach technological consensus in the society (Ye, 2017).

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<sup>4</sup> At the time of writing this thesis, the HKSAR government has started to push more concrete policies as to tackle the inadequacy of technological development in the city, government's supports include funds, infrastructures, legislation, education and technology transfer. Details see from paragraph 98 to paragraph 107 in 2019 Policy Address (The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address, 2018).

**Table 1 - Global indexes of Hong Kong (2015-2019)**

Index	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Global Power City Index (Institute for Urban Strategies, The Mori Memorial Foundation)</b>	7th	7th	9th	9th	Not Yet Released
<b>Global Cities Index (A.T. Kearney)</b>	5th	5th	5th	5th	5th
<b>Global Competitiveness Index (World Economic Forum)</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> (2014- 2015)	7 <sup>th</sup> (2015- 2016)	9 <sup>th</sup> (2016- 2017)	6 <sup>th</sup> (2017- 2018)	7 <sup>th</sup> (2018- 2019)

*Source:* Author.

Taking human capital as an example, a city which can attract talents from overseas is the key factor to maintain its international character and diversity, thus to consolidate its competitiveness and soft power. Beaverstock and Hall (2012) have argued that a “city's competitiveness is significantly dependent on the functioning of its global labor market” and they suggested, “UK immigration policy should be very responsive to allow the city to flourish in such a highly competitive, global industry and labor pool” (p. 271). Many governments make every endeavor to explore the best policy package and to nurture the right environment to attract the skilled and professional expatriates with the needed skills and experience, which is described as an essential vehicle to advance cities’ “global control capability” (Sassen-Koob, 1986, p.88; Findlay et al., 1996, p. 49). In the case of Hong Kong, however, Blunday (2016) observed that the expatriates have started to struggle with the idea of remaining in Hong Kong and increasingly considered other Asian cities such as Singapore as a better place to work. One worrying sign of the “exodus” of human capitals concerns the number of British, Americans and Australians in Hong Kong, which is said to have dropped by about 11%, 8%, and 5% respectively in 2016 compared to the figure in 2015. Specifically, expatriates are frustrated by the

substandard quality of the environment<sup>5</sup>, the strikingly high living standard<sup>6</sup> and work-life imbalance, which made Hong Kong only managed to finish 39th of an international survey for expatriates, while other destinations like Taiwan, Singapore, Vietnam, and Malaysia were positioned 4th, 9th 12th and 15th in the list, respectively (Internations, 2017). The survey reflects the weaknesses of Hong Kong in the face of the highly competitive human capital global market.

Simultaneously, from the institutional approach, by reviewing two types of admission schemes for talents and professionals, one is Quality Migrant Admission Scheme which targets the skilled and talented people to stay in Hong Kong for long-term career development. Another one is the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP) which aims at attracting talents from China (Immigration Department, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2018a & 2018b). The two schemes show significant divergence in terms of, the successful rate of ASMTP was 7.4 times of Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (Table 2). This imbalance may reflect the preference of policymakers who unwittingly further weaken Hong Kong’s competitiveness for global talents.

**Table 2 – The success rate of Quality Migrant Admission Scheme and Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP) in Hong Kong**

**Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (For Overseas’ Application)**

	2014		2015		2016	
	Processed Application	Approved Application	Processed Application	Approved Application	Processed Application	Approved Application

<sup>5</sup> Another survey on the most livable cities for Asian expatriates conducted by a human resource consultancy ECA International ranked Hong Kong 28<sup>th</sup> out of 470 locations, but ranked Hong Kong 11<sup>th</sup> in 2013. The survey showed that the poor air quality and dense population leading to high risk of infectious disease outbreaks made expats hesitate to work in Hong Kong (Yeung, 2018a).

<sup>6</sup> The 24th annual Cost of Living Survey conducted by Mercer reviewed that Hong Kong is the most expensive destination to live for expats out of 209 cities (Brinded, 2018).

Total	2,557	338	1,849	240	1,573	156
Successful Percentage*	<b>13.2%</b>		<b>13.0%</b>		<b>10.0%</b>	

**Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)  
(For Mainland Application)**

	2014		2015		2016	
	Processed Application	Approved Application	Processed Application	Approved Application	Processed Application	Approved Application
Total	10,963	9,313	11,034	10,861	12,307	10,404
Successful Percentage*	<b>84.9%</b>		<b>98.4%</b>		<b>84.5%</b>	

Source: Author's own compilation, adapted from the Immigration Department, the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (2018).

\*Correct to 3 significant figures

Hong Kong is regarded as an international city, but the official discourse has primarily focused on trade and economic performance more than anything else. For post-1997 Hong Kong, however, the self-limiting vision is increasingly seen as antiquated and no longer able to meet the growing aspirations of the people. It is, in a nutshell, an economic city, a global financial hub, a gateway to the Chinese market and a conduit for Chinese capitals "to go out". Such indicators are always highlighted by the government and most of the global indexes available. However, the existing scholarly literature has yet to look systematically and empirically into other, no less important, aspects of Hong Kong's global identity, not to mention theoretical debates over the city's performance in its external relations. This study, therefore, provides an original contribution to two long-neglected areas of Hong Kong's roles in the world - the source of Hong Kong's soft power and its paradiplomatic performance under "One Country, Two Systems". The research

entails different theoretical investigation and multi-pronged research methods to critically examine the institutions and values in manners which have not yet been explored before. Last but not least, this study serves as the first to adapt and apply the concepts of soft power and paradiplomacy of non-sovereign international actor to the case of Hong Kong. Being a significant non-sovereign international actor, we are of the view that Hong Kong's global profile, soft power assets, and paradiplomatic influences can make considerable gains with regards to the findings of the research.

The discussion of paradiplomacy is originated from the interdependence of both non-state actors and state actors under the globalization with the focus to find out solutions under issue-based by associating the flexibility of non-state actors in the decision making process of global issues (Keating, 1999; Tavares, 2016a; Aldecoa & Keating, 1999). Hong Kong carries international charisma and its solid status of the international financial centre will contribute to the literature of paradiplomacy, particularly with the vigorous interplay with its Central Government. With the intention to retain the city's international status, situating itself a significant position within the dynamics in Hong Kong-China relations and retrieving a possible development path for the HKSAR, exploring on the paradiplomacy and soft power of Hong Kong can further acquire possible solutions for the city's future.

This research will approach the question via multi-pronged research methods by studying the international indexes, surveys of public opinion, official documents like Hong Kong Policy Addresses and conducting in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews with 3 groups of interviewees: scholars, the HKETO's officials and people from NGOs and creative industry, have been conducted. The research data will be further triangulated in order to increase its validity and soundness. This research explores new angles to deal with Hong Kong-China relations with highlighting how the paradiplomacy and the soft power of a non-sovereign international actor can create space and flexibility for its international engagement even under the straitjacket of the Central Government. A theoretical framework which incorporates the features of new institutionalism and normative theory is proposed for the purpose of understanding the city's paradiplomacy and gauging systematically the capacities of the city's soft power.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

This research will provide dynamic evaluations on the HKSAR's capacities, limitations, and prospects of soft power resources and strategies with the consideration of the city's paradiplomacy and identity which have not been explored in the literature. Instead of only identifying the static soft power resources like institutional designs for business and trade opportunities, a dynamic evaluation on Hong Kong's capacity for boosting the city's soft power by considering both the institutional ambits and normative perspectives. It is also worthy to decipher the applicability, capacity, and limitation of soft power in the non-sovereign international actor as soft power is always analysed under the restriction to the unit of the state. This research could help in expanding the theory of soft power to non-state actors by taking paradiplomatic power and the interaction between the Central Government and the subnational government into consideration. Furthermore, the significances of culture and political values which are the fundamental soft power resources diagnosed by Nye (Nye, 2004a, p. 11) could create developmental space for Hong Kong's soft power which is also under-explored in the literature.

This research will put forward a theoretical framework to shed light on the following research questions:

- 1. How the HKSAR government and the Hong Kong Economic Trade Offices (HKETOs) interact in terms of executing Hong Kong external relations and its soft power?*
- 2. In what way(s) that the HKSAR government and the HKETOs recognize Hong Kong's soft power?*
- 3. What is the room for the HKETOs officials to execute paradiplomatic power which is guaranteed under constitutional provisions and conventions?*
- 4. Does the HKSAR government have enough dialogues with different sectors before implementing related policies?*
- 5. What is the impact of international NGOs on enhancing Hong Kong soft power and China-Hong Kong relations?*
- 6. To what extent the HKSAR government facilitate the development of cultural industry which is regarded as one of the key areas for fostering soft power?*
- 7. How both the public and non-public resources are important for soft power enhancement for a non-sovereign international actor?*

The main objectives of this thesis are, first, to provide alternatives for the HKSAR to further maintain its predominance in international stage not limited to the economic perspective; second, to analyse how Hong Kong's soft power can become one of the possible solutions in Hong Kong-China relations, in particular, soft power is the element which China has difficulty to develop in a short period but Hong Kong indeed has its comparative advantages; third, to diagnose how the HKSAR government and its officials perceive soft power. Fourth, to enrich the literature of paradiplomacy and soft power of non-sovereign international actors when the analysis of non-sovereign actors is largely limited to the state-centric paradigm. Under this context, it is highly relevant to how the HKSAR government perceive the scope of paradiplomacy and soft power, the level of the interaction between the government and the civil society and film industry and how these sectors can contribute to Hong Kong soft power enhancement as to enhance Hong Kong as a non-sovereign international actor.

The key findings of the research indicate the HKSAR government has had a very restrictive understanding of the soft power for the city, particularly it has shown salient ignorance of the universal values cherished in the city. Though the HKETOs officials are given freedom to execute paradiplomatic works, the HKETOs were requested to shoulder more responsibilities to disseminate political lines uphold by the HKSAR government, hence, turning the HKETOs from paradiplomatic units into propaganda ones. Depending only on the quality of the HKETOs officials and the freedom granted, this cannot ensure Hong Kong has a sustainable and comprehensive soft power promotion overseas in the future, in particular, without the articulation of values promotions for the city. Moreover, the prevailing policy focus on strengthening the city's financial and economic status with respect to China's rise to power has not done justice to other stakeholders such as the film industry and civil society who could have made considerable impacts on enriching and enhancing Hong Kong's global attractiveness. Even though the HKSAR is granted paradiplomatic power in the constitution, it seems the HKSAR government has practiced self-limitations on generating richer soft power resources for the city. The research has identified the above as challenges and controversies on sustaining the identity of Hong Kong as a non-sovereign international actor. This

also extends to how Hong Kong can further develop its identity as an active and salient non-sovereign international actor should that be seriously considered.

The thesis is structured as six chapters. Chapter II examines the concept of soft power and its general application under the views of international relations, with particular illustration on the relations of public diplomacy and soft power and the indicators of measuring state's soft power. It discusses the theory of paradiplomacy for the non-state actors and how it works in the global interdependence system. Pinpointing what Hong Kong has experienced would lead to a meaningful discussion on how the paradiplomacy can expand the city's recognition and consolidate Hong Kong's identity in both China and on the international stage. For the purpose of this study, we put forward a theoretical framework by incorporating new institutionalism and normative theory, which develop an alternative to analyse the soft power of a non-sovereign international actor by taking paradiplomacy and its limitations into consideration. The relations of institutions and normative evaluation for the promotion of the city's soft power and the details of the research such as research objectives and research methodologies will be also submitted in this chapter.

Chapter 3 enquires into the impacts of the city's institutions on the fostering of soft power. By appraising how is the paradiplomacy applied and executed in the HKSAR, the political development of the HKSAR under China's rule, particularly in the recent years and the global positioning of Hong Kong, this chapter, focuses on the extent of institutions affect the dissemination of soft power in the city.

Chapter 4 investigates the key resources to evaluate the values in the society of the HKSAR under normative consideration. This chapter examines the development of the civil society of the HKSAR and how the values help foster the city's soft power. Post-Umbrella Movement is introduced as a key era for the HKSAR and the social and political changes in the city react to this largest social movement in the city is also reviewed. Interview data is also imported to support the perceived social and political changes in the HKSAR.

Chapter 5 evaluates Hong Kong's soft power, in particular, it will take a closer look at the policy preferences of the HKSAR Government over the last ten years in order to examine how Hong Kong retains the international visibility as well

as integrating with China. The official positioning of Hong Kong in terms of changes, level of autonomy and tendency of future policies in 2007-2019 Policy Addresses are explored by conducting content analysis and discourse analysis. Interview data will be also analysed to evaluate how the HKETOs officials execute their paradiplomatic powers, how the HKSAR government and the HKETOs officials interpret soft power of the city and the situation of government-other sectors dialogues as to foster potential soft power. The international NGOs and film industry are selected as the cases to have cross-examination to validate the sources of soft power for the city's soft power enhancement.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion with key findings, research implications and the limitations of the study.

## Chapter 2

### Understanding Soft Power and Paradplomacy: Towards a Theoretical Framework

#### 2.1 Soft Power and Its Significance

Joseph Nye was the scholar who coined the concept of “soft power” in the 1990s (Nye, 1990a; Nye, 1990b; Nye, 1990c). He has argued the states have employed alternative ways to pursue national interests and exert influence other than those “hard powers” or “hard methods” (The military and economic powers) (Nye, 2011a, p. 91). Nye claimed that except using inducement or coercion, soft power was one of the signature forms of power as a means to exercise international influence on world issue, i.e. soft power serves as an alternative to help legitimize the actions of international actors. He was inspired by the ideas from two key Realists, E.H. Carr<sup>7</sup> and Henry Kissinger<sup>8</sup>, both of them apprehended the momentousness of similar forms of soft power during the 1930s and 1970s respectively. E.H. Carr recognized opinion power as one of the effective international power (Carr, 1964, p. 108) whilst Henry Kissinger admitted there was an alternative to the balance-of-powers in the world politics and he regarded the global communications would become salient in the future (Nye, 1990a, p. 156).

By pinpointing the blooming of interdependence in different aspects, it is inadequate to make power calculation just based on the classical power categories like ‘population, territory, natural resources, economic size, military force, and political stability’, but the noteworthiness of developing technology, enhancing education and tangible economic performance could not be disdained in order to expand national influences on other international actors (Nye, 1990c, p. 154; Nye, 2004b, p. 69). In the globalized era, states can adopt cooperation strategies to convince others for their *raison d’être*, for instance, ecology issues which consisted of mutual advantages would be brought to fruition by cooperation, just like the French has abandoned its individual economic plan and adhered to European

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<sup>7</sup> British Realist E.H. Carr has divided international power in three categories: military power, economic power and power over opinion (Carr, 1964, p. 108).

<sup>8</sup> Henry Kissinger stated that there was an alternative except the balance-of-power in the world politics and he gave a speech in 1975, ‘We are entering a new era. Old international patterns are crumbling...The world has become interdependent in economics, in communications, in human aspirations.’ (Nye, 1990a, p. 156)

Monetary System in the 1980s were one of the notable examples of an interdependent international system (Nye, 1990a, p. 158). After 9-11 terrorist attack, Nye explicitly criticized Bush Administration's employment of hard power leading to the decline of American soft power and national image by promoting unilateralism and ignoring international consensus (Nye, 2011b).

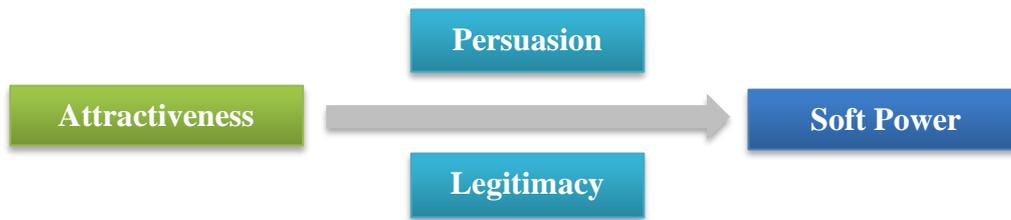
Nye did not argue soft power was the substitute of hard power and admitted that some goals could only be accomplished by hard power only (Watanabe & McConnell, 2008, xix), instead, he emphasized 'soft power does not depend on hard power' (Nye, 2004a, p. 9). He diagnosed the interrelations between soft power and hard power was not proportional. For example, Russia possesses a strong military and economic strengths but Russian government's inhumane policies and the violent suppression towards political dissenters have ruined the soft power (Human Rights Watch, 2018; Nye, 2004a, p. 9). Alternatively, hard power can act as the resource for generating soft power, for instance, an efficient army could be a national attraction or the military-to-military cooperation and training programs which augment transnational network would upgrade national soft power (Nye, 2011a, p. 86). Or, soft power can be a determinant factor to enhance hard power, for instance, legitimacy, morale, and patriotism in a country will influence the confidence and performance of military (Nye, 2011a, p. 21).

The nature of soft power as a form of power entails one's intention to change the behaviours of other actors through shaping their preferences to reach desirable outcomes under sound legitimacy<sup>9</sup>, without applying forces or coercion (Nye, 2004a, p. 2; Nye, 2011a, p. 82; Cooper, 2004, p. 173; Napier, 2007). Put it simply, according to Wilson (2008), soft power is 'the capacity to *persuade* others to do what one wants'(p. 114). Considering the behaviours which would the actualization of soft power proposed by Nye, building attraction and agenda-setting are the mechanisms leads to favourable outcomes (Nye, 2017). Diagram A illustrates the nature of soft power stems from the legitimacy and persuasion based on the attractiveness of a political entity:

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<sup>9</sup> Legitimacy means "as the right to govern assumes that consent play a major therein." (Coicaud, 2002)

**Diagram A: The nature of soft power**



*Source:* Author.

International actors have striven to win support for their actions, reactions and policies in the eyes of other international actors. One's attractiveness is often regarded as a by-product of the legitimacy, moral authority and credibility of the actors in question (Nye, 2004c). Attractiveness that is morally persuasive can boost influence and induce compliance (Wang & Lu, 2008). For example, Chen (1999 & 2001) has highlighted that the participation of Taiwan's civil society organizations in international organizations and events to tackle social justice and labour rights issues would definitely help build a positive image of Taiwan and win political support. Ideally, constructing resonance across the international community will prepare the stage for setting not only the political agenda but also the rules of the game, which no doubt amount to a display of soft power.

Advantageous outcomes stem from understanding others' behaviours, changing and managing the relationship and altering their value, beliefs or even ideologies. Tracking the sources which would reinforce the soft power, Nye (2004a, 2009 & 2011a) identified culture<sup>10</sup>, political values, foreign policies, and institutions are the fundamental appealing sources for fostering soft power. Culture includes high culture such as art, literature, education as well as the mass culture like television, cinema and pop music. However, the advantageous outcomes depend on the audiences' perceptions of the cultural products.

The areas of culture, health, sports, and education generate soft power to "win the hearts, minds and appetites of policy opponents" by making the information and debate available (Chitty, 2011; Chitty, 2017, p. 18). Culture and ideas serve as a platform to create a consensus with shared meaning, people would be convinced and the actions would be justified by building mutual identification.

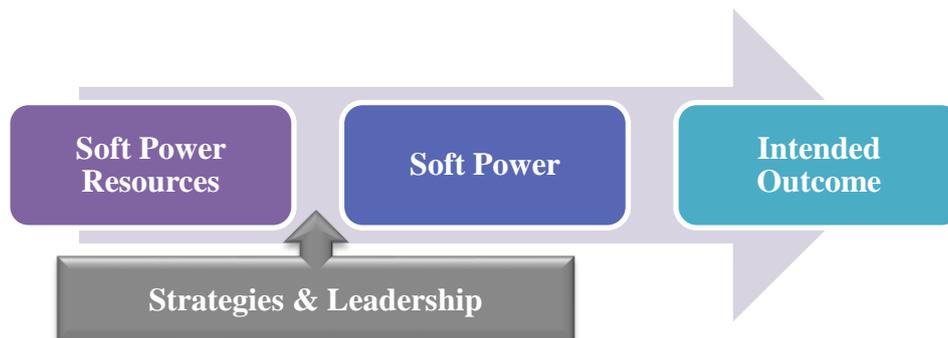
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<sup>10</sup> Culture is 'a set of values and practices that create meaning for a society' and a kind of pattern in the society which transmits ideologies and knowledge (Nye, 2004a, p. 11; Nye, 2011a, p. 84).

Nye has termed this condition as ‘milieu’ (Nye, 2011a, p. 97). For instance, democracy, freedom, the alleviation of poverty and human rights are some universally-accepted ideas which would definitely prompt attractiveness and hence, contributing to well-being in the society (Roselle, Miskimmon, & O’Loughlin, 2014, p. 72). Chitty (2017) used a more precise description to elucidate how values can prompt soft power. Benignity and rectitude will promote public good which associates with attractive behaviours. If benignity and rectitude constitute the values of public policies, these values could be transformed into good governance with the absence of corruption and the high level of commitment to the rule of law. Both elements would enhance the legitimacy and soft power at the same time. As foreign policy generally executes under the framework of one’s political values, delivering its image and political message, a legitimate foreign policy that acknowledges the moral authority among the target audiences will develop soft power at the same time (Chitty, 2017).

Nye has further clarified the sources of soft power and how it can nurture favourable outcomes (Nye, 2004a). Once the soft power resources such as culture, foreign policies and values are identified, they can be transferred into soft power through sound strategies and leadership and generate advantageous outcomes which will be favourable towards the political entity (Diagram B):

**Diagram B: How the intended outcome stems from soft power resources**



Source: Nye, 2004a; Illustrated by Author.

Both the public domain and the private domain can generate soft power resources (Ying, 2008). For instance, institutions and cultural products can be generally regarded as the soft power resources of public domain and private domain, respectively. By adopting appropriate or effective strategies and leadership, soft power can be generated from potential soft power resources. Formulating proactive policies with supportive measures by the government to recruit international students in local university programmes could be one of the good examples adopted by the government to develop and promote the soft power of the country or city in question.

Another strategy is to develop the cultural industries. Korean pop music (K-POP), dramas and films have substantial global influences and also benefits South Korea's national interest both in the economy and cultural industry. The total cultural exports of South Korea have been increased from \$3.2 billion in 2010 to \$5.3 billion in 2014 (Zhang, 2016). Those cultural products have contributed to South Korea's national image as well as attracting more tourists to visit South Korea and boosting product sales, bringing positive impacts on employment in the country (Creative Economy Team, UNCTAD, 2017). These cultural products are the soft power resources which have been identified by the leaders in both the public domain and private domain. The government of South Korea has set up various institutions<sup>11</sup> to facilitate the promotion of cultural products, with the aims to develop and serve its cultural industry on the global stage. One point to note about the cultural products of South Korea is that "the traditional value and cultural identity" are always embedded in the cultural products (Creative Economy Team, UNCTAD, 2017, p. 26).

Japan has continued to enhance its cultural power globally with the help of a comprehensive strategy<sup>12</sup>. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan has established the "Cool Japan" office in June 2010 to coordinate the promotion of Japan overseas. In particular, a Cool Japan public-private promotion platform has been created to invite inputs from different sectors such as tourism,

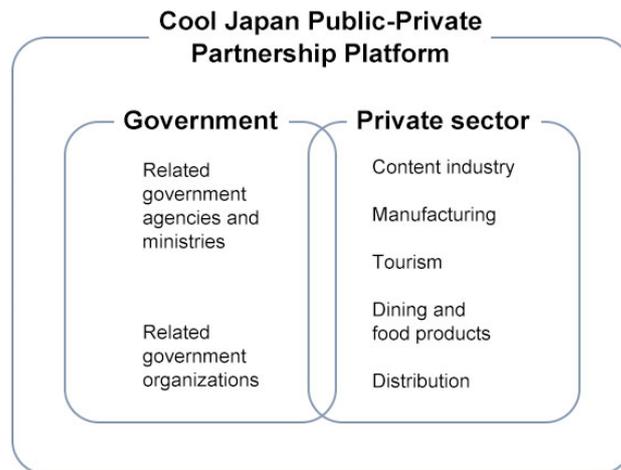
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<sup>11</sup> For instance, Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) and Creative Economy Town. Details see Creative Economy Team, UNCTAD, 2017, p. 26-28.

<sup>12</sup> According to Portland (2018), Japan ranked 8th, 7th, 6th and 5th from 2015 to 2018 respectively and has strengthened its upward trend. Japan has been the only country from Asia among the top 10 countries with the strongest soft power in the world.

dining and food industry etc. to work with the Japanese government to formulate an overall strategy (Diagram C):

**Diagram C: Cool Japan Public-Private Partnership Platform under The Cabinet Office of Government of Japan**



*Source:* The Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, 2019

Both South Korea and Japan have set up institutions to boost the cultural and innovative sectors and to facilitate public-private collaboration accordingly. Both countries serve as good examples to show how policymakers get themselves prepared for partnership with private sectors to project the soft power globally. Notwithstanding Nye's focus on the private sector and civil society as the key source of soft power, one should not dismiss the important roles of effective government strategies and policy measures in the projection of the country's soft power.

## **2.2 Soft Power and Public Diplomacy**

According to Nye, under the reality of interdependence, private sectors and civil society should be the key source for soft power. Nye also regards civil society as the soft power-house for a society, i.e. civil society model of soft power has been always emphasized by Nye<sup>13</sup>. On the other hand, it is notable that except offering

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<sup>13</sup> Except Nye, Respublica has published a report on Britain's soft power and highlighted that civil society is a better engine for having long-term relationships with other countries citizens, particularly there is a global phenomenon that people begin to not believing in their government. Details see Blond, Noyes, & Sim (2017).

the institutional channels, the government always brings impacts on elevating soft power by, for instance, maintaining official external relations and connection with other countries and cities, participating in international organizations and establishing administrative mandates for the creative industry. For instance, referring to the discussion on soft power in the House of Lords of the UK Parliament, it clearly manifests that how a government could serve as a facilitator and give impetus to foster soft power for the country through, for example, promotion for tourism, establishing cultural institution like the British Council, providing education and scholarship, nurturing language to foster international communication, be more prominent in international organization etc. (The Parliament of the United Kingdom, 2016). This prompts scholars to have interests in the investigation of how the public sector, political elites and states advocate initiatives to enhance soft power for their countries. The government of a non-sovereign actor is expected to have the intention to nurture environment and initiatives for breeding creativity and innovation for potential soft power for based on the fact that the development of hard power is restricted for a non-sovereign actor.

The exercise of soft power is not just limited to the public sector, private sectors also impart the transferences of soft power. The resources from private sectors like commercial activities, education, media, cultural institutes, partnership, and exchange programs would help to transform soft power into tangible, and arguably, even more effective leverage than the state actions (Nye, 2004a, p. 13; Roselle, Miskimmon, & O'Loughlin, 2014, p. 71). Nye (2011a) further suggested the non-state actors, such as NGOs, business, universities, religious organizations, ethnic groups, and international organizations, could have a stronger impact on the public and governing elites in other countries when they help to fashion a suitable environment for augmenting soft power. The interaction of civil societies and non-state actors would generate important values like democracy, liberty and human rights between people in different parts of the world (Nye, 2004a, p. 90-97; Nye, 2011a, p. 101).

Furthermore, the engagement of local civil society groups with other countries' civil society groups would create a platform to facilitate a collaborative relationship between civil society groups and governments, which would also

enhance the promotion of country's values and interests. Scholars have given examples as to illustrate how the states and non-state actors may join up to facilitate the promotion of soft power. Fraser (2008) has stated that the American government has collaborated with the business sector to utilize media broadcasting to boost its national image and interests abroad. The triumphs of Hollywood, Harvard, Microsoft, and Michael Jordan demonstrate that soft power is not necessarily originated from the government or public sector, private enterprises could contribute to as well as benefit from a nation's soft power (Nye, 2004a, p. 17).

Scholars distinctly propounded that 'a high-quality education sector is one of the important factors that contribute to a country's soft power' by carrying the national values which would be captivating to the foreign audiences (Wojciuka, Michałk, & Stormowska, 2015, p. 298-300). Deodato & Borkowska (2014) reviewed the significances of academia and universities on nurturing soft power for the nations. Particularly,

*“The favourable condition for diplomacy made by Academia is the high awareness and an unbiased perspective on historical, political, cultural and economic issues wherein multidisciplinary teams of independent scholars and scientists are able to position themselves. Exchange of ideas, information, arts and culture on the one hand and the cascade effect of education on the other, facilitates the academic soft power performance.” (Deodato & Borkowska, 2014, p. 5)*

The works of universities and academia facilitate a “search for truth” environment for research and education which is a crucial element to spread the influences globally (Deodato & Borkowska, 2014, p. 7). The decentralized educational system in America could make provisions to promote values such as transparency, differentiation and openness (Altbach & Peterson, 2008). The university exchanges program between Japan and the United States has championed the bilateral political relations (Mashino & Miki, 2008). Japanese scholars Sugiura and Kondo evinced that the Japanese government has enhanced Japan's soft power by creating the environment to promote private-sector culture exports and organizing educational exchange programs (Sugiura, 2008; Kondo, 2008).

Indeed, this body of knowledge has presented a viable alternative to toppling the Realists' approach which focuses on the interaction only between

powers. Keohane and Nye highlighted the significance of the private sector, education, culture, trading, money multinational cooperation and NGOs (Keohane, & Nye, 1977). New forms of partnerships have emerged through the interactions and mutual influences between governments, societies and intergovernmental organizations (Nye, 2004b, p. 3).

In addition, the perception matters. The effectiveness of soft power relies on the management of the communication process between the political actors and the target audiences. Nye said ‘what the target think is particularly important’ (Nye, 2011a, p. 84). Soft power elements such as culture and value can be incorporated as public policies which are utilized by the political actors to seek the support from the target audiences through communication channels. Roselle, Miskimmon, & O’Loughlin (2014) have singled out the remark of ‘strategic narratives’ (p. 74) which are the cues for processing constructive communication as to maximize the influences of soft power. Soft power is consolidated through the reputation, credibility, and perception of the country, which is constructed by conveying attractive ideas and message through strategic communication (Barr, Feklyunina, & Theys, 2015, p. 213-215). Thus, the influence of soft power heavily depends on the communication process. The key is how to transform soft power resources to soft power outcomes by constructing a positive communication channel to perform strategic communication. This is not a natural process and the political leaders and elites have to design a public diplomatic program to facilitate the communication process. Hence, scholars and political leaders started to explore public diplomacy as one of the key elements of foreign policies. The advantages of soft power attract governments, think tanks and academics to enquire into and invest in researching and practicing public diplomacy (Dugué-Nevers, 2017).

Gullion firstly coined public diplomacy in 1965 and offered a new angle to explore ways for effective foreign policies, in his words,

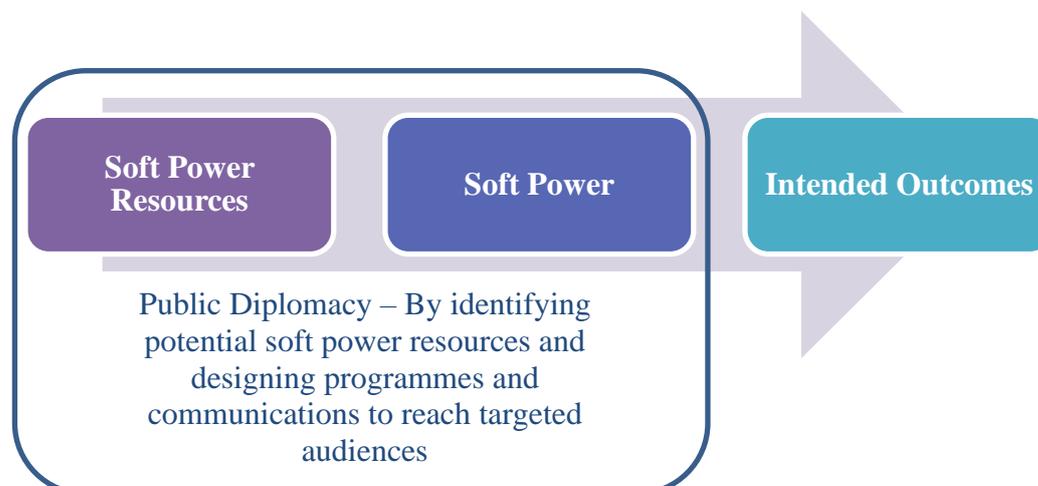
*“Public diplomacy...deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is*

*communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications.” (Cited in Cull, 2016).*

Public diplomacy is a type of soft skill acquired by sovereign states to “inform, influence, and engage global publics in support of national objectives foreign policies” (Snow, 2009, p. 6) and to create a “new form of consensual world governance” (Castells, 2008, p. 91). Melissen (2005) stated, “public diplomacy is one of soft power’s key instruments” (p. 3) that say, public diplomacy is the instrument for the state to project soft power to the targeted audiences. Constructing a positive image by government-to-people or people-to-people channels like dialogues and exchanges will increase the chances for communication between two countries and hence, to provide a platform for cultivating mutual understandings. Nowadays, it is imperative for governments and diplomats to consider global public opinion when they design diplomatic strategies (Snow, 2009). Through public diplomacy like broadcasting, exchange programs, development assistance and disaster relief (Nye, 2011b) originated from the public domain as the *strategies*, positive images of the nations will have a higher chance to be promoted internationally.

Diagram D shows where public diplomacy contributes to coordinate and deliver soft power by designing programmes and plans to enhance intended outcomes:

**Diagram D: How public diplomacy generates intended outcomes**



Source: Author.

Putting together the elements highlighting in Diagram A, B and D, political leaders are expected to be able to identify potential soft power resources and formulate public diplomatic strategy to consolidate and enhance nation's and city's attractiveness, persuasiveness and legitimacy in order to achieve intended outcomes.

### **2.3 The Measurement of Soft Power**

Academic, think-tanks and countries have developed various indicators to measure soft power. The favourability of countries, the popularity of cultural events, discourse and content analysis of news coverage, numbers of tourists, exchange and foreign studies, people learning the language and the activeness of international NGOs have been considered as indicators to measure countries' efforts on promoting soft power (Lee, 2011; Hooghe, 2011).

“Soft Power 30” is one of the earlier efforts to assess soft power comprehensively in a comparative perspective (Portland, 2016, p. 8). Specifically, it studies how governments generate and deploy soft power effectively in the technology era (Portland, 2016). 6 sub-indices of data (government, digital, culture, enterprise, engagement, and education) combines with 7 categories international polling data (cuisine, tech products, friendliness, culture, luxury goods, foreign policy and livability) are taken into consideration. The sub-index of government is measured by political values, outcomes of public policies, institutions and international collaborations (Portland, 2018, p. 32). Digital sub-index is related to the extent how the governments work with technology and how the governments and public policies embrace technologies to bring advantages to their citizens (Portland, 2018, p. 33). Sub-index culture includes the efforts of promoting universal values and cultural products like music, film, and sports (Portland, 2018, p. 32). Regarding the sub-index of enterprises, it examines the attractiveness to establish a business in the country with the highlight of institutions for easier setting up business (Portland, 2018, p. 33). The sub-index of engagement emphasizes the “global footprint” of the country which focuses on the ability to engage international audiences (Portland, 2018, p. 32). Education is another key element to evaluate soft power by measuring the numbers of foreign students, academic achievements and universities' rankings (Portland, 2018, p. 33). In the report of 2016, “Soft Power 30” specifically reported that the intense interdependency of the worldwide network is being nurtured by the prevalence of social media, when world

leaders, ministries, diplomats and government have already made use of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. for the sake of increasing their global presence<sup>14</sup>. Moreover, “Soft Power 30” puts forward the nowadays comparison has been shifted from nation-to-nation to city-to-city, departing from the conventional wisdom that ‘nation-state is the sole government actor in international relations’ with reference to the C40 group of Mayors which represents a group of cities tackling climate change collaboratively (Portland, 2016, p. 22). In 2017, France, the United States and the United Kingdom occupied the top three positions of “Soft Power 30” index (Portland, 2017). For instance, the United Kingdom’s engagement, culture, education, and digital innovation gave rise to British soft power, its media (BBC World Service), cultural institute (The British Council) and sports (Premier League) provide broad platforms to reach international audiences. American’s strengths in the area of higher education, cultural production, and technological innovation were also pervasive and predominant.

However, when viewing “soft power 30”, China was ranked 30<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> in from 2015 to 2018 respectively (Portland, 2018). China started to advocate and ‘institutionalize’ soft power in the 2000s when President Hu Jintao has framed his stratagems as ‘building a harmonious society’ in 2004 and ‘building a harmonious world’ in 2005 respectively. Then in 2007, in the venue of the 17th Party Congress, Hu firstly and affirmatively articulated soft power as one of the national objectives (Hu, 2007; Xinhua, 2007). Xi Jinping in 2013 further asserted in the Central Committee that cultural soft power is directly related to China’s modernization and the actualization of “Chinese Dream” and deduced that cultural soft power could demonstrate China’s strategic significances in the international system (Zhang, 2010). Starting from the 2000s, public diplomacy and soft power were one of the key components in China’s foreign policy (Zhao, 2015, p. 170). China has invested \$10 billion a year (The Economist, 2017) to establish its “global

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<sup>14</sup> Over 90% of the UN member states, i.e. 175 political leaders, have official pages on the social media network (as of March 15, 2018) (Twiplomacy, 2018).

discourse power” (Yang, 2018) through investing in media<sup>15</sup>, film<sup>16</sup> and cultural institute<sup>17</sup> which are regarded as the main soft power sources. China has extended its global soft power network by establishing more than 500 Confucius Institutes overseas to promote the Chinese language and Chinese culture (Confucius Institute, 2018). In recent years, as part of its strategy to project a benevolent image of peaceful emergence, China has developed specific policies for promoting and institutionalizing the participation of provincial and city governments in global affairs (Kurlantzick, 2007; Shen, 2014). At the subnational levels, President Xi Jinping has taken a personal interest in the creation of the US-China Governors Forum in 2011 in which “31 Chinese provinces/regions/cities have established 43 sister province/state relations and 200 sister-city relations with 50 American states.” (Tavares, 2016a, p. 54).

The failure of China's pursuit of soft power is instructive. As David Shambaugh (2015, p. 107) aptly observed:

“What China fails to understand is that despite its world-class culture, cuisine, and human capital, and despite its extraordinary economic rise over the last several decades, so long as its political system denies, rather than enables, free human development, its propaganda efforts will face an uphill battle. *Soft power cannot be bought. It must be earned.* And it is best earned when a society’s talented citizens are allowed to interact directly with the world, rather than being controlled by authorities. For China, that would mean loosening draconian restraints at home and reducing efforts to control opinion abroad. Only then could the country tap its enormous reserves of unrealized soft power.” (Italics mine)

It is not clear how China may actually change its ways of understanding soft power without change the regime's one-party ideology. For example, China has been found to restrict the freedom of speech and exerts political constraints on the

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<sup>15</sup> China has invested 45 billion yuan to transform its media into a 24-hour multilingual documentary TV channel with the channel name CCTV 9, with 6 platforms reaching Europe, Asia and America (Branigan, 2011; CCTV 9, 2016); Take the Xinhua News Agency as an example, it recruited around 3,000 journalists of which around 400 of them work in its 170 overseas agencies (Shambaugh, 2015; Li, 2008).

<sup>16</sup> For instance, China tycoons Li Ruigang and Wang Jianlin bought Hollywood movie studios as to extend China's footprints in international film industry which is currently monopolized by US Hollywood (Ge, 2017; Economist, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> Absorbing the successful experiences of setting up culture and language-promoting engine like the British Council of the UK, the Goethe-Institut of Germany and the Alliance Française of France, 500 Confucius Institutes were set up till the end of 2015 (Confucius Institutes, 2015), aims at presenting China's image and culture via learning official Chinese language Mandarin.

institutes which host the Confucius Institutes, especially on the sensitive topics which China is hostile such as Taiwan and the Dalai Lama (Allen-Ebrahimian, 2018). Marco Rubio, U.S. Senator of Florida, has persuaded five U.S. universities to terminate the partnership with Confucius Institutes which were found to have imposed censorship and violated U.S. values in general (Rubio, 2018). All this does not bode well for China's global aspirations and foreign policy objectives.

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs and the East Asia Institute (EAI) has published a study on “soft power in Asia” in 2009 by interviewing people in 6 countries (China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia and the United States) with the intention to investigate the perception on soft power (The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2009, p. 1-2). It divided soft power into 5 general areas as economic, cultural, human capital, political and diplomatic (The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2009, p. 7). The result, unsurprisingly, revealed that American soft power has strong influences on Asia. The study commented that the US achieved promising prestige in terms of economic, cultural and human capital soft power, while China has paid effort to expand its diplomatic and economic weights in the region; it still has limited influences on the Asian audiences with regard to ideologies and perception.

The Institute for Government collaborated with Monocle Magazine to publish a soft power report over three consecutive years from 2010 to 2012. By considering the component parts of soft power: Government, culture, diplomacy, education and business/innovation, plus the panel-based metrics: design/architecture, cultural output, global leadership, soft power icons, cuisine, national airline/major airport and commercial brand, the United Kingdom topped the soft power index while the US, Germany, France, and Sweden ranked from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> position, meanwhile, China was ranked 22<sup>nd</sup>. It was widely commented that China’s soft power has been undermined by its political control on personal freedom, oppressive media control and rebuff to political criticisms. The author suggested that the emerging powers should reform their political structures and institutions, together with the development of individual liberties, democracy, freedom of the press, corruption and civil society so as to construct an all-embracing power (McClory, 2012, p. 14).

For measuring the soft power of cities, the British Council (2018) has published a research on studying the soft power of cities and this is the only worldwide research to study cities' soft power instead of nations. The report has highlighted the significances of how the cities exhibit soft power potentials, though the research mainly focused on European and Japanese cities. By investigating the engagement, culture, government, education, digital, enterprise and polling of 10 countries, Catalonia was ranked the first in the aspects of engagement and culture, while Scotland topped the education, digital and enterprise perspectives. Quebec got the best government comparing to other cities and Scotland was ranked the first in the aspects of enterprise, digital and education (Donaldson, 2018).

All the indexes are inspired by Joseph Nye and have generally a full spectrum of soft power resources. Those indexes offer research data for comparative analysis. For the political leaders of non-sovereign international actors, they have to explore and apply the soft power resources by considering the institutions, social values and also the ambits of paradiplomacy granted by the Central Government.

Hong Kong's soft power is not yet evaluated by any available index. Instead, Hong Kong is ranked by various kinds of the global indexes to evaluate the city's economic and financial performances (Table 3).

**Table 3: Analysis of global indexes related to Hong Kong soft power**

<b>The Global Competitiveness Index by World Economic Forum – 2018</b>	
<b>Overall Ranking: 6<sup>th</sup></b>	
<b>Sub-index</b>	
1. Institutions	9 <sup>th</sup>
2. Infrastructure	1 <sup>st</sup>
3. Health and primary education	26 <sup>th</sup>
4. Higher Education and Training	14 <sup>th</sup>
5. Labour Market Efficiency	4 <sup>th</sup>

6. Technological Readiness	9 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Ease of Doing Business Index by The World Bank – 2018 Overall Ranking: 5<sup>th</sup></b>	
<b>Sub-index</b>	
1. Protecting Minority Investors	9 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Index of Economic Freedom by The Heritage Foundation - 2018 Overall Ranking: 1<sup>st</sup></b>	
<b>Sub-index</b>	
1. Rule of Law	
• Government Integrity	82.8/100
• Judicial Effectiveness	84.3/100
2. Regulatory Efficiency	
• Business Freedom	96.3/100
• Labor Freedom	89.4/100
• Monetary Freedom	84.3/100
3. Open Markets	
• Trade Freedom	90/100
• Investment Freedom	90/100
• Financial Freedom	90/100
<b>The Global Financial Centres Index from The China Development Institute (CDI) and Z/Yen Partners - 2018 Overall Ranking: 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	
<b>Sub-index</b>	
1. Business Environment	3 <sup>rd</sup>
• Political Stability and Rule of Law	
• Institutional and Regulatory Environment	

2. Human Capital	1 <sup>st</sup>
• Availability of Skilled Personnel	
• Flexible Labour Market	
• Education and Development	
• Quality of Life	
3. Infrastructure	3 <sup>rd</sup>
• Built Infrastructure	
• ICT Infrastructure	
• Transport Infrastructure	
• Sustainable Development	
4. Reputation	3 <sup>rd</sup>
• City Brand and Appeal	
• Level of Innovation	
• Attractiveness and Cultural Diversity	
• Comparative Positioning with Other Centres	
<b>Global Cities Index – 2018 Overall Ranking: 5<sup>th</sup></b>	
<b>Sub-index</b>	
1. Human Capital	Did not provide sub-index rate
2. Information Exchange	
3. Cultural Experience	
4. Political Engagement	

On the other hand, Nye (2004a) has put forward certain indicators to evaluate a country's soft power (pp.7-8). Table 4 offers further appraisal of Hong Kong's soft power by incorporating Nye's indicators and some other widely used

indicators. The purpose of which is to provide an overview of the constitution and the performance of the soft power of Hong Kong.

**Table 4: Indicators of Hong Kong’s soft power**

Indicators	Figure/Data
<p><b>Foreign Immigrants</b> (Immigration Department, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals: 23,361 (Jan 2018 – Jun 2019)</li> <li>• Capital Investment Entrant Scheme: 35,372 (30 Jun 2019)</li> <li>• Visas Issued under the General Employment Policy: 61,348 (Jan 2018 – Jun 2019)</li> <li>• Employment/Investment, Dependent and Student Visas Issued: 17,612 (Jan 2018 – Jun 2019)</li> </ul>
<p><b>University Ranking</b> (QS top universities, 2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 universities ranked the global top 50 (The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and The Chinese University of Hong Kong)</li> <li>• Other 4 institutions ranked top 600 in QS World University Rankings 2020</li> </ul>
<p><b>Asylum Applications</b> (Chen &amp; Liu, 2017)</p>	<p>There are more than 14,000 asylum applications as at Sept 2017</p>
<p><b>Life Expectancy</b> (Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2018)</p>	<p>Hong Kong has the longest life expectancy worldwide (Senthilingam, 2018)</p> <p>Male: 82.2 years (2018) Female: 87.6 years (2018)</p>
<p><b>International students</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The best cities for international students ranked</li> </ul>

Indicators	Figure/Data
	<p>14<sup>th</sup> in 2019 (QS Best Students Cities, 2019)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overseas Students Enrolment (2017/18): 4,950<sup>18</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Tourists</b> (Hong Kong Tourism Board, 2019)</p>	<p>Number of Tourists visit Hong Kong in 2018: 65,147,555 (Mainland: 51,038,230, Non-mainland: 14,109,325)</p>
<p><b>Number of Internet hosts</b> (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hong Kong was ranked 48<sup>th</sup> in 2012</li> <li>There are 870,041 internet hosts in Hong Kong</li> </ul>
<p><b>Book Sales and Music Sales</b> (Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sales of books is under the categories of “books, newspapers, stationery” so the statistics of book sales only is not available</li> <li>Government does not have the statistic of music sales</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spending on Public Diplomacy</b></p>	<p>Staffing and budget resources of Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (HKETOs), Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) and Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) as at <i>Appendix D</i></p>
<p><b>Renowned Institution</b></p>	<p>For example, Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICAC is a globally-recognized anti-corruption institution which showcases a successful model to other countries which are facing the issue of corruption. ICAC is identified by international</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> The number of overseas students enrolment includes those from Asia (except Mainland China) and the rest of the world to enroll UGC-funded Institutions / Programmes. Details see <https://cdcf.ugc.edu.hk/cdcf/searchUniv.action?lang=EN>

Indicators	Figure/Data
	<p>organizations such as World Bank and United Nations (ICAC, 2018)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICAC provides standard and tailor-made consultancy services and training programmes to suit the needs of different countries, particularly the countries with low perception of fighting against corruption</li> </ul>
<p><b>Healthcare System</b> (Miller &amp; Lu, 2018)</p>	<p>According to 2018, Bloomberg Health Care Efficiency Index, Hong Kong's healthcare system is the most efficient in the world, which provides the high standard of medical service with the minimal cost</p>
<p><b>Rule of Law</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rule of Law Index 2019: 16th out of 126 countries and jurisdictions (World Justice Project, 2019)</li> <li>• Sub-index of Index of Economic Freedom (The Heritage Foundation): Overall Ranking: 1<sup>st</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government Integrity: 82.8/100</li> <li>- Judicial Effectiveness: 84.3/100</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sub-index of The Global Financial Centres Index by The China Development Institute (CDI) and Z/Yen Partners - 2018 Overall Ranking: 3rd <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Political Stability and Rule of Law in the sub index of Business Environment: 3rd</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

*Source:* Author's own compilation.

Generally speaking, Hong Kong performs well in the fields of education and institutional capacity including the commitment to the rule of law, quality health care, government efficacy, university ranking and attractiveness to international students. The picture is less clear cut with respect to other indicators.

For instance, Hong Kong topped “the most-visited city” in 2018 (Business Insider, 2019), but the main source of tourism (80% of the total number of tourists) is China, whilst the Hong Kong Tourism Board has struggled to attract non-Mainland visitors with higher purchasing power<sup>19</sup>.

Meanwhile, Health Care Efficiency Index shows that the government spends “wisely” to maintain the high standard of medical service in the city, but it does not show long working hours of the medical sector, the underdevelopment of primary care system, or a lack of long-term strategy to tackle aging population, which are the main challenges of Hong Kong health care system<sup>20</sup>.

It is evident that the complex interplay between perceptions, recognition and interactions cannot be easily captured by quantitative measurements. To understand the dynamics properly, qualitative methods may yield better insights and more realistic assessments of the state of Hong Kong’s soft power. Though Nye (2017) has convincingly argued that soft power is originated from civil society, one should not lose sight of the fact that the government may facilitate, control or obstruct the development of soft power. Insofar as the civil society does not exist in a political vacuum, the roles of the government and policymakers in the projection of a polity’s soft power overseas remain under-researched.

Therefore, it is advisable to conduct a new research into Hong Kong’s soft power. Specifically, it is important to study how one may understand Hong Kong’s soft power and what should be the suitable strategies to enhance it if desired. This study is a basic evaluation of the city’s soft power. Moreover, studying the paradiplomatic capacity of Hong Kong will provide a better picture for consolidating soft power resources and capacities for the city under the framework of “One Country, Two Systems”. We support there a systematic analysis of both China’s public diplomacy and China-Hong Kong relations in the future.

## **2.4 Paradiplomacy**

Global affairs are mostly defined by geopolitical rivalries, territorial disputes, humanitarian crises, strategic competition between nation states and war

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<sup>19</sup> Legislative Council Tourism Commission has warned that Hong Kong has to diversify its tourists source in order to develop its attractions for a long run. Details see Wong, 2015.

<sup>20</sup> Schoeb (2016) has highlighted key issues of Hong Kong health care system. Details see Schoeb, 2016.

of words between leaders. However, globalization has inadvertently opened up new opportunities for “global cities” in different parts of the world, which according to Ivo Daalder, president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, “have emerged as leading actors on the global stage” (Daalder, 2015), since they seem to be more capable of generating innovative responses to common challenges. Both Geddes and Hall employed “world cities” to conceptualize the cities that are playing influential roles in international economic activities, industrial undertakings and transportation and communication networking (Geddes, 1915; Hall, 1984). In their article, Ng and Hills (2003) enriched the definition of world cities and made further elaborations on the essential elements which constitute a sustainable world city. They accentuated that a world city can be transformed into a great city by taking the following formula into consideration: Good governance and economic and technological development which would complement the cultural, environmental, social and human capacities (Ng & Hills 2003, p. 155). They also emphasized the “local characteristics” in the impacts of globalization in which a world city cannot merely serve as a constituent of the global economy, but also aiming at providing good quality of life and sustainable development of the city (Ng & Hills 2003, p. 152) and during the process, reflecting the city’s uniqueness in the flow of globalization. By putting new ideas to test, cities could help to overcome a sense of self-inflicted helplessness in the face of globalization. Moreover, global cities have propelled the creation of “super-regions” or cross-border strategic alliances between subnational governments or regions of neighbouring states (Keating, 1999).

A parallel development in recent years has been a new phenomenon known as paradiplomacy - the external relations involved in an actor’s expanding participation in the international community of subnational or regional governments and the growth of global activities carried out by subnational governments and their civil society counterparts (Tavares, 2016a; Duchacek, Latouche, & Stevenson, 1988; Keating, 1999; Kuznetsov, 2015; Aldecoa & Keating, 1999). To illustrate, international networking between cities has led to the formation of the Global Parliament of Mayors in 2016 to “tackle local challenges resulting from global problems.” (Global Parliament of Mayors, 2017). Meanwhile, the UN-sponsored Compact of Mayors has been established to provide, “a common platform to capture the impact of cities’ collective actions through standardized measurement of

emissions and climate risk.” (Compact of Mayors, 2017). In other words, sovereign states are not the sole actors in the international area. With respect to the emergence of global cities as international actors, Beck (2012) has coined the notion of “Global Domestic Politics” (Weltinnenpolitik) in an attempt to delineate what politics is like for “world cities” which are part of the world but still are part of their nations. In his words,

“Especially *world cities are an example of this reality*: they are part of the world ... but are still part of their nations. They exemplify the logic of “both/and” – of both globalism and localism, of the transnational that cohabits with the national – which is, in fact, the logic of global domestic politics (rather than “either/or”). (Italics mine)” (p. ix-x)

Why do cities go global? There is a strong functional logic underlying such fields like trade and investment, technological transfer, infrastructure, policy exchanges, environment or culture. However, it should also be noted that the growth of global activities by cities and regions has been characterized by other motivations such as identity-building and promotion of self-esteem, links with the diaspora, conflict resolution and confidence-building, and even the self-interest of subnational political elites to present themselves on the global stage. In many cases, such activities are characterized by a high degree of involvement of civil society and the private sector. Beck’s idea that “Global Domestic Politics” is essentially “post-national” and “post-sovereign” may appear to be radical at first glance. But in a world that the interpenetration of the domestic and the global arenas has become the order of the day, global cities are expected to be less motivated by antiquated politico-ideological constructs such as patriotism and nationalism but are rather attuned to ideas, norms and “smart solutions” to address the policy challenges commonly encountered in an increasingly multi-lateral, multi-layered milieu.

It is important for global cities and their inhabitants to learn how to craft an autonomous niche in their favor so as to pursue their respective interest, to develop their identity and to project their influence as non-sovereign global actors. World cities will be more successful if they have institutions and leadership capable of arriving at a simple, clear and, most important of all, authentic definition of their identity, articulating their interest and values, and devising narratives and

corresponding policies to promote them strategically. In the end, a city's reputation both at home and abroad depends on one's ability to articulate, connect and promote such attributes. It is important to commit budgetary resources, to provide administrative support and to create the necessary structures for such actions to be visible and sustainable.

Concerning the practical issues, paradiplomacy is expected to be carried out by sub-national governments in the form of "territorial daily bread", which denotes paradiplomacy will only deal with non-military and non-diplomatic issues by the sub-national government, which includes trade and economy, cultural exchanges and health issues (Duchacek, 1990, p. 2). By taking geopolitical consideration, three categories of paradiplomacy have been proposed by Duchacek (1990): 1. Transborder regional paradiplomacy; 2. Transregional and paradiplomatic contacts; 3. Global paradiplomacy (p. 16). Transborder regional paradiplomacy concerns the formal and informal interactions across the border in order to manage the common issues and seek possible solutions. One of the salient examples is immigration issue and goods and people smuggling across US and Mexico borders (Duchacek, 1990, p. 19-20). Transregional and paradiplomatic contacts describe the interactions and collaborations of non-neighbours sub-national governments which both the central governments are neighbours (Duchacek, 1990, p. 25). For instance, Ontario, Alberta, and Quebec have sub-national interactions with New York City (Duchacek, 1990, p. 19 & p. 26). For the global paradiplomacy, it represents the extensive exchanges and cooperation of economic development, cultural dialogue and industrial collaborations between sub-national governments. For instance, there are more than 100 collaborations between some of the major US cities and Canadian provinces (Duchacek, 1990, p. 27) and they mainly manage the issues such as environmental protection, cultural interchange, scientific and technological development and education and training (Martínez, 2017).

Duchacek (1990) has regarded Hong Kong as one of the main actors of global paradiplomacy in the international system, with a substantial global network connecting with other sub-national governments like Quebec, Maine, New York (p. 19). However, we are of the view that the institutional and normative contexts in which Hong Kong's "global actorness" require careful analysis before jumping to a premature conclusion about its soft power and paradiplomatic capacity.

## 2.5 Theoretical Framework

The concept of soft power was originated from the views on the post-cold war era's international relations and world order proposed by Liberal Institutionalists. Keohane and Nye (1977) elaborated in *Power and Interdependence* that the advantages of cooperation would further exert heavy influences and changes in the world system. Liberal Institutionalism highlights the ideas about giving prominence to the global connectivity and mutual interdependence between states, non-state actors and the civil societies through communication, cooperation and consensual-building within recognized international institutions and mechanism under the prominence of globalization and modernization (Keohane & Nye, 1977; Keohane, 1984). Those institutions create platforms and capacities to let states cooperate and overcome obstacles in a collaborative manner.

Liberal Institutionalists declined states as the only chief players in international relations and tried to comprise Liberalism (international economic orders by free trade) and Realism (The concept of power) under consensual international institutions as a medium to formulate principles, regulations, values, and ideologies. This kind of mechanism would be regulated and modulated under international organizations as to legitimate the leading states and to empower the smaller states by establishing advantageous rules and norms (Nye, 1990b; Krasner, 1983). The interdependence framed under international institutional arrangement would justify the policies and the actions which involved different stakeholders, for instance, forming political or economic alliances, providing foreign aid or engaging in military operations etc. (Keohane & Nye, 1977, p. 6). This inclination actually echoed what Burton (1965) submitted to avoid the exercise of power, i.e. the force could place threats, as the tool of foreign policy, but influence, dialogue, and mutual understanding will replace any forms of power calculation and power maximization. Some changes in the world order could be perceived like the globalization causing the interdependence of the international economic system, the rising significance of transnational actors and the development of military technology among states (Hackbarth, 2008). This phenomenon helped weaken the efficacy of military and economic power when international actors deal with each other. The liberal institutionalists advocate the universally-accepted rules, ideologies and values

should be the rationale of setting up international institutions, which the states, non-states actors, ruling elites and the ruled are willing to identify and comply with the consensual rules in those international institutions. This legitimacy agreed by states and other stakeholders shape the consensus of the world orders and international relations.

As the HKSAR is a non-sovereign international actor and is regarded as a sub-national political entity, liberal institutionalism to some extent is applicable to the HKSAR. However, the city does not have full legitimacy to participate in international organizations if they require state as the unit to apply as the member of those international organizations or empowered by the state to become member of international organizations. As a result, liberal institutionalism may have limitations to help analyze this research in a comprehensive and dynamic way even though the theory is the origin of soft power. Instead, new institutionalism and normative theory are employed in this study to help in analyzing how the HKSAR incorporate its institutional ambits and normative situation in the society to expand its soft power and increase its international influences.

### **2.5.1 New Institutionalism - The Institutional Environment for the HKSAR Government to Execute Paradiplomacy**

Political institutions are the salient determinants of social and political analysis. The role of institutions are the mechanisms to regulate and balance the forces of interest, power, resources, and knowledge and contribute to collective outcomes which will be favourable to most of the people in the society (Krasner, 1982). New institutionalists like March and Olsen (1989) tend to regard institutions as “determining, ordering or modifying individual motives and as acting autonomously in terms of institutional interests” (p.4). New institutionalists focus their research interests in the outcomes of autonomous governments, the institutional settings for power distributions and the public policy (Robertson, 1993).

In particular, new institutionalists emphasize how the institutions affect the norm, social order, political culture, collective identity, belonging, trust, and solidarity of the society (Ferguson, 1984; March and Olsen, 1984; Hattam, 1990; Rothstein, 1996). Therefore, moving from a static descriptive explanation of politics with reference to the nature of institutions such as states (Wilson, 1898;

Wright, 1977), governments (Kjellberg, 1975), public policy (Hanf & Scharpf, 1978; Aberbach, Putnam, & Rockman, 1981), political management skills (Whicker & Moore, 1988) and political system (Nordlinger, 1981), considered how we are more concerned about how institutions affect the political development in society (Krasner, 1978; Skocpol, 1979).

In this research, institutionalism has been incorporated as one of the theoretical pillars to explain to what extent the institutional set-up of the HKSAR government has affected the performance of the city’s soft power and paradiplomacy. The institutions of the HKSAR has generally received positive appraisal (Table 5) and particularly, with reliable legal system and international-standard financial infrastructure (Yam, 2006), hence to attract a lot of foreign direct investment and the multinational corporations to set up regional headquarters in the city<sup>21</sup>.

**Table 5 – The ranking of institutions of the HKSAR in The Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2018**

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>The ranking of institutions of the HKSAR</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> (Out of 144 places)	8 <sup>th</sup> (Out of 140 places)	9 <sup>th</sup> (Out of 138 places)	9 <sup>th</sup> (Out of 137 places)

*Source:* Schwab (2015, 2016, 2017 & 2018).

However, the paradiplomatic space and capacity in relation to the city’s soft power has to be further evaluated. As to the question how the HKSAR government actualize its paradiplomacy and how the HKSAR government present its rationales and protect its global identity, section 1.1 gives a general picture on how the HKSAR has engaged into the international community.

To what extent paradiplomacy is allowed in the case of Hong Kong, which could be a challenge or an opportunity for the whole nation (Kuznetsov, 2015), not least because Beijing has always claimed that Hong Kong’s affairs are domestic

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<sup>21</sup> However, Singapore has already replaced Hong Kong to become the most favorable destination for the multinational corporations to set up regional headquarters in the region. Details see Hong Kong Business, 2018.

ones and that it would absolutely not allow any form of interlopes by the international society. China strongly resisted “intervention” from Britain in the situation of law enforcement in the HKSAR (Hong Kong Free Press, 2016). Recently, the HKSAR government dismissed the human rights report written by Hong Kong Watch and emphasized: “foreign organizations should not interfere in the internal affairs of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region” (News.gov.hk, HKSAR, 2018). It is of vital importance to consider Young (2009) has examined how the international society has shaped and influenced the decision-making and public policy of an institution (p. 178). It is expected a non-sovereign political entity cannot easily ignore or dismiss the comments, preferences, and values from the global community. Two questions have to be considered here. First, being an active non-sovereign international actor, how does the HKSAR government perceive and respond to the comments, experiences, and values from the global community to bring favourable outcomes for Hong Kong? Second, how the attitude and stance of the HKSAR government affect the city’s soft power?

### **2.5.2 Normative Theory – Fostering Soft Power for the HKSAR**

Value is one of the key soft power resources identified by Nye (2004a & 2011a). By pursuing “the good life of the political community” (Pietrzyk-Reeves, 2017, p. 176), politics and ethics should not be separated, hence, what ought to be done is always the values, ideas, and thoughts what the governments or political leaders should do (Vincent, 1986; Cohen, 2003). In a practical way, normative theory embraces through the interactions and negotiation of people, norms, code of conducts and behaviors, institutions like law and regulations and shared understandings of morality will be the consensus eventually agree by the society in question (Jones, 1991; Mansbach, 2012), placing a legitimate ground for public and political order for its members. Normative theory intends to provide “critical assessment of the assumptions and philosophical foundations of political action and allows for the overcoming of the separation between politics and ethics” (Pietrzyk-Reeves, 2017, p. 179), hence, to evaluate the meaning and the value content of particular political decisions and political behaviors. Normative theory aims to introduce alternatives for the institutions and political leaders to obtain their desirable objectives (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1971), in particular, “through discussion, deliberation and negotiation—to find the common principles of social

and political order that should prevail in society” (Goodin, & Klingemann, 1998, p. 138).

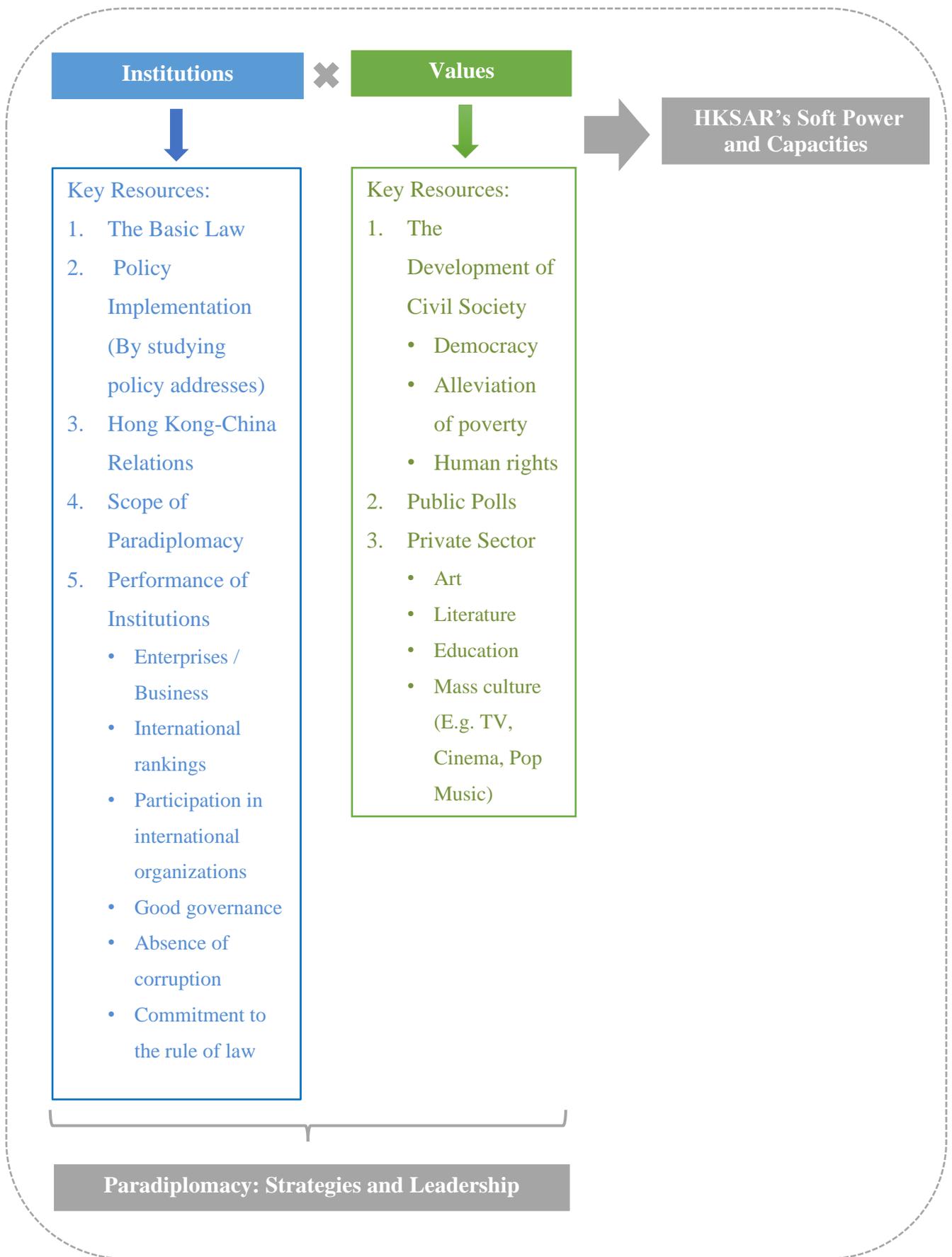
A lot of contemporary issues are discussed and analyzed based on normative theory, for instance, human rights, world peace, issue of justice and arms controls. All those issues start with the discussion and evaluation of the values and moralities behind the political actions. Vincent (1986) proposed that human rights is the foundation for a universally-applicable global norm (p. 3). The integration of normative issues like human rights in the analysis of world politics is significant (Dyer, 1997). The nature of human rights stemmed from political philosophers such as Hobbes and Locke, shedding light on the standard of human rights as the constitutional principles of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizens, the American Declaration of Independence and the contemporary 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights in United Nations (Rayner, 2018). This proved that human rights as a normative parameter are basically recognized in a long history of political context. John Rawls (1971, 1999) emphasized the importance of embedding values into the construction of institutions for the well-being of the society in his seminal work *A Theory of Justice*. In this view, the institutions should comply with the public consensus with the ideas of justice and respect the diversities in the society (Rawls, 1999).

John Rawls’ elaborations on how the institutions can act as a medium to deliver the values such as justice and fairness in society steer a reflection on how the HKSAR can further utilize its paradiplomacy to boost its soft power, i.e. the promotion of the city’s values in the international community. The research aims to explore how the HKSAR government and different sectors in Hong Kong society articulate and project commonly agreed values through the different institutions and policy channels. One of the key investigations of this research is to examine the dynamics between government (public)-creative sector as well as government-civil society interaction on the promotion of soft power in Hong Kong, hence, to evaluate the soft power performance in a more dynamic way.

Diagram E sums up the theoretical framework specifically designed for this study. By considering and evaluating both the HKSAR’s institutions and the values as the key resources in society, this study will be able to evaluate the paradiplomatic and soft power capacities and to determine whether the capacities will fortify the

city's identity as a non-sovereign international actor. Capacity is defined as the extent to which the HKSAR increase its soft power through paradiplomacy of Hong Kong under Chinese sovereignty.

**Diagram E: Theoretical framework of the study**



**Diagram F: Author's conceptual framework**

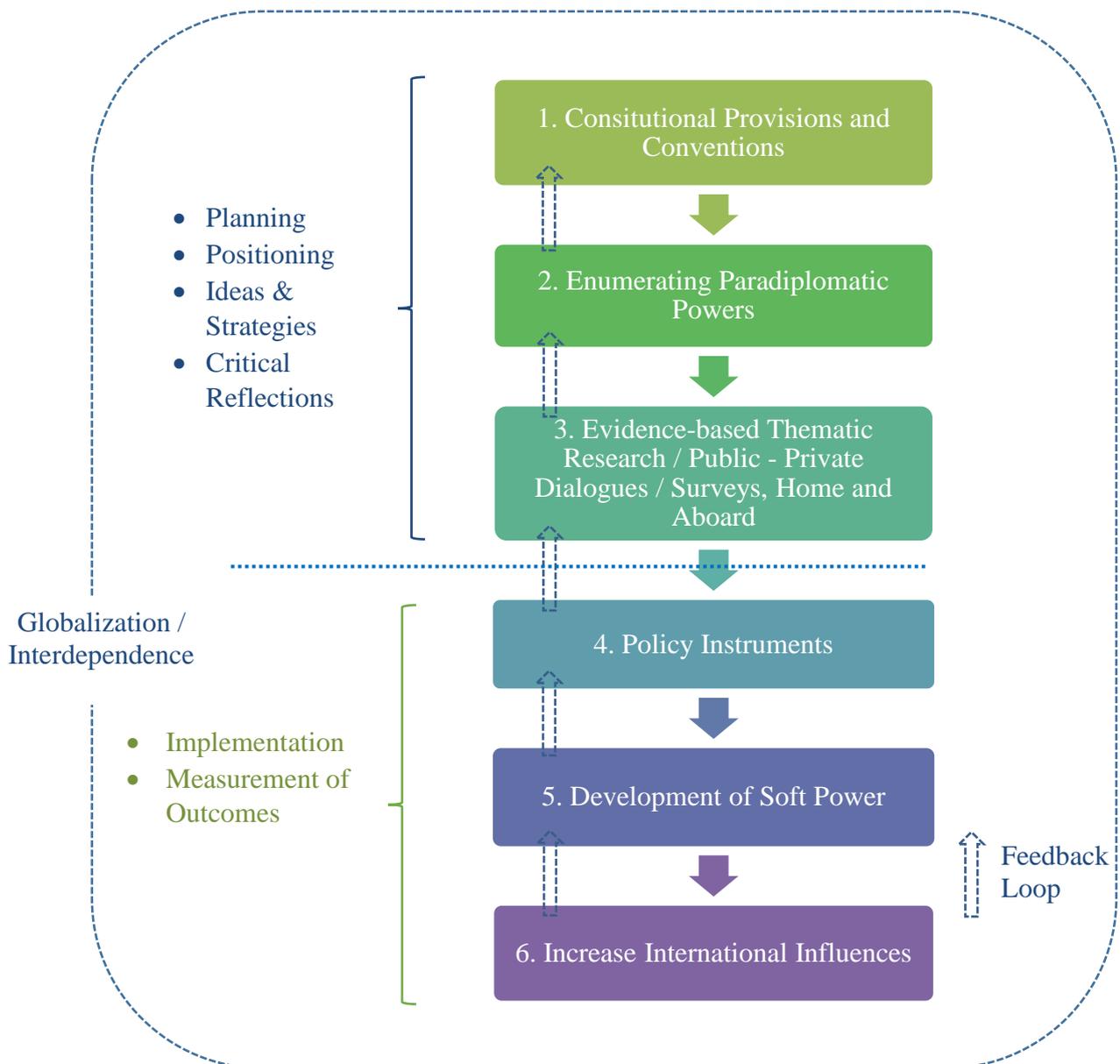


Diagram E outlines the conceptual framework for this study, which takes paradiplomacy, policy instruments, and soft power into focus. For the HKSAR, the key is to examine how Hong Kong can convert its paradiplomatic powers stipulated in the Basic Law to policy instruments which will boost its soft power, whilst simultaneously, maintain a cooperative manner with China. Paradiplomatic powers granted to Hong Kong could be combined with the practices and experiences from Hong Kong's non-public entities as to consolidate a more comprehensive and systematic strategy for soft power enhancement. Based on the fact that there is no department in the HKSAR government coordinating and organizing Hong Kong's

external affairs, this research does not intend to suggest instituting a new department or organization to execute the coordination of external affairs, rather, this research intends to review the dynamics between the concepts of both paradiplomacy and soft power and how the current situation of the collaboration between public and non-public for further soft power enhancement<sup>22</sup>. Research, surveys, and dialogues with other entities are advised to be taken into consideration before implementing policies related to global coverage and soft power enhancement. Studies and surveys about the self-perception of Hong Kong people and how international others perceive Hong Kong are crucial for policy design and implementation. Constructing dialogues with stakeholders is also indispensable to comprehend and envisage potential soft power.

Diagram F also demonstrates that there are two levels of analysis to be conducted in this study. The interviews with the HKSAR officials and the informed interviewees from different sectors and backgrounds will shed light on how the HKSAR government has exercised its paradiplomatic power specified in the Basic Law and the degree of incorporating research and public-other sectors dialogues into the process of policy making and policy implementation. Planning, positioning, and reflections are expected to be done by the HKSAR government in order to extend the city's influences through different channels. For the level of implementation and measurement of outcomes, it is expected that the interviewees can help the author to evaluate Hong Kong's soft power by examining its assets, capacities, strategies, performances, and prospects as well as comparing China and Hong Kong's performances on soft power, hence, how Hong Kong can position itself in both the paradigm of China's public diplomacy and international stage.

The awareness of Hong Kong's soft power by Hong Kong leadership would bring consensus to further policy coordination and implementation. Policy arrangement is essential to preserve and promote soft power in order to shape Hong Kong into a more attractive and influential global city. Hence, the uniqueness and the vibrancy of the city could be reasserted in both the international stage and the national strategic plan of Mainland China. This would fortify the foothold of Hong

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<sup>22</sup> For the information about policy coordination of the HKSAR government, see also Neves, 2003, p. 170-175; Shen, 2016, p. 36-38.

Kong under the principle of “One Country, Two Systems” in the constitution by identifying the values and identity of the HKSAR.

The research questions are set with the purpose to verify whether the soft power has been articulated by the HKSAR government’s policies and strategies granted by the paradiplomacy stipulated in the Basic Law as to thrive the values, identity and negotiating power for the city under the sovereignty of Mainland China. Furthermore, a comprehensive feedback mechanism is expected to evaluate how the HKSAR’s soft power promotes and functions overseas, in order to have more effective external affairs’ strategies for the city’s identity. For the case of non-sovereign entities like the HKSAR, soft power within the paradiplomatic scope can actually help Hong Kong to achieve political goals which are distinctive but complementary with those of China. Soft power can improve Hong Kong’s international status and help China pursue a favorable political environment for its public diplomacy which is regarded as a key practice of foreign policy of China.

The following five hypotheses will be tested along with the research questions, which reveal the relations between the institutions and the values in the HKSAR, hence, to consolidate the capacities, limitations, and prospects of the city’s soft power and its identity as a non-sovereign international actor.

*H1: Both institutions and values of the HKSAR are crucial for boosting the city’s soft power*

*H2: The institution of the HKSAR limits the fostering of norms and values in Hong Kong society*

*H3: The insufficiency of debates, deliberations, negotiations and promotion of values in Hong Kong society will undermine the city’s soft power*

*H4: The paradiplomactic powers provided by the Basic Law for the HKSAR have not been fully utilized by the HKSAR government to articulate and promote the city’s soft power*

*H5: With weak collaboration between government and civil society or the cultural sectors, there has been a weakening of the global identity of Hong Kong as a non-sovereign international actor*

## 2.6 Research Methodologies

This study adopts a multi-pronged method to investigate Hong Kong's soft power and its leaders' capabilities in upholding the city's international profile under "One Country, Two Systems". Through studying the international indexes, surveys of public opinion, official documents and conducting in-depth interviews, it intends to evaluate the soft power capacities of Hong Kong within paradiplomatic ambits of the city.

As a means to respond to the designed research questions on Hong Kong soft power, triangulation of qualitative research data would be implemented as the research methodology in this research. By inviting three groups of interviewees, i.e. academic scholars, HKETOs' officials and people experienced in the film industry and international NGOs to attend semi-structured in-depth interviews. Purposive sampling is adopted in the research as the interviewees should have the "key relevance to the subject matter" (Ritchie, Lewis, Elam, Tennant, & Rahim, 2014, p. 113) and the interviewees are expected to comment and evaluate how Hong Kong's soft power practice and disseminate internationally.

Soft power, generally speaking, is precipitated by different sectors in the society such as creative industry, media, education, tourism etc. On that account, 3 groups of interviewees have been invited to attend the in-depth interviews. Scholars who specialize in soft power give their opinions on the capacities, directions, and limitations on promoting Hong Kong's soft power by considering the impacts of political environment like Hong Kong-China relations and Hong Kong's civil society. Two Asian scholars who are familiar with Hong Kong politics and China-Hong Kong relations were invited to participate in the interviews. Thus, the interview data from scholars brings conceptual insights into the HKSAR's identity and uniqueness under China's rule. The HKETOs officials were invited to comment on the interaction of the HKSAR government and the HKETOs on executing Hong Kong external relations and its soft power, the level of recognizing Hong Kong's soft power and their flexibility of executing paradiplomatic power overseas. People experienced in film industry and international NGOs highlighted the situation of maintaining dialogues with the HKSAR government, how the civil society and international NGOs work on Hong Kong soft power and how the HKSAR

government facilitates the development of film industry. The details of interviewees are listed in Table 6.

**Table 6: List of Interviewees in the research<sup>23</sup>**

Group	Name of Interviewee	Date of Interview	Place of Interview	Position and Affiliation
<b>Scholars</b>	Prof Kurata Toru	1st Sept 2017	Tokyo, Japan	Professor College of Law and Politics, Department of Politics, Rikkyo University, Tokyo
	Prof Chen Chien-fu	19 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2017	Taipei, Taiwan	Associate Professor, Graduate Institute of China Studies, Tamkang University, Taipei, Taiwan
<b>HKETO Officials</b>	Mr. A*	30th Aug 2017		
	Mr. B*	9th Oct 2017		
<b>Film Sectors</b>	Ms. Deniece Law	27th Nov 2017	Kowloon Bay, Hong Kong	Director, Hong Kong Local Film
	Mr. C*	26 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2018		
<b>International NGO Leaders</b>	Mr. D*	2nd Apr 2018		
	Ms. Au Mei Po	4th Jun 2018	Kowloon Tong,	Former director, Amnesty

<sup>23</sup> Details see Appendix A and Appendix B.

Group	Name of Interviewee	Date of Interview	Place of Interview	Position and Affiliation
			Hong Kong	International Hong Kong
<b>Media</b>	Mr. Stephen Vines	19th Mar 2018	Shatin, Hong Kong	Hong Kong-based journalist and editor of various international newspapers

\* The invited interviewees have signed on the informed consent statement that they chose the option *not to be identified* in the research paper. The names, position, affiliation, and place of interviews will not be disclosed here.

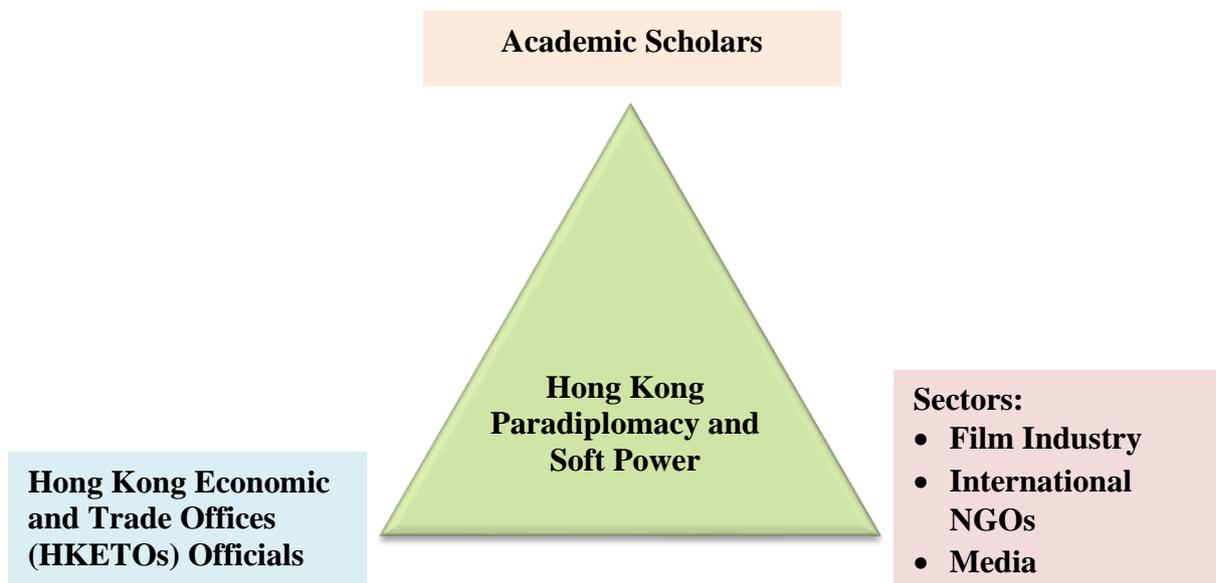
Further validation of interaction between the qualitative interview data would be examined and analysed by triangulating the three groups of qualitative data. Triangulation of qualitative data could complement the institutional analysis and quantitative findings of this study (Decrop, 1999) and hence, to raise the significance of conclusions. Triangulation is a research-validating process which “involves careful reviewing of data collected through different methods in order to achieve a more accurate and valid estimate” (Hoyo & Allen, 2006, p. 42). Simply speaking, this is a cross-validating procedure when scholars doing qualitative researches (Wiersma, 2000). If different qualitative sources proceed towards the same answer for the research questions after doing the triangulation, a more unambiguous finding and estimation would be produced. It can also limit personal and methodological biases and increase the generalizability of the research (Decrop, 1999).

For this study, data triangulation (Denzin, 1978) has been adopted in this research by identifying stakeholders of Hong Kong’s soft power to participate in in-depth interviews as to acquire insights from different perspectives on nurturing Hong Kong’s soft power. Evaluations, opinions, and suggestions from each group would be compared to deduce the similarities as well as the variances. It is expected the triangulation of the interviews of three groups of interviewees will provide

consensus and directions on paradiplomacy, soft power and the Hong Kong-China relations. The expected consensus illustrates 3 group interviewees have built rapport with each other and support the consensus. If no consensus can be achieved through the triangulation of the interviews, it illustrates different groups of people have different perceptions and aspirations of the HKSAR, hence, a more consolidated social consensus should be further built in the future. The method of triangulation of this study does not intend to achieve generalizability from the analysis of interview data but for the purpose of this study, it has enabled a cross-sectoral comparison of insights and observations of strategic stakeholders who have direct experiences with the subject matter of this investigation, namely soft power, paradiplomacy and Hong Kong's global status.

As there is a small quantity of academic literature, documents and data on analysing Hong Kong's soft power, instead of using secondary data, the triangulation of in-depth interviews is expected to fill the gap and to enrich the literature on Hong Kong soft power (Diagram G):

**Diagram G: Triangulation of qualitative research data**



*Source: Author.*

## Chapter 3

### The Impacts of the City's Institutions and "Mainlandization" on Soft Power Assets

#### 3.1 Considering the Applications of Paradiplomacy for the HKSAR

Understanding how soft power works for global cities is critical. Hong Kong is no stranger to the logic of "Global Domestic Politics" and recently conceived notions of global cities and paradiplomacy. As Sassen (2001) puts it, "since its inception, Hong Kong has been a key intersection of different worlds ... as well as among all the overseas Chinese communities." (p. 174). During the colonial era, Hong Kong people built a stable and prosperous city against the backdrop of chronic turmoil in Communist China. In fact, Hong Kong's global status with its "western outlook" has boosted the city's self-esteem and constituted the identity of its inhabitants who are predominantly Chinese. In terms of geopolitical considerations, Ting (2004) claims it is important to protect the integrity of Hong Kong as a city, "where the economic and political interests of many Western countries are hinged. The continual participation of the Western triad, that is, the United States, Japan, and Europe is extremely crucial to the success of this city." (p. 188). Rezvani (2012) also asked observers not to lose sight of "the considerable levels of political influence of Hong Kong's economic status." (p. 102).

Zhou Enlai, during a meeting with Shanghai businessmen, recognized Hong Kong's three strategic values for the international development of China. First, Hong Kong could act as a trade and investment hub for China's development; second, Hong Kong could as a role model for the business management and techniques for the export and import industry; and third, Hong Kong could be a mediator between China and the rest of the world, which Hong Kong could observe, exchange and connect with the overseas for China (Shi & Li, 1995, p. 380; Wang, 1997). A report conducted by the Shanghai Institute of International Studies and the Central Policy Unit precisely recommended Hong Kong could be the public diplomatic outpost of China by utilizing its competence of external relations. In particular, Hong Kong can complete some diplomatic tasks which China may find controversies and difficulties (Central Policy Unit, the HKSAR, 2009).

Constitutionally, the Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984 and subsequently the Basic Law, have laid the political and institutional foundations for post-1997 Hong Kong to retain a high level of visibility, recognition, and legitimacy through continuous participation in the international arena. The Basic Law embodies the institutional framework for Hong Kong to continue to develop as a global city under Chinese sovereignty. The internationalized and extroverted character of Hong Kong has been unrelenting under the principle of “One Country, Two Systems,” which is unambiguously declared in the mini-constitution. This formula has confirmed China’s commitment to the international community that Hong Kong should be maintained as an international city following the 1997 political conversion (Béja, 2008), without violating its global financial competitiveness as compared to the colonial period.

Autonomy in dealing with other global actors is constitutionally guaranteed by the Basic Law and Hong Kong is regarded as an international actor that participates in international organizations, signs global agreements, and is even actively involved in political and economic mediation between states. For instance, in 1994, Hong Kong was the trade mediator between China and the United States, and eventually, the United States granted China most favored nation status (Ip, 2016). Over the past 20 years, Hong Kong has continued to develop its external relations under the auspices of the “One Country Two Systems” policy as a Special Administrative Region of China. The Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984<sup>24</sup> and the Basic Law<sup>25</sup>, the city’s mini-constitution that is crafted to protect its “high degree of autonomy” through “Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong,” have provided the political and constitutional foundations for Hong Kong’s continuous participation in the international arena (Lee & Chan, 1997, p. 177; Ip, 2016). Both London and Beijing had reassured Hong Kong people and the international community that post-handover Hong Kong would be able to take part in international affairs wherever appropriate, including but not limited to participating in international organizations, signing international agreements or even involving in political and economic mediation between states.

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<sup>24</sup> Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, HKSAR Government, 2007.

<sup>25</sup> The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China. Retrieved from <http://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclawtext/>

Article 13 of the Basic Law stipulates that while China is responsible for the foreign affairs relating to Hong Kong, “the Central People’s Government authorizes the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to conduct relevant external affairs on its own in accordance with this law.” The Basic Law proclaims Hong Kong as a separate customs territory, and allows Hong Kong to “participate in relevant international organizations and international trade agreements” using the name “Hong Kong, China.” Moreover, Hong Kong continues to maintain a shipping register and has been authorized by the Central Authorities to negotiate and conclude air service agreements<sup>26</sup>.

Article 96 allows the Hong Kong government to make “appropriate arrangements with foreign states for reciprocal juridical assistance” with the assistance or authorization of the Central People's Government. Article 150 allows the government to participate “as members of delegations of the Government of the People's Republic of China” in negotiations at the diplomatic level directly affecting the Region.

Furthermore, Article 151 and Article 152 stipulate that under the title ‘Hong Kong, China,’ Hong Kong is able to participate in international organizations and to develop its global profile in the “appropriate fields,” namely economic, trade, financial and monetary, shipping, communications, tourism, cultural and sports. This limitation indicates, first, that Hong Kong would be restricted to a distinctive “division of labor” between foreign affairs, which is managed by the Central Government, and external affairs, which would be administered by the HKSAR government (Shen, 2011); second, the crucial state-centred sovereignty issue could not be mastered by Hong Kong; and third, China intends to utilize the intrinsic international characteristics and foreign engagement of Hong Kong so as to benefit both economically and politically in the country reform and modernization since the Deng era. Hong Kong is expected to demonstrate its international character through its free society<sup>27</sup>, rule of law, the principle of laissez-faire market, etc. China, without hesitation, has agreed to preserve Hong Kong’s international identity after 1997, which is principally in tune with both China’s strategic interest

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<sup>26</sup> As an aviation hub, Hong Kong connects with no less than 190 cities with direct international flights.

<sup>27</sup> Hong Kong consecutively topped the Human Freedom Index from 2011 to 2016 but fell to the second place in 2017. For details, see Cato Institute (2017).

and has promised to maintain the city's special status for 50 years (Article 5 of the Basic Law).

Of equal importance, Article 149 of the Basic Law states that “Non-governmental organizations in fields such as education, science, technology, culture, art, sports, the professions, medicine and health, labor, social welfare and social work as well as religious organizations in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region may maintain and develop relations with their counterparts in foreign countries and regions and with relevant international organizations. They may, as required, use the name ‘Hong Kong, China’ in the relevant activities.”

Moreover, under Article 153, “the application to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of international agreements to which the People’s Republic of China is or becomes a party shall be decided by the Central People’s Government, in accordance with the circumstances and needs of the Region, *and after seeking the views of the government of the Region.*” (Italics mine) With regards to international agreements to which the People's Republic of China is not a party but which are implemented in Hong Kong may continue to be implemented in the HKSAR. The same article further requires Beijing to “authorize or assist the government of the Region to make appropriate arrangements for the application to the Region of other relevant international agreements”<sup>28</sup>.

According to Article 39 of the Basic Law, “the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and international labor conventions as applied to Hong Kong shall remain in force and shall be implemented through the laws of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.” Last but not least, Articles 154 to 157 deal respectively with the powers of Hong Kong to issue the HKSAR passports and to conduct immigration control; the right to establish “official and semi-official economic and trade missions” in foreign countries; and the establishment of foreign consulates in Hong Kong<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> There are 265 international treaties applicable to Hong Kong (as at 14 May 2018). See Department of Justice, the Government of the HKSAR (2018).

<sup>29</sup> As at 1.4.2017, there are 62 Consulates-General, 59 Consulates and 6 “Officially Recognized Bodies” (such as the European Union Office) in Hong Kong.

It is important to note that Article 13 of the Basic Law also states “The Central People's Government shall be responsible for the foreign affairs relating to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China shall establish an office in Hong Kong to deal with foreign affairs” but in the same article also claims that HKSAR is allowed to conduct ‘external affairs’. The case of Edward Snowden evidently emphasized how Hong Kong had carried out its external affairs stipulated by the Basic Law. Edward Snowden emphasized Hong Kong was his choice to stay at as Hong Kong has “a spirited commitment to free speech and the right of political dissent” (BBC News, 2013). Article 6 in the U.S.-Hong Kong Extradition Treaty also gave promising protection of political dissenters which Hong Kong could refuse the request of United States to surrender the person(s)<sup>30</sup>. This case not only demonstrated the soft power of Hong Kong, i.e. the freedom of speech but also showed that Hong Kong has its independence and space to lubricate the foreign relations between China and other countries (Shen, 2016, p. 32). However, Snowden did not remain in Hong Kong but had to leave for Russia, showing the limitation of Hong Kong’s autonomy stipulated by the Basic Law, Washington, and the international community. This illustrates the unclear line between foreign affairs and external affairs, which grants Hong Kong flexibility in handling issues related to foreign stakeholders or the events related to politics.

While in some ways “One Country, Two Systems” is a triumph of pragmatism over dogma, and the Basic Law is subject to two different legal-political traditions—socialist and common law, the Chinese leaders have held on to an antiquated notion of sovereignty which is supreme and illimitable (Horlemann, 2003). Against this background, Hong Kong has been closely monitored by Beijing for any sign of foreign powers or external forces “meddling” and any form of action initiated by international bodies towards Hong Kong. China has made known its long-standing disapproval of what it regarded as the “internationalization” of the Hong Kong Question before and after 1997. In response to critics, Beijing’s line-

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<sup>30</sup> Original statement in the Article 6 of U.S.-Hong Kong Extradition Treaty: “Under the proposed Hong Kong Agreement the Secretary retains independent authority to determine whether a request may be denied because it is politically motivated.” See also The U.S. Government Publishing Office, 1997.

to-take is simply that “foreign countries do not have the right to interfere in its affairs”(Radio Television Hong Kong News, 2017).

During the 2014 pro-democracy “Umbrella Movement,” members of the UK Parliament intended to visit Hong Kong to take evidence as part of their inquiry into the state of “One Country, Two Systems” in general and Hong Kong democratic predicaments in particular, but their intended visit was strongly opposed by the Chinese, albeit the Basic Law provides the HKSAR Government with “full autonomy on immigration control matters.” In the event, the MPs were denied entry and the trip did not take place. According to Sir Richard Ottaway, the UK House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman, China’s deputy ambassador, Ni Jian, in announcing the ban, in effect asserted that the Sino-British Joint Declaration “is now void and only covered the period from the signing in 1984 until the handover in 1997 ” (The Parliament of the United Kingdom, 2014). Benedict Rogers, a human rights activist, was also rejected to entry Hong Kong to visit Joshua Wong and Alex Chow who were imprisoned for their participation in the Umbrella Movement. Benedict Rogers had promised that he would not engage in any public and media interviews in Hong Kong but China kept sending threatening messages to him through the Chinese embassy in London and finally he was sent back to Thailand immediately by Hong Kong immigration (Rogers, 2017).

During the colonial era, Hong Kong people cherished their freedoms and the rule of law traditions against the backdrop of political turmoil in socialist China. With China’s ascension to power in global affairs, hard authoritarianism has posed serious threats to the civil liberties in Hong Kong with illiberal tendencies which block democratic reforms, limit the exercise of political rights, weaken the protection for human rights, and reduce transparency and accountability in the exercise of its power. Notwithstanding the promise of universal suffrage, the methods for selecting the Chief Executive and Legislative Council members have remained neither free nor fair.

Meanwhile, Beijing has curtailed Hong Kong’s autonomy, the rule of law, and judicial independence by delivering a number of controversial decisions and interpretations of the Basic Law (Chan, 2016; Tamanaha, 1989). The power of interpretation is vested in the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, which is essentially a political organ of a Leninist one-party regime. In

recent years, it is not uncommon for the pro-Beijing and pro-government camp to assert that the exercise of human rights and the process of democratization must be balanced with reference to alternative “values” including “stability and prosperity,” “the executive-led government,” “nationalism,” “patriotism,” “sovereignty,” “the supremacy of the NPC over Hong Kong,” and “national security.” (Cheung, Cheung, & So, 2015; Xinhua, 2016).

On 10 June 2014, the State Council of the People’s Republic of China published a White Paper on The Practice of the “One Country, Two Systems” Policy in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (The State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China, 2014). According to which,

*There are lines and criteria to be observed in implementing “Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong,” that is what Deng Xiaoping stressed, Hong Kong must be governed by the Hong Kong people with patriots as the mainstay, as loyalty to one’s country is the minimum political ethic for political figures. Under the policy of “one country, two systems,” all those who administrate Hong Kong, including the chief executive, principal officials, members of the Executive Council and Legislative Council, judges of the courts at different levels and other judicial personnel, have on their shoulders the responsibility of correctly understanding and implementing the Basic Law, of safeguarding the country’s sovereignty, security and development interests, and of ensuring the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. In a word, loving the country is the basic political requirement for Hong Kong’s administrators. If they are not consisted of by patriots as the mainstay or they cannot be loyal to the country and the HKSAR, the practice of “one country, two systems” in the HKSAR will deviate from its right direction, making it difficult to uphold the country’s sovereignty, security and development interests, and putting Hong Kong’s stability and prosperity and the wellbeing of its people in serious jeopardy. (Section 5, point 3)*

That Beijing and the conservative elites in Hong Kong have never shared the city’s strong aspirations for a democratic, free and diverse society is not at all surprising (Chan, 2004). They fear that Hong Kong can easily become a base for subversion against the Communist regime in China. What is surprising, however, is that the ruling elites have stubbornly held on to a rather narrow, economic-oriented imagery of Hong Kong in the face of political gridlocks and a restless society as a result of chronic political system failures. Since 1997, the “patriotic” camp, which has constituted the mainstay of the establishment of Hong Kong by

*default*, has championed rapid integration with the Mainland at both national and regional levels, emphasizing the immediate economic gains and potential opportunities for growth.

In recent years, in line with China's 13<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan, Hong Kong was expected to throw its weight behind the "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) and the "Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area" (GBA) project. In response, the Chief Executive C. Y. Leung has on numerous occasions described Hong Kong as a "super-connector" between China and the rest of the world (Leung, 2017)<sup>31</sup>. Hesitations and procrastination, warned "the patriots" and their political masters in Beijing, will result in Hong Kong's marginalization and isolation as Shanghai and Shenzhen are fast-developing to challenge Hong Kong's position. In March 2017, Zhang Dejiang, the chairman of the National People Congress (NPC) and the third most powerful man of China, reportedly warned that Shenzhen could overtake Hong Kong within two years if people of Hong Kong "continued to overly politicize every issue and shift its focus from boosting its domestic economy." (Luo, 2017)<sup>32</sup>. The impacts of Hong Kong on the Chinese economy keep dwindling and the city becomes less important in the Chinese economy. The shrinking significance of Hong Kong in China's economy consequently create more room for China to interfere in Hong Kong's affairs, especially by bringing economic and political benefits to Hong Kong's different sectors.

The media industry is one of the salient cases. The original design of "One Country, Two Systems" implied both the preservation of Hong Kong original ways of life, systems, values and identity and The Under Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Ronald Chan Ngok-pang also emphasized that the Basic Law "will not expire automatically after 2047 but will remain effective beyond 2047" (Legislative Council, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region 2016, p. 2443), policy implementation is already proven as another means to integrate Hong Kong and China. Evidence from Beijing's further intervention in Hong Kong's affairs already hinted that China will try every means to engage in Hong Kong's affairs by foregrounding both what is stipulated in the Basic Law and policy collaboration and

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<sup>31</sup> The positioning of Hong Kong as a "super-connector" was first put forward by Leung in his 2015 Policy Address.

<sup>32</sup> In 2017, Shenzhen has a GDP estimated 8.7 percent smaller than Hong Kong's; Estimating by analysts, Shenzhen's economy will outstrip Hong Kong at the end of 2018. Details see Lam, 2017.

regional integration to boost Hong Kong's economic development. Obviously, the HKSAR government will not dare to lose the support from China or avoid any possible conflicts with Beijing by self-limiting its external relations with stakeholders overseas (Neves, 2003). But it seems that the HKSAR government has underestimated the impacts of neglecting the international insights in the policies.

During the period of British colony, the British government enthusiastically promoted Hong Kong as an international city after the June 4 massacre in order to dilute Hong Kong people's dependency towards Beijing and fortified the connection between Hong Kong and international community by regarding internality of the city would be the "innate protection" which particularly attracting more expats to invest and do their businesses in Hong Kong (Yiu, 2018). Yahuda (1996) was amongst the first astute observers to suggest that Hong Kong's "international profile" may be used to measure "the degree of autonomy that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will be allowed to exercise in practice." (p. 131-134). The chairman of Economic Development Board of Singapore Beh Swan Gin articulated in a media interview that Hong Kong will become less suitable for those companies which would like to explore Asian market because of Hong Kong's "China-centric" policy orientation (Jamrisko & Zhai, 2018), implying that the HKSAR has articulated its policies more to China than the international markets. How the HKSAR government positions Hong Kong in the integration process and utilize the flexibility stipulated in the Basic Law would be worth to be discussed, which further implies how much sensitivity the HKSAR government has in order to narrate and envisage the nature of "One Country, Two Systems" and the identity of Hong Kong.

Paradoxically, the carrot-and-stick approach has divided rather than united the people of Hong Kong. Appendix C above summarizes survey findings of public trust and confidence towards the central and Hong Kong governments, "One Country, Two Systems", as well as the future of Hong Kong over the past 20 years. The data clearly show that the "One Country, Two Systems" policy has lost much of its clout among Hong Kong people when compared to the beginning of the post-handover period, there has been growing anxiety that the "high degree of autonomy" on which the city's identity, values, and norms are based may no longer be self-

evident. Critics have accused C. Y. Leung of being beholden to Beijing, implementing its wishes even at the expense of Hong Kong people<sup>33</sup>.

Meanwhile, the city's politics is in a state of flux. Widespread scepticism towards the "patriotic camp" and Beijing's plot towards Hong Kong has rapidly crystallized into an array of "localist" movements to defend the city from the threats and hazards, real or imagined, posed by the incessant convergence with the Mainland (Yew & Kwong, 2014; Fong, 2017; Kaeding, 2017) Policymakers are often hard-pressed to explain how further integration with China will not undermine Hong Kong's distinctive identity, values, way of living and its vitality as a global city. What is worrying is the growing public perception that the city's politics has become dysfunctional in the sense that not only political reforms towards a full-fledged democratic system of government have been stalled, but much needed institutional and policy innovations have also suffered as the level of trust in the government and the leaders has reached its nadir. All this does not bode well for Hong Kong.

Hong Kong's success as a global city has been inextricably linked with its freedom to articulate its identity, to uphold its values and norms, and to advance its interest the way it sees fit. However, as Beijing tightens its grip over Hong Kong, the strategic dilemma has become more acute than ever. In the words of Klosson (2002), the former US Consul-General in Hong Kong, the dilemma is "how to strike the proper balance between deeper economic interdependence with China and maintaining Hong Kong's political, cultural and economic distinctiveness."

On the one hand, some local scholars such as Chiu and Lui (2009) have tried to strike a more positive note by saying that Hong Kong has a crucial role in regional integration and may as well re-position itself to become "a Chinese global city." With regards to the BRI and the GBA, Lo (2017) suggests that Hong Kong must explore ways to "adapt to Beijing's plan" and foster deeper integration with Guangdong and Macau "in order to stay competitive." Wong (2017) believes that the GBA "will propel the region forward to spearhead BRI for infrastructure investment outreach strategy," adding that as China's ideas hub, Hong Kong is

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<sup>33</sup> Leung was heavily criticized by netizens and commentators for his reluctance to show support for the Hong Kong football team when it played against the national team twice during the FIFA World Cup qualifier in 2015. See, for example, Ejinsight 2015.

“most suited to remain a generator of infrastructural plans projects (*sic*), putting it in command of the global supply chain.” On the other hand, it is an undeniable fact that there is growing unease among Hong Kong people about the prospects of an imposed convergence with the one-party, state-capitalist system in China. A decade ago, Ting (2007) pointed out that “mainlandization” at the expense of Hong Kong’s global connections would eventually result in the city’s “provincialization.”

In May 2017, Moody’s Investors Service downgraded Hong Kong’s local currency and foreign currency issuer ratings. The announcement followed Moody’s downgrade of China’s rating, for close and tightening economic, financial and political linkages with China, such as Hong Kong’s involvement in the BRI, “risk introducing more direct contagion channels between China’s and Hong Kong’s financial markets.” (Moody’s, 2017). In a related matter, Hong Kong’s participation in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)<sup>34</sup> as a non-sovereign member in mid-2017 was not without controversy. The initiative of establishing AIIB came from President Xi Jinping in October 2013 to channel sovereign and non-sovereign financial funds into infrastructural projects under the BRI. The government suggests that membership of the multilateral development bank will help strengthen its standing and credibility in bidding for AIIB to set up a sub-office in Hong Kong, but officials are hard pressed by the opposition lawmakers to substantiate claims about “gains” for the financial services industry and professionals in Hong Kong, and there are questions about the bank’s governance and transparency under China’s control. Critics see Hong Kong’s participation as yet another example of how the government puts Beijing’s interest and ambitions above Hong Kong, where the money allocated for the bank subscription should have been spent elsewhere to meet medical and other social needs<sup>35</sup>.

The strategic dilemma that Hong Kong has to face is not uncommon for global cities in a multi-level, multi-layered and multi-stakeholder milieu. There is no quick fix solution but it is important for Hong Kong to continue to subject all policy-driven economic opportunities such as the BRI and the GBA to the stringent criteria of cost-benefit analysis. Here, the logic of functionalism will continue to

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<sup>34</sup> Hong Kong’s capital subscription amounts to US\$765.1 million (HK\$6 billion), which is about 0.765% of total AIIB capital shares.

<sup>35</sup> For details, see Finance Committee papers and minutes. (Finance Committee of Legislative Council, the HKSAR, 2016-2017)

apply. It goes without saying that the “economy first” approach will no longer serve to alleviate people’s deep-seated mistrust of the Central Government.

Moreover, as the AIIB saga has shown, it is no longer helpful to simply tell people that under “One Country, Two Systems” Hong Kong officials are able to make official trips overseas, or to use the name “Hong Kong, China” to organize, co-organize and attend countless international meetings and conferences. As for our search for a new thinking to buttress the city’s uniqueness and aspirations, here to propose that Hong Kong may take advantage of the emergent debates about paradiplomacy and to devise institutions and policies to benefit from some of the lessons gleaned. The reasons why Hong Kong must step up its efforts in the international arena to harness soft power over China and how the city may benefit from paradiplomatic actions are significant for the sustainability of “One Country, Two Systems”.

The above investigation on how Hong Kong can situate itself in China-Hong Kong relations, in China’s national plan or in the international system will direct Hong Kong to obtain well-founded benefits, which is not only limited to economic ones. Paradiplomacy that is successful should result in more soft power for global cities and also contribute to favorable policies towards the actors that engage in it. Under this logic, for a non-sovereign actor like Hong Kong, a soft power strategy can be used to exert an influence on other global actors, change undesirable political situations, or provide solutions to disputes. Thus, soft power is put forward here to act as a practical way for Hong Kong to create a path forward. The relations of paradiplomacy and soft power are the keys to execute the city’s influences and consolidate its city’s identity. While the political situation of Hong Kong cannot be easily changed by the city alone, Prof. Helen F. Siu, professor of anthropology in Yale University, advised Hong Kong should create space for itself to nurture its unique soft power and create more diversity for Hong Kong’s society (Project Citizens Foundation, 2018)<sup>36</sup>.

One has to go beyond mere expressions of optimism or pessimism in order to put forward a strategy that serves to retain a high level of visibility, recognition, respect, and legitimacy of Hong Kong in the international arena and an action plan

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<sup>36</sup> Project Citizens Forum: What Makes Hong Kong Special? on 9 June 2018, Admiralty, Hong Kong.

to advance its interests and values. In this respect, the theoretical framework based on “Global Domestic Politics,” paradiplomacy and soft power offer a sound analytical tool to help chart a new course away from the strategic dilemma which has perplexed Hong Kong under Chinese sovereignty. Hong Kong is a global actor which is able to celebrate diversity in norms and standards that are different from those in China, and the idea is to have Hong Kong’s unique global identity and values defended against such overbearing narratives as “integration” with the Mainland or “isolation,” and to have the city’s interests materialized through an action-oriented paradiplomatic strategy in a consistent manner. The connection of the concepts of soft power and paradiplomacy is always in Hong Kong’s interest by investing in soft power assets within a paradiplomatic scope and establishing a set of policy instruments to both enhance its international influences and its global city’s identity.

Kuznetsov (2015) has defined four main motives for paradiplomacy: economic, cultural, political<sup>37</sup> and cross-border housekeeping (p. 111-112). Some key practices of paradiplomacy of non-sovereign states can be considered (Table 7). Except lacking a responsible department to oversee the overall planning and implementation of an international issue, both the HKSAR government and the colonial government satisfy most of the requirements of paradiplomacy of a non-sovereign political entity. It should be noted that during the colonial era Hong Kong was advised to decide how best to participate international events and organizations on its own accord because the colony was not treated as extension of the United Kingdom. Although the HKSAR Government no longer enjoys full autonomy in its participation in international bodies, Hong Kong has developed an extensive network of overseas outposts such as Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (HKETOs), Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) and Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB). HKETOs, HKTDC, and InvestHK are responsible for the promotions of Hong Kong economy in foreign countries<sup>38</sup> and HKTB is tasked to promote Hong Kong and attract more tourists.

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<sup>37</sup> Political paradiplomacy is curbed in Hong Kong as constitutionally stated in the Basic Law, which is specified in Article 13 and Article 14 in the Basic Law (The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China)

<sup>38</sup> The past 10-year average annual expenditure of HKETOs, HKTDC, Invest Hong Kong and Hong Kong Tourism Board was 300 million, 1.5 billion, 100 million and 700 million respectively. For the details of annual budget and staffing resources, please see Appendix D.

HKETOs<sup>39</sup>, particularly, have a broader outreach which covers the brand building of Hong Kong, acts as a platform to connect to the overseas local communities and networking with current and potential worldwide business partners. Concerning the economic aspect, there is no doubt that Hong Kong does its utmost to facilitate its economic position and gain benefits from the international liberal market, as is evidenced by the data of its global competitiveness and economic performance (Appendix E). Hong Kong is a crucial regional hub, even as it faced challenges from neighbors such as Singapore (Ting & Lai, 2012), and it still attracts many multinational corporations to settle there. In 2017, there were 1,413 regional headquarters and 2,339 regional offices in Hong Kong representing parent companies located outside Hong Kong (Census and Statistic Department, The Government of the HKSAR, 2018).

The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) mainly focuses on attracting visitors to Hong Kong by “marketing and promoting Hong Kong as a travel destination worldwide” (Hong Kong Tourism Board, 2018). BrandHK is positioned as a “strategic communications programme” to promote Hong Kong as “Asia's world city” by promoting Hong Kong’s competitive edge and core values of being an international city (BrandHK, 2018). For the official visits, the HKSAR government has established “Official Visitors Programme” which aims to invite foreign dignitaries to visit Hong Kong since 1997 and as at 30 April 2018, there were over 100 foreign dignitaries at senior ministerial level have visited Hong Kong under this programme after the handover of Hong Kong (Protocol Division Government Secret, The Government of the HKSAR, 2018). As of May 2018, Hong Kong has participated in 39 international organizations limited to states and 54 international organizations not limited to states (Appendix F and Appendix G)<sup>40</sup>. As Hong Kong’s sovereignty was transferred from the UK to China, China has actively invited Hong Kong officials as the delegation of the Central government since 1997. The presences of Hong Kong officials will meliorate China’s image in the international stage and Hong Kong officials’ expertise and the standard of

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<sup>39</sup> There are 18 HKETOs overseas in China and overseas: Beijing, Guangdong, Shanghai, Chengdu, Wuhan, Taiwan, Jakarta, Singapore, Sydney, Tokyo, Brussels, London, Geneva, Berlin, New York, San Francisco, Washington and Toronto (As at June 2018) (GovHK, 2018).

<sup>40</sup> Especially, Hong Kong has obtained a higher degree to participate in international organizations which limits to states such as the Group of Twenty (G20) in 1999, The World Tourism Organization (WTO) in 1999 and The World Health Organization (WHO) in 2000 after 1997.

English language will further promote an openness and flexible environment for the meetings<sup>41</sup>. Even Hong Kong officials were only part of the delegation, they admitted that they have some flexibility when they have to get Beijing's approval (Neves, 2003, p. 179).

The HKSAR has fulfilled most of the requirement of paradiplomacy of a non-sovereign political entity and execute external affairs according to the stipulations in the Basic Law. However, how are these paradiplomatic duties done by the HKSAR are worth to be discussed and evaluated. For sovereign states, Nye (2004a & 2011a) has discussed how culture, political values, and foreign policies have become the main resources for expanding national soft power. For non-sovereign entities, both political values and foreign policies have to be considered as coming under the purview of paradiplomacy. Study on the application of soft power under the framework of paradiplomacy by non-sovereign entities is still insufficient. The interdependence situation in the international system is also applicable to non-sovereign entities. Though interest-based intentions and their pragmatism are conveyed in the paradiplomacy of non-sovereign international actors, subnational entities have to discern how the central government comprehends paradiplomacy, which could be a challenge or an opportunity for the whole nation (Kuznetsov, 2015). Taking the HKSAR as an example, the Central government always claims that Hong Kong's affairs are domestic ones and that it would absolutely not allow any form of interlopes by the international society. China has often been perturbed by any attempts to turn Hong Kong into a platform or medium for secessionism, or "subnational egocentrism" (Duchacek, 1990; Tavares, 2016b, p. 236). Would this kind of political stances limit the space of the HKSAR government to execute its paradiplomatic capacities and hence, restricts the fostering of the city's soft power?

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<sup>41</sup> For some international events like The Hague Conference on Private International Law, as the HKSAR government could not participate by itself, China had to send delegates to the events so that making Hong Kong could constitutionally participate (Neves, 2003, p. 181)

**Table 7: Hong Kong’s key practices of paradiplomacy**

<b>The Key Practices of Paradiplomacy</b>	<b>HKSAR (After 1997)</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>British Hong Kong (Before 1997)</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>1. Establishing a responsible department for international issues</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N.A.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N.A.
<b>2. Opening permanent offices in foreign countries</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	E.g. Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Hong Kong Trade Development Council, InvestHK, Hong Kong Tourism Board, BrandHK	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Since the mid-1960s, offices for managing economic and trade were set up overseas (In Chinese: 海外事務處)

The Key Practices of Paradiplomacy	HKSAR (After 1997)	Example	British Hong Kong (Before 1997)	Example
<b>3. Exploring paradiplomatic avenues such as official visits</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>E.g. In 2015, Hong Kong officials made at least 183 official visits (Standnews, 2015).</p> <p>E.g. The HKSAR government has established "Official Visitors Programme" which aims to invite foreign dignitary to visit Hong Kong (Protocol Division Government Secret, HKSAR government, 2018) (As at 30 April 2018)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>E.g. High-level visits between US and Hong Kong intensified after 1989 (Postiglione &amp; Tang, 1997, p.92) to explore measures to restore confidence in Hong Kong in the aftermath of June Fourth Incident</p> <p>E.g. In February 1994, Chris Pattern was invited officially to visit Australia (Postiglione &amp; Tang, 1997, p.94)</p>

The Key Practices of Paradiplomacy	HKSAR (After 1997)	Example	British Hong Kong (Before 1997)	Example
<b>4. Participating in international events such as exhibitions or summits</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	E.g. Until June 2013, under the name “Hong Kong, China,” Hong Kong officials participated in international conferences 20,000 times and organized/co-organized international conferences 1,000 times (Wenweipo, 2014).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Before 1997, British Hong Kong was a full member of the Commonwealth and operated under the name “Hong Kong” to join international events and participate in organizations.
<b>5. Fortifying issue-based regional networks or working groups</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	E.g. In 2015, the ICAC participated in cross-jurisdiction cooperation in a graft fight with ASEAN countries in Mainland China (ICAC, 2015).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hong Kong participated in a wide range of regional networks or working groups before 1997 (Appendix F)
<b>6. Joining international events as an official delegation of the central government</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Until June 2013, Hong Kong officials, on behalf of the delegation of the PRC Central government, participated in international conferences more	Not Applicable	During the colonial period, the British government tended to treat Hong Kong as a separate entity and did not treat Hong Kong as part of British delegation (See Chu, 2017, pp. 204-207)

The Key Practices of Paradiplomacy	HKSAR (After 1997)	Example	British Hong Kong (Before 1997)	Example
		than 1,400 times (Wenweipo, 2014).		

*Source: Author, adapted from Kuznetsov, 2015, p. 111-112*

## **3.2 The Changing Hong Kong-China Relations and Their Impacts on Soft Power**

### **3.2.1 Hong Kong-China Relations**

Since the handover in 1997, Hong Kong has changed from a British colony to become a Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) under the People's Republic of China (PRC). A political experiment whereby a Communist party-state managing a capitalist enclave has since commenced. Under this unprecedented arrangement, Hong Kong's capitalist has been given a constitutional guarantee for 50 years (The Basic Law, Chapter I, Article 5). 'One Country, Two Systems' affirms unequivocal statements which guarantee the people of Hong Kong to enjoy a high degree of autonomy in the affairs of government administration except in the areas of defense and foreign affairs (The Basic Law, Chapter II, Articles 13-14). The entitled right also extends to the external affairs under the name of "Hong Kong, China" in particular areas like economic, trade, financial and monetary, shipping, communications, tourism, cultural and sports fields (The Basic Law, Chapter VII, Article 151).

Due to China's poor human rights records, Hong Kong people have long been skeptical about Beijing's approach towards the HKSAR government. The 1989 Tiananmen Incident constituted a significant political lesson for Hong Kong people who have continued to distance the Chinese Community Regime. This triggered a brain drain of middle-class and professional families to Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, reaching a record number of 66,000 émigrés in 1992 (Chan, 1997, p. 24). In order to place a high recognition of 'One Country, Two Systems', the US Congress has passed the US-HK Policy Act in 1992 which US recognizes Hong Kong as an autonomous political body from China (The US-HK Policy Act, 1992; Tang, 2007, p. 420). This "special treatment" of the bilateral agreement would keep careful observation on Hong Kong's developments in different perspectives, including to what extent China pledges to the Basic Law granting the city with high autonomy (Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, 2018). Jardine & Matheson and the headquarter of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation have evacuated from Hong Kong to Bermuda and London respectively (Chan, 1997, p. 24). Hong Kong people

detected that the blueprint of Hong Kong's success: freedom which was secured by the rule of law, unique international status with a strong advocate on free trade and low tax system, the integrity of institutions and system would possibly deteriorate after 1997.

Hong Kong is defined as non-sovereign international actor (Tang, 1993; Mushkat, 1997; Yue, 2007; Hsiung, 1998a) which has accomplished a pivotal position in economic domain and communications, particularly being a 'bridgehead in Asia and the Westerners counted Hong Kong as a base to develop their economic and political activities in Asia' (Ting & Lai, 2012, p. 349). Since the 1950s, Hong Kong further took the responsibility to serve both China and the international community. Hong Kong facilitated the 'open door policy' of China by providing information, communication, expertise and professionals, institutions, rule of law, capital and investment which other Chinese cities could not offer (Ting, 2007, p. 265). Without hesitation, China would hope to gain benefits from Hong Kong's international networks, coupled with Hong Kong's institutions, values, and ideologies, integrity and transparency which are all crucial to position China as an important global nation on the international stage (Yuen, 2015). All the above underscore Hong Kong's unique international identity which has stemmed from free and uninterrupted interaction with other global actors and people around the world. Maintaining a high degree of freedom and possessing international principles, Hong Kong becomes distinctive in the boundary of PRC and possesses its unique international identity which is different from other Chinese cities.

Wu (2008) has provided an analysis on Hong Kong's political influence over Mainland China in the past. Firstly, Hong Kong has served as a reference city for Chinese modernization by bringing the institutions such as economic, political and judiciary systems<sup>42</sup> to China and Deng has upheld high profile statements to boost the development in coast cities like Shenzhen by duplicating the successful experiences of Hong Kong from the 1980s (Lin, 1993, p. 4). The establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Shenzhen and Zhuhai were the products of 'new paths for speeding up socialist modernization constructions' (Li, 1998, p. 152) and

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<sup>42</sup> This could be demonstrated by Deng Xiaoping's comments on Hong Kong economic and social achievements, 'For stability of Hong Kong, a stable political system, besides economic development, is also a necessity' (Deng, 1993, p. 267).

these ‘new paths’<sup>43</sup> took the model of Hong Kong particularly in modernizing, management and development (Wu, 2008, p. 284). The vantage in institutional settings emboldens Hong Kong to be ‘the enclave of authoritarian China’ in terms of institution settings (Wu, 2008, p. 286) and this institutional advantages should be upheld and incorporated with the sustainable strategic development of Hong Kong, in order to maximize its values in China’s national strategies. Hence, the Hong Kong’s core values civil liberties, freedom of speech, freedom of press and freedom of assembly as well as the rule of law exert marked effects on Chinese citizens via private domains like the mass and tourism. Concerning the mass media, Chan (2000b) has conducted an empirical study on the influences of Hong Kong television on the Guangzhou audiences and showed that Hong Kong TV was generally more attractive than the party-control local Chinese TV production and concluded that the Hong Kong’s television industry has exerted notable cultural influence over south China residents (Chan, 2000b). Till 2016, the Mainland China tourists topped the source for the tourism market in Hong Kong and around 77% of the total visitors (Hong Kong: The facts, 2016) and the expanding trend reached the peak in 2009 (Jiang, 2015; CEIC, 2015). Some of the Mainland tourists have participated in political events such as pro-democracy protest, demonstration or assembly<sup>44</sup> (Lagon, 2014) and they could freely purchase the ‘forbidden publications’ in Hong Kong which they have no access in the Mainland. These kinds of political and social interactions would facilitate their understandings about freedom of assembly, freedom of speech and freedom of the press by their first-hand experiences when they come to visit Hong Kong.

Lau (2013) has elaborated the roles and the capacities of Hong Kong in the national strategic development of Mainland China by analyzing the components of Mainland China’s international strategies. The 11 important components of international strategies of Mainland China include cultivating a peaceful international environment for the development and overseas expansion, fostering

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<sup>43</sup> One more example for illustrating city development in Mainland China has taken Hong Kong as reference. An official in Guangzhou who has joined the local delegation to Hong Kong for an underground railway study tour and inspired him to legislate a local law for operating and administrating the underground railway (Wu, 2008, p. 285-286).

<sup>44</sup> Mainland Chinese also use their IVS to participate in The Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June in Hong Kong (Causal interview with participates in the memorials, Victoria Park, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong).

free trade and anti-protectionism, establishing good relations with neighbor countries as to maintain national security, ensuring national sustainable development by obtaining energy and natural resources internationally, maintaining the ‘outgoing’ characters of Mainland China in terms of capitals, skills, talents, labors, etc., internationalizing national financial sector, banks and Renminbi (RMB), promoting the soft power of Mainland China, initiating international friendship by strategic investment in various aspects like economy, finance, education, foreign affairs and foreign aids, etc., furthering the establishment of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in East Asia region, ensuring the national security by monitoring the separatism, terrorism, financial security, economic security and cultural security and enhancing the legitimacy of public diplomacy and civil diplomacy. By endowing Hong Kong’s international position, Lau underscored the capability of Hong Kong helps the nation to become better connected with the international area. The internationalization of Mainland China could be assisted by Hong Kong in the following perspectives (Lau, 2013, p. 101-102):

1. *Actualizing strategic financing*
2. *Providing a platform for global production and its layout*
3. *Utilizing the Chambers of Commerce as economic carriers*
4. *Offering training programs for Mainland Chinese businessmen*
5. *Cooperation of financial insurance market between Mainland China and Hong Kong*
6. *Advancing the brand images for Chinese products by incorporating Hong Kong’s professions like sales, advertising, media, public relations, consultancy, design, accounting as well as legal advice*

Hong Kong has long been the intermediary between Mainland China and international market by actively engaging in trade, logistic supports and foreign direct investments from the 1980s (Lui & Chiu, 2003; Moore, 2002; Naughton, 1995). The status change from a British colony to an HKSAR suggested that Hong Kong should have more opportunities to obtain new resources from Mainland China and hence, more opportunities will be available for its negotiation from its re-positioning (Lui & Chiu, 2003, p. 6-7). Predictably that a closer bond with national development was being developed for this international city by more frequent and

the increasing interactions in human mobility, trade, and business, exchange of professionalism, investment between China and the HKSAR (Lui & Chiu, 2003, p. 18-20).

Being the gangplank for connecting international community and Mainland China, Hong Kong can ideally utilize its strengths of international networking, diversity and pluralism, the radiation of media, educational system, English language ability<sup>45</sup> as well as the strengths of civil society, to incorporate legitimized perceptions, cultures and rules into national development and to mediate the contrasts between international community and Mainland China (Lau, 2013, p. 105-106). Even though Shanghai had more financial assets than Hong Kong, the international community has yet to treat Shanghai as a global financial center because of its limited network and communication channels connecting to the global financial system. Instead, China needs the network of the HKSAR to radiate its economic influence through, for instance, internationalizing A-share and Renminbi (Leung, 2016). On this point, the HKETO official learned that some Asian countries have huge cultural differences when they have to do business with China, the significance of Hong Kong is to provide an internationalized business environment and confidence to those countries as Hong Kong is a part of China but with different systems and values<sup>46</sup>.

Mainland China has already interlocked Hong Kong in a political paradox: Mainland China realized the values of Hong Kong in its holistic global strategic planning and the advantages of the international status of Hong Kong could undoubtedly benefit China in different aspects. Yet, it would not tolerate any challenges on its territorial integrity, Communist one-party system, political ideology, and internal security, most significantly, Hong Kong could not be turned into subversion base against CCP, in order to further demonstrate the prospects of unification with Taiwan.

As a result, Mainland China since the handover has continuously created a situation of Hong Kong's over-dependence on Mainland China. Internationality and integrating with China is neither theoretical incompatible nor mutually exclusive

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<sup>45</sup> Particularly, the English standard of Hong Kong people is the key to be a global city which was always highlighted by the HKETO official Mr. A in the interview on 30<sup>th</sup> of August 2017.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with the HKETO official Mr. A on 30<sup>th</sup> of August 2017.

especially in the age of globalization (Ting, 2007, p. 265), but Hong Kong is being throttled by the over-dependence on unitary Mainland market. Consequently, internationality and ‘Mainlandization’ has been put into an antithesis framework which the HKSAR government devotes more resources to the Mainland market. This also put the irreplaceable uniqueness and advantages of Hong Kong and the win-win situation of Hong Kong and Mainland China Mainland Chinese official emphasized<sup>47</sup> become debatable. The above descriptions are supported by a couple of surveys: There was 44% of the German corporations believed that Hong Kong could maintain its international image in 2001 compared with 75% in 1999 (Survey on German business in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and China, 2001, p. 11); In 1999, 42.3%, 36.5% and 28.5% of responding companies claimed that the political climate, rule of law and English standard have degraded (Survey of regional representation by overseas companies in Hong Kong, 1999, p. 22). Mainland corporates have already dominated the Hang Seng Index and replaced the well-established local and British companies with occupying nine out of the top ten largest companies in Hong Kong<sup>48</sup>.

Infiltrating media industry was another tactic to exert influences from the economic domain to social and political domains in order to maximize China’s control on Hong Kong. The most striking one was the getting hold of the South China Morning Post by Alibaba Group Holding Limited in December 2015. Jack Ma owns Alibaba Group Holding Limited and Ant Financial which has already extended its influences in Hong Kong but not limited to media, his business already covered logistics, film industry, insurance, technology, etc. (Standnews, 2018). This acquisition raised concerns that the control of SCMP by Alibaba would censor reports on the Chinese politics and issues related to Chinese companies and thus, damage the integrity of the Post and undermine the freedom of the press in Hong Kong (Carew, 2015). China Mobile, one of the Chinese mobile grants has become the largest shareholder of Hong Kong pay-television operator i-Cable

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<sup>47</sup> Zhang Dejiang, the 3<sup>rd</sup> high-ranking official in Politburo Standing Committee of PRC, said that ‘Hong Kong has unique advantages that can’t be replicated by other Chinese cities.’ (Levin, & Yung, 2016).

<sup>48</sup> As at 14 June 2018, the top 10 turnover stocks were Tencent Holdings, Ping An, China Construction Bank, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, Lyxor China Enterprise, Bank of China, China Mobile, AIA, ZTE Corporation and HKEX, 8 out of 10 are Mainland corporate.

Communications, the future editorial direction and the independence of media coverage have become the key concerns after this buying action (Yeung, 2018b).

The Hong Kong Journalists Association has issued a report entitled ‘Two Systems under Siege: Beijing Turns the Screws on Hong Kong Media’ during the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of handover and highlighted a general deterioration of freedom of press under Beijing’s hard-line approach towards the city (The Hong Kong Journalists Association, 2017a)<sup>49</sup>. 8 out of 26 Hong Kong media outlets are controlled by the PRC Government or red capital as of 2016 (Levin & Yung, 2016; The Hong Kong Journalists Association, 2017a). The Hong Kong Journalists Association has noted that the Hong Kong media are “still able to play its role as a watchdog” and their overall performance is highly credited by the people of Hong Kong, yet these well-known strengths of the city such as free flows of information and ideas can no longer be taken for granted. The Association has warned that the issue of self-censorship is severe whilst the government has yet to respond to demands for new laws to enhance freedom of information and to improve the protection of and access to public archives (The Hong Kong Journalists Association, 2017b). The international media and freedom of press watchdog Reporters without Borders is less impressed. It is of the view that,

*“The erosion of Hong Kong’s media independence vis-à-vis Beijing is now under way. The media are finding it more and more difficult to cover sensitive stories about the Hong Kong government and Mainland China, and the need to protect their editorial positions from Beijing’s influence is increasingly noticeable. The purchase of Hong Kong media by Chinese Internet companies such as the Internet giant Alibaba is extremely disturbing.”* (Reporters without Borders, 2017).

Meanwhile, Pen America Centre (2015) also investigated the situation of press freedom in Hong Kong and directly condemned the interferences from Beijing and violated the international laws which have been incorporated into the local laws of Hong Kong (p. 8). Both Article 27 and Article 39 of the Basic Law guaranteed the freedom of press and the freedom of speech in Hong Kong. The Bill of Rights Ordinance (1991) has incorporated the International Covenant on Civil and Political

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<sup>49</sup> Zhang Dejiang gave a speech to make sure that there was no room to discuss Hong Kong independence and to urge the HKSAR government to implement national security legislation according to the Article 23 of the Basic Law (The Hong Kong Journalists Association, 2017a, p. 2)

Rights (the ICCPR) into Hong Kong law. Article 19 of the ICCPR guarantees freedom of press. The United Nations Human Rights Committee commented in 2011,

*“A free, uncensored and unhindered press or other media is essential in any society to ensure freedom of opinion and expression and the enjoyment of other Covenant rights. It constitutes one of the cornerstones of a democratic society. The Covenant embraces right whereby the media may receive information on the basis of which it can carry out its function. The free communication of information and ideas about public and political issues between citizens, candidates and elected representatives is essential. This implies a free press and other media able to comment on public issues without censorship or restraint and to inform public opinion. The public also has a corresponding right to receive media output.” (Human Rights Committee of United Nations, 2011, p. 3-4).*

Another tactic of Beijing is to invite Hong Kong’s media tycoons to hold positions in the PRC’S united front organizations. There is an impression that the PRC has the power over Hong Kong’s media and censor sensitive topics (Fong, 2016, p. 15-16 & p. 18). And the pro-Beijing owners can have the full control of what is going to publish or how to publish. The journalists adopt self-censorship will not be a surprise under the facts of Mainland’s expanding influences in Hong Kong local media outlets (Fong, 2018).

For Hong Kong, freedom of press is one of the indispensable elements to maintain the city’s governance. However, the perceived corrosion of press freedom in Hong Kong which was reported by two pioneering international press freedom indices, already raised a dangerous signal to the city: Hong Kong ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in 2002 while its ranking dropped significantly to 70<sup>th</sup> in 2018 in Press Freedom Index (2017) and according to Freedom House’s The Freedom of Press Reports, Hong Kong got 61 points in 2017, down from 67, 65 and 63 in 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively.

On the other hand, Beijing has controlled major publishers through the Chinese Liaison Office, which is the main investor of the 3 main publishers in Hong Kong: Commercial Press, Joint Publishing and Chung Hwa Book Company. Books which contain sensitive political topics were not available from the 3 bookstores. For instance, a Chinese book ‘The Epoch of Social Movement: The Trace of Hong

Kong Contentious Politics’ edited by Dr. Cheng Wai and Dr. Yuen Wai-hei, was not found there and no reasons provided<sup>50</sup>. The HKSAR government claimed that it was legal for the Chinese Liaison Office to buy properties in Hong Kong and the HKSAR government “should not intervene” if the action is “in line with its operating purposes” (Cheng, 2018b).

A Hong Kong bookseller Lam Wing-kee was kidnapped by the Chinese government at Shenzhen border and his colleague Lee Bo was taken from Hong Kong with the reason of selling banned publications in Mainland China (Levin & Yung, 2016). Lam was forced to confess on video that he had broken the law exposed how fragile “One Country, Two Systems” has become (Siu, Lau, & Cheung, 2016). This case provoked strong international reactions on the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ in the face of growing threats and manipulations by Beijing.

To against the raising political consciousness in the HKSAR, Beijing has devised a proactive strategy towards Hong Kong in order to face the potential local challenges towards the PRC government (Cheung, 2012, p. 327-328):

1. Emphasizing Beijing’s constitutional authority and exercising its veto power over the path of Hong Kong’s political development. The Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress (SCNPC) constitutionally interpreted the Basic Law before the Court of Final Appeal made their final judgment according to the Article 158 of the Basic Law. But the SCNPC has interpreted the Basic Law in the form of “decisions” 5 times since 1997. The five interpretations of the Basic Law by the SCNPC took place in 1999, 2004, 2005, 2011 and 2016<sup>51</sup>. This signifies Beijing’s eagerness to use its power of interpreting Basic Law over Hong Kong in both the social area and the political area;
2. Shaping Hong Kong’s governance through a variety of united front mechanisms. The united front mechanisms include shaping political discourses and values in Hong Kong, manipulating political parties and interest groups by offering them political positions in NPC or CPPCC and providing business opportunities in Mainland China, forging a pro-Beijing

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<sup>50</sup> Personal communication, 2 Feb 2018.

<sup>51</sup> The first interpretation of the Basic Law by the SCNPC concerned social issue while the remaining four interpretations were related to politics. Details see Huang, & Huang, 2016.

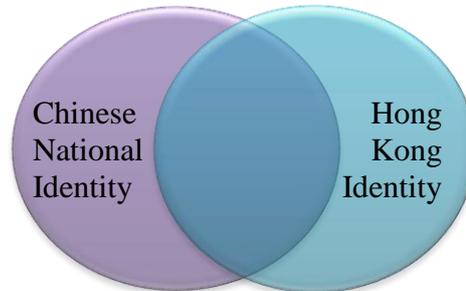
political alliance in the HKSAR, manipulating elections by “distributing spoils among voters, buying votes and creating fake opposition”, the grooming of the second generation of Hong Kong’s tycoons and elites as political players (Fong, 2016; Cheung, 2012, p. 329-330), in order to expand the united front and political support network in favor of the Mainland;

3. Displaying pragmatism in dealing with the pro-democracy forces over constitutional reform in order to achieve compromise while dividing up such opponents;
4. Prompting the HKSAR government to promote patriotism and national education. For example, the PRC government and the HKSAR government actively arranged visits by China’s first astronaut Yang Li-Wei and the champions of Chinese athletes in 2004 and 2008; “National Education” was in Chief Executive’s policy address, the National Education Centre was set up in 2004, and in 2007 Education Bureau intended to introduce National Education as compulsory subject in both secondary schools and primary schools (Cheung, 2012, p. 337-339);
5. Supporting Hong Kong’s economic integration with the Mainland economy and promising “unlimited” possibilities in the China Dream in line with regional and national plans like the Belt and Road Initiative and Greater Bay Area.

The high-handed strategy has threatened the intrinsic values, practices, conventions, and institutions of Hong Kong people. More Hong Kong people began to question the legitimacy of “One Country, Two Systems” and rose to express their dissatisfactions towards the perceived “Mainlandization” of Hong Kong. A public survey in the 1980s about the identity of Hong Kong people already raised the alarm that the Hong Kong young generation could not identify with the Chinese government. A Hong Kong identity has grown strongly as Beijing tightened its grip over Hong Kong. Though there were variations on both identifications throughout the years after the handover, Hong Kong people averagely regarded themselves as first and foremost “HongKongers”. This is the circumstance what Brewer has characterized as “Dual Identity” (Diagram G), which is portrayed as ‘a kind of joint

membership which emerges to serve needs of *distinctiveness* and also *inclusion*' (Brewer, 1999, p. 190)<sup>52</sup>.

### Diagram H – The “Dual Identity Model” in Hong Kong



*Source:* Author.

The dual identity of Hong Kong people intends to ‘differentiate from non-Chinese Hong Kongers and the Mainland Chinese’ (Brewer, 1999, p. 192). Simultaneously nurtured by the historical and political development, Chow (2015) denoted that the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984 was the watershed to unfold the self-realization process on the Hong Kong identity, while means after the 1997 handover, Hong Kong people would try to uphold a unique identity while would not be consciously, behaviorally or politically Chinese (Chow, 2015, p. 72). Hong Kong has undergone 150 years of British colonial rule and was granted a high degree of administrative, economic and social self-governance. Hong Kong people have taken advantages of the period of localization from the 1970s after the left-wing riots in 1967 (Wu, 2016). To a certain extent, Hong Kong people have independent identities from both the British and the Chinese. Since 1997, the Chinese government dedicated economic resources to restore the national identity among Hong Kong people. National Education has been highlighted in policy address by the Chief Executive of the HKSAR government; The HKSAR

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<sup>52</sup> Hong Kong people, undeniably, are all regarded as the ethnicity of Chinese. However, the historical and political development as a British colony, Hong Kong people were exposed to an independent and local cultural settings, practices and values via different language, narrative, history, living habits, routines, collective memory, lifestyle, convention etc. See also Chan, 2000; Fung, 2004.

government subsidized Mainland study tours for students<sup>53</sup>; National Education Centre was set up in 2004 as to strengthen national education among Hong Kong teachers and students (Cheung, 2012). Patriotic and national elements have been packaged as “national education”. Such actions show Beijing’s determination to institutionalize a “Nested Identity Models” (Brewer, 1999, p. 190) whereby the Chinese national identity is superior to the Hong Kong identity (Diagram I):

**Diagram I – The “Nested Identity Model” which Beijing has always preferred**



*Source:* Author.

### **3.2.2 Post-Umbrella Movement Era**

In 2012, President Hu Jintao reassured in the opening speech of the party congress that Beijing will “respect the differences of two systems” (Cheng, 2017b). The Chinese Government further employed multi-pronged strategies to stabilize Hong Kong in order to achieve Beijing’s core national interests: National security, state sovereignty, and development (Hu, 2012). Since 2015, President Xi declared he would exercise the full control and jurisdiction over the HKSAR and the Macau SAR in accordance with the Basic Law and the Chinese Constitution in the 19<sup>th</sup> Chinese Communist Party National Congress and eliding “high degree of autonomy” and “Hong Kong People administering Hong Kong” in the speech (Cheng, 2017b; Cheung & Siu, 2018). Cheung (2018) has made a thorough analysis of how Beijing implemented new strategies in Hong Kong in the post-UM era (p. 278-279). First, Beijing reinforced its authority through constitutional principle and “correct” Hong

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<sup>53</sup> For instance, Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education provides funding support to Hong Kong youths to participate in the tours to Belt and Road countries (Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education, 2017).

Kong people's understandings towards the Basic Law in order to master the political development of the city. Second, Beijing has reinforced the political strength of the pro-establishment camp. Third, as to against the arousal of Hong Kong's civil society in post-Umbrella Movement era, Beijing invested in forming the mass organizations among various social sectors to maintain united front tactics across the city. Fourth, the intensification of social and cultural exchanges between China and Hong Kong has been implemented with the aims to minimize negative comments on CCP. Fifth, the official views on political issues in Hong Kong have been frequently promoted through official and commercial news platforms to generate norms via political communications. Sixth, Beijing has highlighted the diminishing role of Hong Kong in China's development and extols how other Chinese cities could help national economic growth. In the nutshell, Beijing, after the 79-day Umbrella Movement in 2014, started to reinterpret and reiterate the relations between the Central government and the HKSAR.

The HKSAR inclines to manage the HKSAR's political and social controversies by bringing comments from Chinese law expertise, the continuous interpretation of the Basic Law and infiltrating the Chinese Constitution to the city. The recent controversy over the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC) Decision for implementing "co-location" arrangement at the West Kowloon Terminus of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong express rail link is a case in point. According to the Decision, Mainland authorities shall be stationed at the so-called Mainland Port Area within the Terminus, which will be subjected to Mainland jurisdiction. The unprecedented arrangement has the effect of divesting all institutions of Hong Kong and the judiciary from having the jurisdiction over that part of the Hong Kong territory for the first time since the establishment of the HKSAR. Considering the legal and constitutional aspects of the Mainland Port Area to be established within the Hong Kong territory, the Hong Kong Bar Association (HKBA) described the Decision as "wholly unconvincing and unsatisfactory." Given that Article 18 of the Basic Law stipulates that only national laws listed in Annex III of the Basic Law shall be applied to Hong Kong, the HKBA submitted that the Hong Kong government has acted "inconsistently with the systems provided for under the Basic Law." The HKBA said it was "appalled" by the Decision which severely undermined public confidence in "One Country, Two

Systems” and the rule of law in Hong Kong. It concluded by stating that: “Through the combined efforts of the HKSAR Government, the State Council and the NPCSC in producing [the Decision], the integrity of the Basic Law has now been irreparably breached.” (The Hong Kong Bar Association, 2017).

The government is adamant that the proposed “co-location” arrangement is indispensable in order for the Express Rail Link between Hong Kong and the Mainland to achieve optimal results. Officials have found the “politicization” of the issue regrettable. The Chief Executive Carrie Lam has not only dismissed critics of the legal basis of the “co-location” arrangement as “irrational” and “scaremongering,” but has also described the Bar Association’s strong statement against the NPCSC Decision as “elitist” and “double-standard” without explanation (Chung & Ng, 2018). Meanwhile, the “co-location” saga has provoked a new round of attacks on the legal system. The pro-Beijing opinion leaders and the Chief Executive took turns to defend the supremacy of the NPCSC and reprimanded Hong Kong people for refusing to accept “the new constitutional order” in post-handover Hong Kong in which the common law system is not everything. It was hardly a coincidence that Chief Justice Geoffrey Ma decided to speak emphatically at the Ceremonial Opening the Legal Year 2018 about the importance of the common law system and judicial independence to the success of Hong Kong:

*The legal system in Hong Kong is the common law system. This system has been in place for nearly 180 years and has served the community by contributing to Hong Kong's success over the years. It is regarded as vital to the continuing success of Hong Kong, not only from financial or business points of view but also for everyone in the community as a whole. The common law is expressly mandated for Hong Kong in the Basic Law and there are references, both direct and indirect, in this document that are clearly referable only to a common law system. This is a system that has been regarded as being appropriate for our community. Hong Kong is seen very much to be an established common law jurisdiction. ...The Basic Law states that the HKSAR enjoys and is vested with independent judicial power. The term "independent" is a reference to the independence of the judiciary. We have an independent judiciary in Hong Kong. The term "judicial power" means the power vested in courts to apply the law and determine legal disputes, including the power to make enforceable judgments which, for example, have the effect of... declaring public acts to be unconstitutional and therefore void... (The HKSAR government, 2018)*

While the government and Beijing will almost certainly have their way to impose Mainland laws as they see fit, the debate about the constitutionality of the “co-location” arrangement and the adverse effects on the integrity of the HKSAR would not be stifled. Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (Co-location) Bill eventually became a local legislation on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June in 2018 (Apple Daily, 2018). This has undermined the constitutional guarantee for the protection of human rights and the rule of law in the past 20 years by redefining system of law and government in the city<sup>54</sup>.

The NPCSC, even though it is not an independent judicial entity, she could interpret, invalidate and amend the laws authorized by Hong Kong Legislative Council (Article 17, Article 157 & Article 158, The Basic Law). There are no explicit descriptions of what kinds of circumstances would have to invite the NPCSC ‘redefine and interpret’ the laws. Legal experts evaluate that any law interpretations as ‘an authorization to make new laws’ (Cheung, 2011, p. 263) and Tamanaha (1989) interprets ‘the power of amendment of this law is vested in the National People’s Congress (Article 158, The Basic Law) as taking possession of Hong Kong’s ultimate autonomy’ (p. 42). There are no unequivocal or categorical elaborations in the Basic Law to define the powers of the NPCSC and the limitations of law interpretation. Hence, the relationship between the Central Government and the HKSAR government is not merely dichotomously categorized as defense and foreign affairs managed by the Central Government and other aspects are administered by HKSAR, to a certain extent, the Central Government has the authority over both the application and the execution by simply interpreting, amending and invalidating the laws in Hong Kong. This reflects Mainland China has been utilizing law and constitution to regulate Hong Kong as to fulfill the standard of strictly complying with the rule of law which is Hong Kong’s traditional social value as to increase the international legitimacy of Mainland China. On that account, law and constitution could be regarded as a political vehicle to counteract the ideological and social contrasts between Mainland China and the society of the HKSAR. Being more realistic, the Basic Law could also limit the latitudes of Hong Kong engaging in the international stage when Mainland China construes Hong

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<sup>54</sup> Interview with Mr. C on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2018, Shatin, Hong Kong.

Kong' action as disloyal, pro-independence or colluding with foreign political actors especially the action is strongly related to the strengthening of civil society. This ultimately limits the soft power of the city in the international stage.

The proposed legislation of the National Anthem Law is another example in Hong Kong to illustrate how Beijing disrespects the nature of Hong Kong law system. As Hong Kong has to fulfill the constitutional responsibility to adopt the local legislation after the National People's Congress Standing Committee (NPCSC) incorporated National Anthem Law into Annex III of the Basic Law in November 2017, legal scholars questioned about the ambiguities of the conducts and the standard of behaviors in occasions which the national anthem is played (Lum, 2018). The Hong Kong Journalists Association directly pointed out that the legislation of national anthem will impose threats to the media as the law did not clarify the legal responsibilities, protection, and disclaimers when the media have to report or spread the news or information about possible offences under the law. Furthermore, the National Anthem Law is constitutionally incompatible with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which is incorporated into Article 39 of the Basic Law. According to the ICCPR, the authorities can only enact legislation to ban and criminalize relevant behaviors only if certain conducts will cause serious harm to others, rather than legislating to restrict freedom of expression in order to avoid the humiliation of the ruling authorities, thus leading to potential political and legal crisis if the HKSAR government legislates on the National Anthem Law in line with the Chinese law (Hong Kong Journalists Association, 2018; The Basic Law, 2018). Taking the nature of Hong Kong's law system into consideration, Council Member of The Hong Kong Bar Association Johannes Chan commented incorporating the Chinese National Anthem Law recklessly into Hong Kong will distort the common law system of Hong Kong which should always be clear about the rights and responsibilities of citizens (Chan, 2018). Senior Counsel Lok Ying-Kam used the words "critical time" to describe the present state of the rule of law in the city (Lam & Lau, 2018).

Beijing further intensively extends its influences in the city's academia in order to dominate the public and private channels to disseminate the pro-Beijing political discourses, even though academic freedom is constitutionally protected in the Basic Law. Article 27, Article 34 and Article 137 of the Basic Law clearly

stipulate academic freedom in terms of freedom of press, freedom to engage in academic research and academic institutions can have freedom and autonomy should be protected by the constitution in the HKSAR (The Basic Law, the HKSAR government, 2012). Since 2005, Hong Kong Watch has published a report on city's academic freedom, pinpointing several measures were generally applied by Beijing against the academia in order to eliminate any further chances that the academics and university students took the major roles to initiate any collective actions in Hong Kong like the Umbrella Movement in 2014 (Carrico, 2018). Tactics like removing or limiting the outspoken scholars to have career promotions or renewal of contracts has been employed, for instance, Dr. Chin Wan at Lingnan University, Johannes Chan and Dr. Tai Yiu-ting at The University of Hong Kong (Cheng, 2016a; Cheung, 2017; Fong, 2018; Ta Kung Pao, 2015), in order to warn other scholars to restrict themselves to speak up in the public domains. Or, directly appointing pro-establishment candidates into the university management as to guarantee "unsuitable" academic will not be promoted. A salient example was Li Kwok-Cheung was further pushed by Leung Chun-Ying as to assure that Johannes Chan would not be appointed as the HKU pro-vice-chancellor even 98% of the alumni in a research poll reflected that opposition towards the Li Kwok-Cheung to take position of the council of HKU (Cheng, 2015; Mok & Kao, 2015).

Freedom of speech stipulated by the Basic Law is under attack by Beijing and the HKSAR government. Such acts violate the general understandings towards freedom of speech which people are allowed to have discussions which "envision situations beyond the current legal framework" (Carrico, 2018, p. 8), also labelling some of the political discussion as "illegal" by the state media,

"The SAR government is right to say *there is no room for discussion* on the issue and to endorse the statement jointly issued by the heads of 10 local universities on Friday condemning the raising of banners advocating "Hong Kong independence" on campuses as an abuse of free speech ..." (China Daily, 2017)

It is salient that both the Central government and the HKSAR government utilized law and constitution as the foundation to justify its action and comments on Hong Kong issues. Paradoxically, international communities already recognized the deterioration of rule of law in the city. Apart from China's economic growth,

Hong Kong's economic success has been dependent upon the soft power resources as the rule of law and clean government, which are said to be not only the foundations of the city's distinctiveness, but also the reason behind its competitive edge over other Chinese cities (Lau, 1997). The British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has recently commented that, "the rule of law is a fundamental component of Hong Kong's prosperity and stability and remains a reason why so many U.K. companies choose to do business in Hong Kong and to use the city as a gateway to the Chinese and other Asian markets." (The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the U.K. Parliament, 2017, p. 4). In 2017, the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index ranked Hong Kong 16th out of 113 countries and jurisdictions with an overall score of 0.77 (with one indicating the strongest adherence to the rule of law). The study further showed that Hong Kong scored well in order and security (the fourth) and criminal justice (the tenth) (World Justice Project, 2017).

In recent years, there have been continuous efforts to enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong as a center for international arbitration for the Asia Pacific region, attracting the International Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce, the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission and the Permanent Court of Arbitration to Hong Kong for arbitration and related dispute resolution services (Department of Justice, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2018; Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre, 2017). Clean government is another core value that makes Hong Kong tick. The city has managed to maintain a relatively high level of performance according to the Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index over the years. In 2017, Hong Kong came 13th out of 184 countries and territories surveyed around the world (Transparency International, 2018). Hong Kong's anti-corruption body Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has remained one of the most trusted public institutions in the eyes of the people of Hong Kong and it has continued to take part in cross-jurisdiction cooperation in graft fight.

Despite President Xi Jinping's high profile campaigns on developing "the socialist system of law" and catching "tigers and flies" (corrupt public officials big and small), international studies such as the World Bank's Worldwide Governance

Indicators continued to show that Hong Kong displayed strong distinctiveness from China in terms of its overall governmental performance in control of corruption, government effectiveness, political stability, and absence of violence/terrorism, regulatory quality, rule of law and voice and accountability (Table 8).

**Table 8: Worldwide Governance Indicators: Hong Kong and China compared**

	Hong Kong		China	
	2006	2016	2006	2016
<b>Voice and Accountability</b>	62	55	6	7
<b>Political Stability &amp; Absence of Violence / Terrorism</b>	91	74	28	27
<b>Control of Corruption</b>	94	92	37	49
<b>Regulatory Quality</b>	100	100	48	44
<b>Government Effectiveness</b>	98	98	57	68
<b>Rule of Law</b>	91	93	31	46

Data show Percentile Rank (maximum score 100)

Source: The World Bank Group, 2018.

Political tensions and constitutional crises that plagued the city under successive governments since the handover has not escaped the observers' attention. As Beijing-Hong Kong relations deteriorate further, it seems foolhardy to believe that the city's distinctive identity, values, and interest are safe and sound after all. In fact, concerns about threats, real and potential, to Hong Kong's liberal values and their institutional underpinnings have eroded people's trust and confidence in the system. According to the findings of the World Justice Project in 2016, Hong Kong showed clear signs of weaknesses with respect to constraints on government powers (rank 25<sup>th</sup>), open government (27<sup>th</sup>) and fundamental rights (33<sup>rd</sup>). Out of the 44 measurements, Hong Kong scored poorly in four of them, namely non-

government checks, civic participation, freedom of expression, and freedom of association (Freedom House, 2017). In 2016, Cato Institute published its annual Human Freedom Index with Hong Kong retaining its number one position, but noted that Hong Kong's strong position was largely due to economic freedom scores but the continuous interference by Mainland China such as infringements on freedom of the press and the independence of the legal system would suffer possible decline in its freedom ratings (Cato Institute, 2016). Given that Hong Kong's democratic change has been an uphill battle, Freedom House has not changed Hong Kong's "partly free" status for decades. In the Freedom of the World 2018 Report, Hong Kong scored 59 points (out of 100) in total and four points down from 2016. In its 2017 Report, the US-based human rights observer attributed Hong Kong's vulnerability to "Beijing's encroachment on freedoms in the territory, reflected in the detention by Chinese authorities of Hong Kong booksellers, shrinking journalistic and academic independence, and the central government's unilateral reinterpretation of the Basic Law in an apparent bid to disqualify pro-independence and pro-democracy lawmakers who were duly elected from the Legislative Council." In the same report, China got 15 points in total "due to the chilling effect on private and public discussion, particularly online, generated by cyber-security and foreign NGO laws, increased internet surveillance, and heavy sentences handed down to human rights lawyers, micro-bloggers, grassroots activists, and religious believers" (Freedom House, 2017). As the city's leaders still emphasize the position of Hong Kong as a global city, it is inescapable that the deterioration of freedom and rule of law will attract global attention as both freedom and rule of law are constitutionally stipulated in Hong Kong's constitution and also serve as the legacy established when Hong Kong was a British colony before 1997. The Fraser Institute, a Canadian think-tank, has shown concerns about the interference from China will degenerate the strength of Hong Kong in terms of rule of law and Global Competitiveness Report declined Hong Kong's judicial independence from 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> in 2017.

However, the HKSAR officials totally rejected the concerns and reaffirmed that the meddling from China has not degraded the rule of law in Hong Kong. One of the evidence was that The Secretary for Justice had denied the damage of judicial independence in the last few years (Cheng, 2017a). Using the same political line

which “foreign organizations / foreign legislators should not interfere in the internal affairs of the HKSAR”<sup>55</sup> as Beijing, this made the HKETO officials embarrassed as they were officially requested to declare the political stances repeatedly when they have to work with the overseas audiences. The HKETO official admitted that this may ruin the long-term relations with the overseas stakeholders which they have established it for a long time, especially the overseas government officials who only handle the trade and cultural exchanges with the HKSAR and also were forced to “listen” to the political issues concerning “foreign intervention”<sup>56</sup>. For the long haul, this will also wreak havoc on the soft power enhancement of Hong Kong as there will be no differences between China and Hong Kong in term of political stances. Under the political structure of “One Country, Two Systems”, Hong Kong has no room to escape from integrating with China, but when internationalization is officially denied, Hong Kong people should pay attention to it<sup>57</sup>.

To some extent, the experiences of collective actions since the anti-Article 23 protest have transformed to the Umbrella Movement through the articulation and expression of strong post-universal values, an emerging political identity and attitudes towards “ethnic-cultural nationalism” inculcated forcefully by Beijing (Lee, 2018, p. 271). The Umbrella Movement makes Hong Kong society polarized in terms of generations<sup>58</sup> and civil society<sup>59</sup>. When we consider in terms of generation, the young generation who participated in the Umbrella Movement have fundamental suspicion towards the authority and identified themselves as the antagonists counteracted with Beijing and the HKSAR government. During the movement, both the government and the young participants could not surmise and manage each other as the actions of the Umbrella Movement were always spontaneous and the young participants did not familiar with the general official

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<sup>55</sup> For instance, see the HKSAR government official press releases on 17 Feb 2017 and 9 Mar 2018:

- Foreign legislature should not interfere in HKSAR affairs. Retrieved from <http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201702/17/P2017021701141.htm>
- HKSAR Government responds to report by foreign organizations on Legislative Council by-election. Retrieved from <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201803/09/P2018030900858.htm>

<sup>56</sup> Interview with the HKETO official Mr. B on 9<sup>th</sup> of Oct 2017, Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Prof. Chen Chien-fu on 19<sup>th</sup> of Dec 2017, Tamkang University, Taipei, Taiwan.

<sup>58</sup> Interview with Mr. C on the 2nd of April 2018, Shatin, Hong Kong.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Prof. Kurata Toru on 1st of September 2017, Ikebukuro, Tokyo.

tactics of the HKSAR government<sup>60</sup>. The generation conflict was also demonstrated between the young activists and traditional opposition camp which in the eyes of the new generation is conservative<sup>61</sup>.

Over the years, scholars and politicians have advised Hong Kong could help to promote democratization in Mainland China (Wu, 1998; Yan, 2011; Wu, 2017). However, the recent identity polls have shown that Hong Kong people do not have a strong national identity. The Umbrella Movement in 2014 reinforced among the young activists the antipathy towards the CCP. There is now little chance to have a strong patriotic democracy movement, rather, there will have a higher probability to have an anti-China movement against China and the Hong Kong authorities<sup>62</sup>. Prof Chen Chien-fu predicts that social movement with a higher level of violence with separatist sentiment will possibly happen in the future<sup>63</sup>.

Another key strategy adopted by Beijing is to strengthen the economic ties and coverage by building economic collaboration mechanism between China and the HKSAR in post-Umbrella Movement era. Beijing actively engaged Hong Kong as a member of regional and national integration mechanism in the past few years. In the earlier time, Chinese officials pinpointed the significances of Hong Kong in China's global development, as far as China becomes the second economic giant in the world (The World Bank, 2018), China can depend on its cities like Beijing, Shanghai or economic regions like the Pearl River Delta Metropolitan Region (PRD) to have holistic global economic expansion (Cheung, 2018, p. 279). Vice versa, does the HKSAR government recognize, tie-in or balance its position in both national development and international development if China already started to fade out the role of Hong Kong in its national economic plan? To answer this, we have to investigate the orientation of Hong Kong policies from the institutional perspective.

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<sup>60</sup> Interview with Mr. C on the 2nd of April 2018, Shatin, Hong Kong.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Mr. D on 26 Jan 2018, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Mr. C on the 2nd of April 2018, Shatin, Hong Kong

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Prof. Chen Chien-fu on 19th of Dec 2017, Tamkang University, Taipei, Taiwan.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Normative Foundations of Soft Power**

#### **4.1 The Civil Society as the Source of the City's Soft Power**

Hong Kong people could not just shrug off the decline of the city's identity. They have participated in collective actions while taking average with the longest lasted 122 days (Cheng, 2016b). 2003 witnessed a surge of civil society actions as half a million people marched in the protest against national security legislation (Article 23 of the Basic Law) which would undermine the protection of human rights, especially the right to freedom of expression and assembly' (Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong, 2012) and bring about irreversible damages to Hong Kong's international image, business environment and global competitiveness. The HKSAR government eventually withdrew the proposed bill and Hong Kong people believed that participating in collective actions was not only a fundamental right but also an effective way to resist further intrusions from the PRC government and to defend Hong Kong's interests in the future. Lee (2018) perceived that Hong Kong people gained significant political efficacy<sup>64</sup> in the 2003 protest.

Within the period of 2006-2010 and 2010-2014, there were 19-fold and 14-fold increases in the number of participants in the collective actions (Cheng, 2016b). From 2003 to 2014, there were total 39 massive protests which aimed at raising awareness on particular issues and predominantly opposing the HKSAR government and the PRC government (Choi, 2015) (Appendix H). Strongly connected with the formation of civil society, Hong Kong people attempted to articulate universal values in each collective action. Based on the number of people involved and the degree of media attention, Table 9 illustrates 8 representative social movements and their articulated values between 2003 and 2015.

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<sup>64</sup> Political efficacy is defined as people believe in or expect that their political actions contributes to political process and political outcomes (Loveless, 2013).

**Table 9: Value articulation in critical events in Hong Kong, 2003-2015**

	Event	Date	Contrast Values	Value Articulation
1	Anti-National Security Bill (Article 23) Legislation	July 2003	National Security Vs Individual Rights and Freedom	Individual Rights and Freedom
2	Preserving Star Ferry Pier	December 2006	Development Vs Heritage Conservation	Sense of Belongings
3	Preserving Queen's Pier	August 2007	Development (Individualism) Vs Heritage Conservation (Collectivism)	Sense of Belongings
4	Anti-Express Rail Link	Late 2009 – Early 2010	Economic Development and Economic Intergration with Mainland China Vs Communal, Community and Minority Development	Questioned the dominance of Mainland China over Hong Kong affairs and the money-making philosophy
5	Anti-National Education Curriculum	July 2012	Political Autonomy Vs Over-intergration with Mainland China	Questioned the dominance of Mainland China over Hong Kong affairs and against the imposition of

	Event	Date	Contrast Values	Value Articulation
				National curriculum
6	Reissuing Free-to-air Television License	October 2013	Transparency Vs Backroom Deals	Procedural Fairness
7	Protest North-East Development Plan	June 2014	Economic Development and Economic Intergration with Mainland China Vs Communal, Community and Minority Development	Local community development
8	The Umbrella Movement	September 2015	Controlling Hong Kong's democracy by Beijing Vs Genuine Democracy in Hong Kong	Pursuing democracy, autonomy, and identity for Hong Kong

Source: Author's own compilation.

*1: Anti-National Security Bill (Article 23) Legislation (2003)*

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2003, 500,000 Hong Kong people participated in anti-article 23 protest as to oppose the enactment of the law “to prohibit any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People’s Government”<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> The full text of Article 23 of The Basic Law:

“The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall enact laws on its own to prohibit any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People's Government, or theft of state secrets, to prohibit foreign political organizations or bodies from conducting political activities in

(Article 23, The Basic Law of the HKSAR). Hong Kong people perceived that the Article 23 will limit the individual rights and freedom which is stipulated in Article 39 of the Basic Law and applies the provisions of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and international labor conventions. Since then, 1<sup>st</sup> July protest has been seen as a tradition of Hong Kong and will be organized by different organizations to raise public awareness on political and social issues. The protest has been perceived as the origin of civil society by the scholars and political activists.

*2 & 3: Preserving Star Ferry Pier (2006) and Queen's Pier (2007)*

The protestors have unambiguously expressed the rationales and the needs to preserve the historical and symbolic heritages in Hong Kong in both collective actions for preserving Star Ferry Pier and Queen's Pier. People took part in hunger strikes and occupied the piers so as to oppose the demolition of the piers for economic development, as they cherished the collective memories and the sense of belongings in Hong Kong. Antipathy always existed when government officials emphasized their demolitions of Hong Kong heritage as a means to boost the economy. The underlining value articulation was post-materialism, which was constructed in sharp contrast to the materialist values such as economic development, money-making, and utilitarianism.

*4 & 7: Anti-Express Rail Link and Protest against North-East Development Plan*

In the case of anti-Express Rail Link and the protest against the North-East Development Plan, protestors gave utterance to the model of sustainable and balanced urban-rural development and the presentation of rural communities in Hong Kong. They were against the demolition of small villages, domestic farming, and the natural environment in the New Territories to make ways for the Express Rail to link Mainland China and Hong Kong above all. The 'Mainlandization' of Hong Kong through cross-border integration was strongly resisted by the protestors.

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the Region, and to prohibit political organizations or bodies of the Region from establishing ties with foreign political organizations or bodies.”

### *5: Anti-national education curriculum*

The HKSAR Chief Executive C.Y. Leung announced to suspend the commencement of Moral and National Education (MNE) implementation in primary and secondary education after 90,000 people participated in 7.29 “Anti-Brainwashing” Rally and 120,000 people besieged the Central Government Offices in response to a call by a student group “Scholarism”. The successful campaign had encouraged Hong Kong youths to engage in politics and elections. However, the HKSAR government has continued to promote national education in schools, to boost nationalism and to reinforce national identity (Chan, 2014, p. 27). But the government’s plan has encountered strong resistance by teachers’ groups and students’ groups and 15 involved organizations had formed an alliance called “Civil Alliance Against the National Education” that has always preferred “civic education” to “national education” for Hong Kong. For them, education (and academic freedom) should be the final battlefield of political autonomy against Mainland China’s further intervention.

### *6: Reissuing Free-to-air Television License*

Hong Kong used to be the center of the TV industry in the Asian region and the limited TV licenses and TV channels available in Hong Kong serve as the bureaucratic obstacle for boosting Hong Kong’s soft power. If the HKSAR government wants to exert political influences by controlling the issue of TV licenses and strangling the creativity, this will decrease Hong Kong’s influences and erode its soft power<sup>66</sup>. There was a public outcry against the HKSAR government rejected HKTV’s application for television license, though HKTV has proved that it had the potentiality to produce high-quality TV programs. Protestors criticized the HKSAR government and the Chinese government for undermining the freedom of media and denying consumers’ right of the people of Hong Kong. If the TV industry in Hong Kong is withering, the graduates of film studies will have fewer chances to have practical training, they finally will be forced to leave

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<sup>66</sup> Interview with Ms. Mabel Au on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong.

the industry or only showcase their talent through online platforms<sup>67</sup>. This phenomenon will hinder the development of Hong Kong soft power.

Hong Kong people realized the importance of post-materialistic values and emphasized their needs by participating in collective actions in the past years. Hong Kong people believe that collective actions could be as one of the possible ways to defend what they cherish in the city: Freedom, openness, and fairness.

#### *8: The Umbrella Movement*

The anti-Beijing resentment precipitated a massive occupy movement - the Umbrella Movement which lasted for 79 days in 3 areas<sup>68</sup> of Hong Kong in 2014. Hong Kong people have long requested genuine universal suffrage. But after the SCNPC decided that there should be screening of candidates before Hong Kong people get to elect the Chief Executive by so-called “universal suffrage” in its decision on 31 August 2014, over the past 21 years, Hong Kong has witnessed a series of confrontations between a defiant civil society which stood up for the city’s legitimate expectations about autonomous self-government and an increasingly assertive Central Government which has held on to an antiquated notion of sovereignty which is supreme and illimitable. In contrast to the expectations of the functionalist perspective, the city’s remarkable economic status has not translated into political influence in order for securing the state of autonomy. Rather, the city has found itself on a leash, as Beijing has repeatedly warned the people not to “cross the line” and this was the first time that the HKSAR government officially was requested to declare a social movement illegal in the city by the Chinese government.

On 10 June 2014, the State Council of the People's Republic of China published a “White Paper on The Practice of the “One Country, Two Systems” Policy in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region,”<sup>69</sup> (China Daily, 2014) with a stern warning as follows:

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<sup>67</sup> Interview with Ms. Deneice Law on 27<sup>th</sup> Nov 2017, Kowloon Bay, Hong Kong.

<sup>68</sup> Admiralty, Causeway Bay and Mongkok were occupied as the sites of the Umbrella Movement.

There are lines and criteria to be observed in implementing “Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong,” that is what Deng Xiaoping stressed, Hong Kong must be governed by the Hong Kong people *with patriots as the mainstay*, as loyalty to one’s country is the minimum political ethic for political figures. Under the policy of “one country, two systems,” all those who administrate Hong Kong, including the chief executive, principal officials, members of the Executive Council and Legislative Council, judges of the courts at different levels and other judicial personnel, have on their shoulders the responsibility of correctly understanding and implementing the Basic Law, of safeguarding the country’s sovereignty, security and development interests, and of ensuring the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. In a word, *loving the country is the basic political requirement for Hong Kong’s administrators*. If they are not consisted of by patriots as the mainstay or they cannot be loyal to the country and the HKSAR, the practice of “one country, two systems” in the HKSAR will deviate from its right direction, making it difficult to uphold the country’s sovereignty, security and development interests, and putting Hong Kong’s stability and prosperity and the wellbeing of its people in serious jeopardy (*Section 5, point 3*).

The SCNPC, which is essentially a political organ of the Leninist one-party regime, has been deployed to deliver a number of controversial decisions and interpretations of the Basic Law (Chan, 2016). With Beijing’s backing, the ruling elites in Hong Kong have stepped up its propaganda campaign about “new core values” such as “nationalism,” “patriotism,” “sovereignty” and “national security.” With China’s accession to power in global affairs, Chinese-style authoritarianism has posed serious threats to civil liberties in Hong Kong with illiberal tendencies by inserting some subjective criteria for choosing Hong Kong’s Chief Executive. Notwithstanding the promise of “Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong” by universal suffrage, the methods for selecting the Chief Executive and Legislative Council members have remained neither free nor fair. The political deadlock came to a head in the 2014 Umbrella Movement, when tens of thousands of citizens occupied the main streets in three districts for 79 days to demand full universal suffrage, but to no avail. Meanwhile, the city’s politics is in flux. Widespread scepticism towards the “patriotic camp” and Beijing’s plan towards Hong Kong has rapidly crystallized into an array of “localist” movements to defend the city from the threats and hazards, real or imagined, posed by the incessant convergence with the Mainland (Fong, 2017).

Over 100,000 Hong Kong people from different sectors were mobilized and demonstrated peaceful and non-violent occupation in 3 districts during the Umbrella Movement (Wong, 2016). It was inescapable that there would be instability if the political institutions are incongruent with the prevailing political culture (Almond & Verba, 1989, p. 20). The elevation of civic capital by establishing civil society under the promotion of education and economy, Hong Kong people would eager to have further demands on the compatibility of institutional development and hence the participation in politics. People questioned against the legitimacy and the accountability of the HKSAR government as the authority allowed continuous increases of economic, social and political integration (i.e. intervention) measures raised from Mainland authority which entirely demonstrated the “blurring of physical, social, cultural and psychological border between Mainland China and Hong Kong” (Ma, 2015, p. 47). Those integration measures not only dismantled the imagined boundaries with Mainland in a geographical sense and in the political sphere but also violated the cultural formation of Hong Kong and its original relationship with Mainland (Ip, 2016b, p. 411), hence, blurring the original identity of Hong Kong people.

In the meanwhile, the Umbrella Movement made Hong Kong people realize self-determination as one of the egresses for Hong Kong (Breakthrough, 2017) as a new political entity is the only way to guarantee the full autonomy of Hong Kong. The failure of the Umbrella Movement further stimulated the Chinese government to pursue a more direct attack on Hong Kong civil society and the core values it has represented. This action demonstrated that the Chinese government not only marginalizes the HKSAR government by handling Hong Kong affairs directly by Beijing but also minimize the autonomy in Hong Kong society. Already lacking the electoral mandate, the legitimacy of the HKSAR government under Chief Executive C.Y. Leung plunged dramatically after the Umbrella Movement as it neither gained the confidences from Beijing and from its people.

After the Umbrella Movement, China took a hard-line approach towards Hong Kong’s NGOs. As a lot of NGOs in Hong Kong have connections and good relationships with the NGOs in China, China endeavors to control and suppress the civil society of Hong Kong in order to hinder the cross-border NGOs’ interactions. Hung & Yip (2012) suggest that Hong Kong serves as an “offshore civil society”

for Mainland China by providing a badly needed space for Mainland NGOs to facilitate their works in China (p.518). For example, Students and Scholars against Corporate Misbehavior (SACOM) continues to organize workshops and seminars in Hong Kong to disseminate information about labour rights in factories in China. Many Mainland NGOs have their representatives in Hong Kong to facilitate fundraising and other administrative works which are restricted by Chinese government (Hung & Yip, 2012, pp.520-521).

Therefore, China has to ensure there are “representatives” in every sector of Hong Kong to have united front works, for instance, using the name of kaifong welfare association, village committee or teacher association to ensure that who will be voted in the district council elections or legislative council elections as to guarantee the institutional supports for Beijing and the HKSAR government. On the other hand, the prosecutions and the subsequent jailing of young political activists and citizens who led or took part in the Umbrella Movements had the effect of “demobilization” of collective action. Some of them have chosen to fight against the authority through institutional channels like running in Legislative Council election<sup>70</sup>, others have chosen to leave the political vortex altogether<sup>71</sup>.

In the meantime, there has been fear that a steady increase of Chinese immigrants<sup>72</sup> to Hong Kong is one of the tactics to dilute the Hong Kong identity. However, a recent research conducted by Chiu and Yip (2018) indicates that there is a significant correlation between the time stay in Hong Kong and the identities perceived by the young Chinese immigrants. Specifically, the longer the young Chinese immigrants stay in Hong Kong, the more they tend to identify themselves as “Hongkongers” and with Hong Kong localist camp (Table 10 & Table 11).

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<sup>70</sup>For instance, Nathan Law Kwun-chung was elected as the lawmaker in Legislative Council in 2016.

<sup>71</sup> For instance, Alex Chow Yong-kang continued his master degree after the 3-week imprisonment in 2016.

<sup>72</sup>The Mainland residents have to apply One-way Permits (OWPs) to have settlements in Hong Kong. The daily quotas of OWPs are 150 and the number of quota is not constitutionally stipulated in the Basic Law (DōngWǎng, 2018).

**Table 10: The relations between the place of birth and identity**

	Students born in Hong Kong	Students born in Mainland China and have stayed in Hong Kong for 1-8 years	Students born in Mainland China and have stayed in Hong Kong for more than 9 years
<b>HongKongers</b>	54.5%	9.7%	33.2%
<b>Chinese / Both Chinese and HongKongers</b>	45.5%	90.3%	66.8%

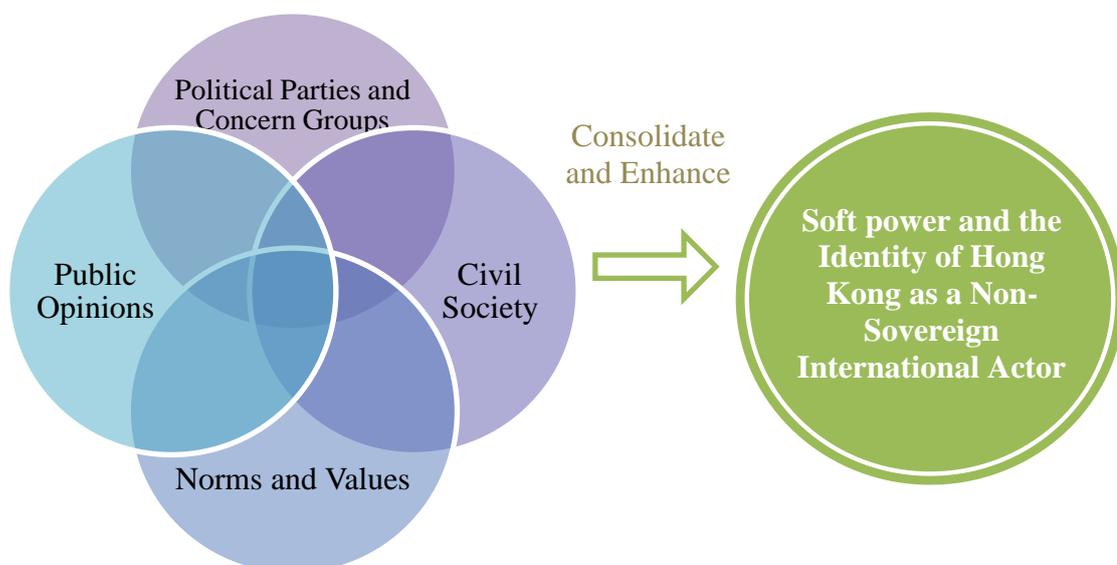
**Table 11: The relations between the place of birth and the identification with political camps**

	Students born in Hong Kong	Students born in Mainland China and have stayed in Hong Kong for 1-8 years	Students born in Mainland China and have stayed in Hong Kong for more than 9 years
<b>No clear inclination</b>	65.9%	76.5%	73.7%
<b>Support Pro-Establishment Camp</b>	2.4%	3.0%	1.1%
<b>Support Pro-Democracy Camp</b>	11.7%	13.6%	8.4%
<b>Support Localist Camp</b>	20.1%	6.8%	16.8%

The Umbrella Movement being both the process and the result, granted a new platform of pursuing universal values and reinforced the identity of Hong Kong people. The survey of people's identity in Hong Kong supports that a large portion of the Hong Kong people (65.9%) identified themselves as “Hongkonger” and “Hongkonger in China” and maintained at a steady level after the Umbrella Movement while only 14.22% and 18.16% of the respondents recognized themselves as Chinese in Hong Kong and sole Chinese respectively (Figure I)<sup>73</sup> :

The seed of local civil society began to sprout as to restore the imaged borderline between Hong Kong and Mainland China socially, politically and economically. The growth of the civil society tends to strengthen the local identity and the process of community building of the Hong Kong people. As we have seen, since the 2003 mass protest against the Anti-National Security Bill (Article 23) Legislation, civil society has started to spring by pursuing democracy and city’s identity through participating social movements. The participation of Hong Kong people, political parties and concern groups create norms for the growth of the civil society and hence, to construct soft power and city’s identity for Hong Kong as a non-sovereign international actor. The image and identity of Hong Kong since the 2003 mass protest has been more outstanding.

**Diagram J: Social-cultural sources of Hong Kong’s soft power and identity**



*Source:* Author.

<sup>73</sup> The percentage is obtained from the average of 8 every half year survey conducted from Dec 2014 to June 2018 by Public Opinion Program, The University of Hong Kong.

The nourishment of Hong Kong civil society by massive political participation would attach Hong Kong more to the international community via the building of consensus on universal values. Furthermore, the civil society would anchor the soft power which enhances the international status of Hong Kong in the global community as ‘civil society is the origin of much soft power’ (Nye, 2004a, p. 17). For instance, the Umbrella Movement has already attracted international supports and solidarities with shared universal values with Hong Kong<sup>74</sup>. Hong Kong’s civil society would exert pressure on Mainland China’s authority and attract more international media coverage. After the outbreak of Umbrella Movement, NHK relocated their editorial office from Guangzhou to Hong Kong<sup>75</sup>. Media coverage related to Hong Kong will not just be limited to economic perspectives, but political, social and cultural aspects of Hong Kong will become valuable to have international coverage by the overseas media, hence, to increase the communication channels between Hong Kong and target audiences. Prof Kurata Toru also believed that attracting more foreign media to establish their branches in Hong Kong is beneficial for improving Hong Kong’s soft power as more diversified news coverage about Hong Kong can be reached to international audiences which the city’s all-round identity of Hong Kong can be further enhanced<sup>76</sup>.

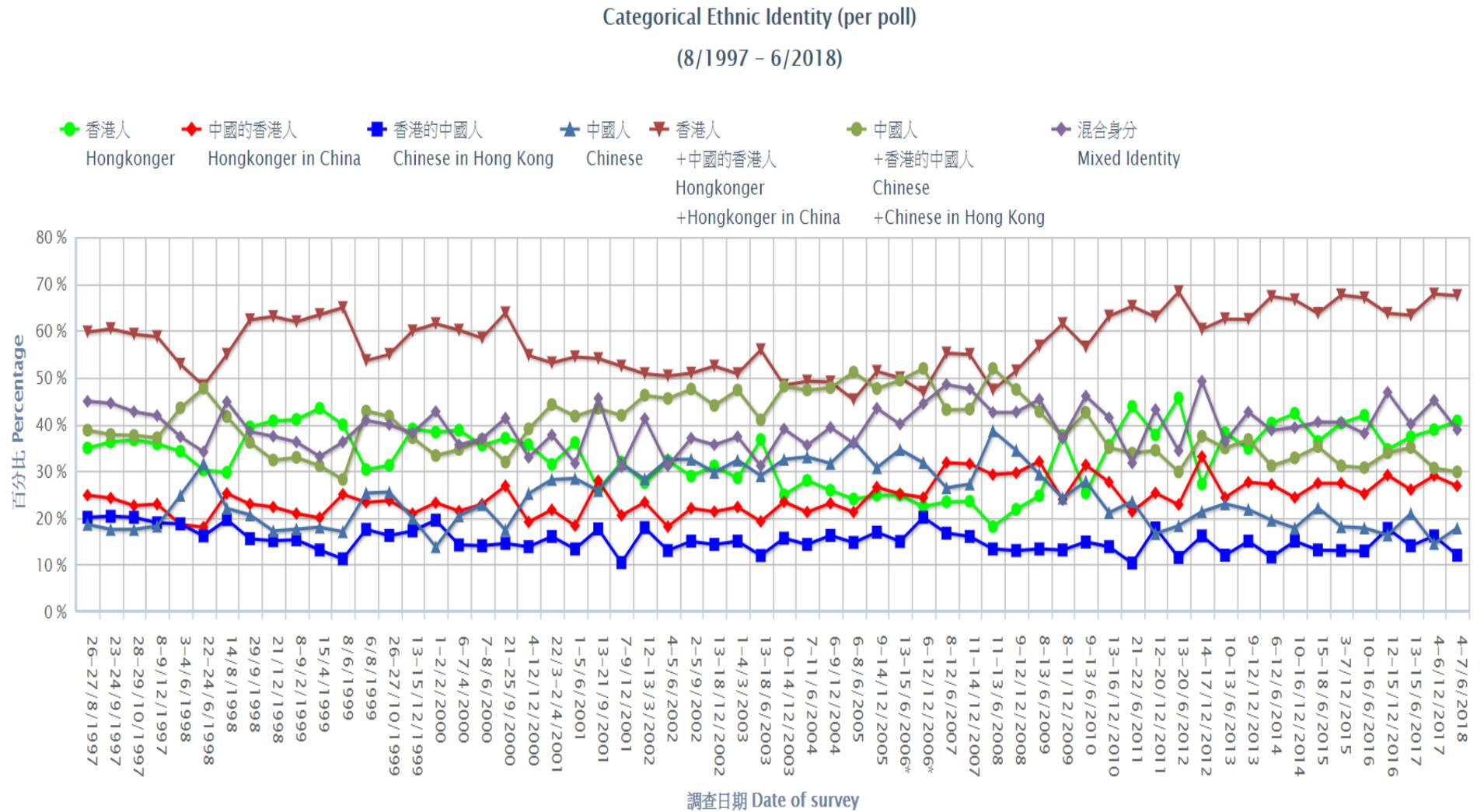
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<sup>74</sup> The Umbrella Movement gained international supports from 26 cities via Facebook page. Details see Barber, 2014.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with Prof. Kurata Toru on 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2017, Ikebukuro, Tokyo.

<sup>76</sup> Interview with Prof. Kurata Toru on 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2017, Ikebukuro, Tokyo.

Figure I: The identity poll conducted by HKUPOP (Public Opinion Program, The University of Hong Kong, 2018)



#### 4.2 Recent Public Polls on How Hong Kong People Perceive Values in the Society

It is important to recall that the policy of “One Country, Two Systems” was conceived in the 1980s by the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping to accommodate a series of cultural, ideological and institutional tensions between Hong Kong and China which he knew would be hard to reconcile. In some ways, the policy was a triumph of pragmatism over dogma. To reassure Hong Kong people and the international community about the city’s future under Chinese sovereignty, the Basic Law was expected to provide the constitutional safeguards for the liberal norms and values such as free market economy, clean government, due process, press freedom, the rule of law, human rights, civil liberties and universal suffrage. Such values, which are also commonly known as “universal values” among the citizens, have constituted the bedrock of the Hong Kong identity, rendering attempts to demand blind faith and allegiance towards the Chinese Communist regime ineffective (Table 12).

**Table 12: Hong Kong’s core values**

	<b>Do you agree that this is Hong Kong’s core value?</b>	<b>The most important Hong Kong’s core value is:</b>
	Strongly Agreed / Agreed	
<b>Rule of Law</b>	92.7%	(1) 22.9%
<b>Just and Corruption-free</b>	92.3%	(3) 15.3%
<b>Social Stability</b>	88.2%	
<b>Freedom</b>	88.1%	(2) 20.8%
<b>Peace and Benevolence</b>	87.4%	
<b>Safeguard Individual Property</b>	86.5%	
<b>Level-Playing Field</b>	86.3%	
<b>Family</b>	84.3%	

	<b>Do you agree that this is Hong Kong's core value?</b>	<b>The most important Hong Kong's core value is:</b>
<b>Democracy</b>	83.2%	(4) 11.1%
<b>Diversity and Tolerance</b>	79.8%	
<b>Market Economy</b>	76.5%	

*Source:* Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2014

Project Citizens Foundation has recently conducted a public perception survey about the most valuable and important characteristics of Hong Kong recognized by Hong Kong people. The top three most valuable characteristics are “history and culture”, “core values like rule of law and freedom” and “Hong Kong’s international status”. However, when comparing the scores of importance and performance of selected social indicators, there is clearly an expectation gap between what Hong Kong people value and the actual performance of those social indicators (Table 13), particularly in the aspect of fairness, equality, corruption free practices, stability of the society and the rule of law. This is an alarming situation that the HKSAR government and the opinion leaders in Hong Kong should take note that those indicators are the keys to sustain the essence of “One Country, Two Systems”. The expectation gap also shows Hong Kong people expect some of the important values can have a more extensive promotion in the society and hence to lift up the quality of Hong Kong. Yet, the survey has not reviewed the reasons of why and how Hong Kong people weighted the social indicators.

**Table 13: The differences between the perceived importance and the actual performances of selected social indicators**

<b>Social Indicators</b>	<b>Importance*</b>	<b>Performance*</b>	<b>Differences between Importance and Performance</b>
<b>Fairness</b>	8.7	5.9	2.8
<b>Equality</b>	8.5	6.1	2.4
<b>Corruption-free practices</b>	9.2	6.9	2.3
<b>Stability</b>	9.0	6.8	2.2
<b>Rule of Law</b>	9.2	7.1	2.1
<b>Democracy</b>	8.0	6.0	2.0
<b>Civility</b>	8.7	7.1	1.6
<b>Public Order</b>	9.2	7.6	1.6
<b>Social Welfare Sufficiency</b>	8.1	6.5	1.6
<b>Freedom</b>	8.9	7.4	1.5
<b>Efficiency</b>	8.4	7.1	1.3
<b>Prosperity</b>	8.6	7.4	1.2

*Source:* Project Citizens Foundation, 2018b.

\* Sampling error: + / - 0.1

The paradiplomacy set out in the Basic Law allows Hong Kong to keep its institutional setting from the British legacy in order to maintain its international significances. The government has its responsibility to promote universal values and

embrace global vision as one of the key narrations in policy-making and institutional settings, making Hong Kong and Hong Kong people as valuable to be global citizens. Hong Kong leadership is advised to utilize the advantages of the city's institutions to integrate the values into the policies per se and the policy-making process. This will generate comprehensive soft power and hence to consolidate both the identity of the HKSAR as a global city.

## Chapter 5

### The Prospects and Predicaments of Hong Kong's Soft Power

#### 5.1 Leadership and Strategy - Hong Kong Policy Addresses

How Hong Kong retains a high degree of international visibility whilst integrating with China are crucial to the success of Hong Kong in the future. To establish this disposition requires a closer look at the policy preferences of the HKSAR Government during the last ten years would give us a better understanding of what the HKSAR government has done (and failed to) in this regard. The following are going to examine the official positioning of Hong Kong in terms of changes, level of autonomy and tendency of future policies in 2007-2019 Policy Addresses by conducting content analysis and discourse analysis.

The Chief Executive of Hong Kong presents the Policy Address annually and outlines last year's achievements and the future planning for Hong Kong. Aiming at exploring the changes and continuities of the position of Hong Kong and how the HKSAR Government describes and interprets Hong Kong's position throughout the last 10 years, analyzing Policy Addresses would be one of the most appropriate approaches.

##### 5.1.1 Content analysis

The objective of conducting a content analysis of Policy Addresses is to map out the trends and changes on Hong Kong official preferences of having international and national engagement. Content Analysis is described as “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communications” (Berelson, 1952, p. 74). It bridges the qualitative and the quantitative research methodology by interpreting the construction of perceptions, trends, and behaviors by studying the texts (University of Georgia, 2012). Content analysis is chosen to have for the purpose of examining the occurrences of policies in the Policy

Addresses, in particular, the paragraphs in the Policy Addresses which indicate the government’s policy action with respect to China as well as those with respect to the city’s position in the world. The percentage of each type of policy preference is calculated by the below formula:

$$\frac{\text{Type of policy preference (E.g. The government’s policy action with respect to China)}}{\text{Total numbers of paragraphs in each year Policy Address}} \times 100\%$$

Chosen policy preference will not be limited to economic aspect, but also include such as environment, talent and professionals, education, law, culture and creative industry, research, and development, logistics and transportation, food safety, infrastructure and politics. For instance, there are 20 paragraphs related to policy preferences with the international community out of a total of 130 paragraphs in 2007-2008 Policy Address, the percentage can be obtained as follows:

$$\frac{20 \text{ (The government’s policy action with respect to the city’s position in the world)}}{130 \text{ (Total numbers of paragraphs in each year Policy Address)}} \times 100\% = 15.38\% \text{ (Correct to 4 significant figures)}$$

On top of counting the policy actions with respect to China as well as those with respect to the city’s position in the world, the policies which involved in both China’s and international perspective simultaneously will be also counted as the policy with respect to China as well as those with respect to the city’s position in the world.

### 5.1.2 Discourse analysis

Discourse Analysis in this paper is to further supplement the statistical analysis by examining the language “beyond the sentence” (Tannen, 2012) in the Policy Addresses. The approach of adopting discourse analysis of this paper is originated from

Fairclough's studies (2003) on text analysis. Text analysis proposed by Fairclough includes an examination of vocabulary, grammar and structure of the text (Jacobs, 2004). Conducting discourse analysis will help to determine the official positions of Hong Kong. The Policy Addresses contain the official positions of the HKSAR which guide Hong Kong's policies and the orientations of the future development of Hong Kong. It is also crucial to interpreting how the HKSAR Government plans and situates Hong Kong on the global stage as well as within the context of national development.

### **5.1.3 Results**

The overall trend of the statistical analysis of the pertinent contents of Policy Addresses (2007-2019) is illustrated in Figure II. It is clear and increasing from 2011 that the HKSAR Government has endeavored to design policies towards China. Except for the 2008-2009 Policy Address, the HKSAR Government showed a much lower interest in international engagement. Carrie Lam's government seems to have a stronger focus than her predecessor C.Y. Leung on international policies. It was obvious that Carrie Lam's government has made more endeavors to focus on the social issues such as housing and labor welfare, but she has continued to emphasize the relations between China and Hong Kong in various policy domains at the very beginning of her 2018-2019 policy address (Paragraphs 8-13).

In earlier years (2007-2008, 2008-2009) of Donald Tsang Yam-kuen's government, it had shown clearer focus of policies with respect to China or with respect to the city's position in the global stage. Since 2009-2010, the trend of the policies respect to China is in line with the trend of the policies respect to both China and the city's world position. This demonstrates the police addresses are directed by the policies respect to China and Hong Kong's the identity of a Chinese city steered Hong Kong's global identity. From the period 2014-2017, the negligence of C.Y. Leung's government on the development of Hong Kong as a global city has been illustrated by the continuous low level policy involvement with international community. The Carrie Lam's government is in search of a new balance between the national and the global

for Hong Kong, but still the policy address highlighted more policies with respect to China than the policies with respect to the city’s world position.

**Figure II – Positioning Hong Kong along global-local nexus: Hong Kong Policy Address 2007-2019**



Source: Author.

In terms of discourse analysis<sup>77</sup>, there are definite changes in how Hong Kong’s positions were described in the Policy Addresses. First, in the earlier years’ (2007-2008 and 2008-2009) Policy Addresses firmly described Hong Kong generally as “a global city”, “a global metropolis”, “global financial center” but in 2010 and afterwards, only

<sup>77</sup> The discourse analysis is carried by searching the keywords “role”, “position” and “status” in the Policy Addresses which is either related to global perspective or China’s perspective.

selected sectors such as maritime (2010-2011), creative industry (2011-2012), asset management (2012-2013), legal services (2012-2013), logistics (2013-2014), intellectual property (2015-2016), initial public offering (IPO) (2016-2017), conventions and exhibitions (2017-2018), professional services hub, asset and wealth management and telecommunications (2018-2019) were expressed in the international perspectives.

Second, the vocabularies and grammars used to describe the positions of Hong Kong in the context of national development have been changed to more affirmative and proactive ones. About ten years ago, Hong Kong was described as having an “irreplaceable role in our country’s development” (2007-2008), “Hong Kong can play a greater role in our nation’s development” (2008-2009), “Hong Kong can fit this role...” (2009-2010). However, since 2010, modal verbs and phrases have been chosen consistently to describe the positions of Hong Kong in Chinese development. For instance,

- 2010-2011, p. 30: “Strengthening our financial co-operation with the Mainland is vital for our financial services. These services *should be* positioned and developed in a way that will increase our contribution to promoting the modernization of the Mainland’s financial system.”
- 2011-2012, p. 48: “Hong Kong *is strategically positioned* as China’s global financial centre. We will introduce measures to boost the competitiveness of our financial sector.”
- 2013-2014, p. 13: “The Government *will play an active role* in the development of the PRD, support the establishment of a free trade zone in Guangdong and work with the province and various municipalities towards mutual success.”
- 2014-2015, p. 9: “The Stock Connect links the Mainland market with international markets and *enhances Hong Kong’s role as* a connector on the financial front.”
- 2015-2016, p. 3: “By leveraging the combined advantages of “one country” and “two systems”, industries in Hong Kong, regardless of scale, *can perform their*

*role as a “super-connector” to attract foreign technologies and investment.”*

- 2016-2017, p. 12: “Leveraging “one country, two systems” and other advantages, we strive to give full play to *Hong Kong’s role as a “super-connector”* and act in concert with the strategy of our country and Mainland enterprises to go global, thereby creating opportunities for our young people and boosting our social and economic development in the coming decades.”
- 2017-2018, p. 1-2: “I propose that the Government should be more proactive and *play the role of a “facilitator” and a “promoter”*. We should seize the *opportunities* brought by the national Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area (Bay Area) development, make good use of the autonomy enjoyed by the HKSAR in developing our external affairs as provided under the Basic Law, and make timely investments in order to create new impetus for our economy.”
- 2018-2019, p.5: “The HKSAR Government will strengthen collaboration with Mainland provinces and municipalities and *actively performs its role as a “facilitator” and “promoter”*, so as to identify more business and development opportunities for Hong Kong people and enterprises.”

p.31: “Through the 26 collaboration measures laid down therein seeking to support Hong Kong’s full participation in and contribution to the B&R Initiative, *we have established Hong Kong’s pivotal position in the promotion of the B&R Initiative* by leveraging our strengths to meet the country’s needs.”

Choosing words such as “should be”, “is”, “will”, “as a”, “have”, Hong Kong’s position was already arranged according to China’s national and regional development plan. This can be clearly manifested by the similarities between the direction of the policies in HKSAR’s Policy Addresses and the national development strategy related to HKSAR written in the 12th and the 13th Five-Year Plans. Particularly, in the 13th Five-Year Plan has explicitly stated that China and Hong Kong’s ties would be extended to social, cultural, environmental aspects etc. (Compilation and Translation Bureau, Central Committee of the Communist Party of China 2016, p. 152-153). It

seems the HKSAR government cannot neglect Beijing’s decision on the orientation of Hong Kong policies through “intergovernmental coordination mechanisms” (Cheung, 2018, p. 258), i.e. policy coordination especially via economic cooperation and trade agreements such as Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA). This would not be limited to economic integration but it is foreseeable to have extensive cooperation in different aspects.

Third, there was a growing tendency to adopt expressions such as “role”, “position” and “status” for Hong Kong in order to incorporate Hong Kong’s position in both global perspective and national perspective simultaneously from 2009-2010 Policy Address and afterwards (Table 14).

**Table 14 - Incorporating the policy context of Hong Kong’s position “the global” into the “national”**

Type of Description	Policy Address	Example
<b>Hong Kong’s international position could help Mainland China in the economic aspect</b>	2009-2010	As the RMB moves towards internationalisation, the Mainland needs a highly open global financial centre that is fully aligned with the world financial markets to serve as its platform for foreign financial activities. Hong Kong can fit this role by making the best of our advantages.
	2012-2013	Hong Kong is also set to play a crucial role in the internationalisation of the Mainland’s commodity futures market, given the Mainland’s

Type of Description	Policy Address	Example
		huge demand for commodities and the gradual internationalisation of its commodity futures trade.
	2014-2015	Hong Kong is well positioned to serve as a springboard for Mainland maritime companies looking to “go global”, as well as a platform for international maritime companies to tap the Mainland market. Hong Kong has what it takes to become an important international maritime services hub for China and the Asia-Pacific region.
<p><b>The status of Hong Kong being a global city would be enhanced by further integrating with Mainland China economically</b></p>	2015-2016	The Shanghai-Hong Kong Stock Connect and mutual recognition of funds will not only help reinforce our status as an international financial centre and a global hub for offshore Renminbi (RMB) business, it will also provide a wider choice of RMB investment products in Hong Kong.
	2016-2017	The Shenzhen-Hong Kong Stock Connect launched last month has further reinforced

Type of Description	Policy Address	Example
		Hong Kong's status as an international financial centre of our country and a global offshore Renminbi (RMB) business hub.
	2017-2018	On the enhancement of bilateral ties, the Government will actively seek to sign free trade agreements (FTAs), investment promotion and protection agreements (IPPAs) and comprehensive avoidance of double taxation agreements (CDTA) with other economies, including those along the Belt and Road to open up markets, and to further strengthen Hong Kong's position as an international trade, commercial and financial centre.
	2018-2019	With highly international and professional financial infrastructure and market profiles, and riding on the reform and opening-up in the Mainland, Hong Kong has developed into a mature international financial centre.

The increasingly frequent practice of incorporating “the global” into “the national” in the Policy Addresses shows that the HKSAR Government is eager to institutionalize Hong Kong’s intermediary roles between China and the world, and less as an individual entity globally. This policy orientation implies that public and private resources would be directed towards meeting national preferences rather than taking Hong Kong’s global strategic position as a priority, which in long term may deteriorate Hong Kong’s quality of being a global city.

The changes in the descriptions of the roles and the deterioration of Hong Kong’s autonomy throughout the past ten years have been summarized in Table 15. The diminishing autonomy of Hong Kong’s unique global position as a result of the political necessity to integrate with China has become obvious only a decade after the 1997 handover. A globalized Hong Kong was still a major discourse according to the HKSAR Government in 2007-2008 Policy Address, for instance:

- P. 1: Only through leveraging the strengths of our country can *we position ourselves globally* to create a better future.
- P. 7: These infrastructure developments will consolidate *Hong Kong’s status as a global city*.
- P. 22: We should also leverage *our position as a global metropolis* to actively promote international exchanges and experience sharing on environmental protection policies and technological research through the ECF.
- P. 39: It is important for us to develop a vibrant international school sector to underpin our aspiration *to be a global metropolis* and fortify our status as a regional education hub

While 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 Policy Addresses illustrated Hong Kong became highly “sub-nationalised” with the Pearl Delta Region and the Qianhai area. However, from 2011-2012 Policy Address onwards, Hong Kong has become immensely incorporated and highly institutionalized in national plans such as the Belt

and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, in which Hong Kong’s role was more a medium, like “springboard” (2014-2015), “connector” (2014-2015) and “super-connector” (2014-2015, 2015-2016) instead of an autonomous global non-state actor in its own right. Hong Kong’s roles in 2015-2016 Policy Address was narrated as “complement national strategy” and “help China go global”, while the descriptions like “alignment with our country” (2017-2018) further re-defined Hong Kong as a platform or medium serving China’s “Big Power” dream. In 2018-2019, the role of Hong Kong has been highlighted as “leveraging our strengths to meet the country’s needs” in regional plan B&R Initiative.

**Table 15 – The changes of Hong Kong’s positions throughout 2007-2019 Policy Addresses**

Policy Address	Global	Subnational	National (Hong Kong as a medium)
07-08	A unique global city with an irreplaceable role in our country’s development		
08-09	A global financial center which <i>can</i> play a greater role in our nation’s development		
09-10			A global financial center with intermediary role between Mainland China and Taiwan and testing ground for RMB’s internationalization
10-11		An international center and incorporate into Hong Kong-Guangdong cooperation	
11-12			China’s global financial center and the role of offshore

Policy Address	Global	Subnational	National (Hong Kong as a medium)
			RMB business center is actively promoted
12-13			The role to play as a “node” which Hong Kong will serve as an international financial center and a business hub of our country
13-14		An international business hub and play an active role in the development of the PRD	
14-15			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role as a “super-connector” which enhance Hong Kong’s role and functions in our country’s economic development...;</li> <li>• as a springboard for Mainland maritime companies to “go global”;</li> <li>• reinforce Hong Kong’s status as an international financial center and a global hub for offshore Renminbi (RMB) business</li> </ul>
15-16			Role as a “super-connector” and help Mainland enterprises “go global”; full play our functions and services as a global hub for offshore RMB business

Policy Address	Global	Subnational	National (Hong Kong as a medium)
16-17			Full play to Hong Kong's role as a "super-connector"
17-18	To maintain Hong Kong's competitiveness in the global arena and enhance Hong Kong's alignment with the development of our country		To maintain Hong Kong's competitiveness in the global arena and enhance Hong Kong's alignment with the development of our country
18-19	Our vision is to develop Hong Kong into an international cultural metropolis grounded in Chinese traditions and enriched by different cultures	"One Country, Two Systems" is a unique characteristic of the Greater Bay Area, as well as the key foundation for its internationalisation	Hong Kong's pivotal position in the promotion of the B&R Initiative by leveraging our strengths to meet the country's needs

On the other hand, it is found that in the earlier years, there were stronger articulations about Hong Kong's global participation, for instance,

- 2007-2008, p. 14: "To further consolidate Hong Kong's position as a global financial centre, we should actively leverage on this new trend by developing an Islamic financial platform in Hong Kong."
- 2007-2008, p. 15: "To strengthen Hong Kong's competitive advantage, we have been forging closer ties with international arbitral bodies."
- 2008-2009, p. 26: "In addition, we will study the reports of such institutes as the Heritage Foundation of the US, Fraser Institute of Canada, World Bank, and World Economic Forum on global competitiveness, economic freedom and business environment to identify areas for improvement."
- 2009-2010, p. 8: "We will work closely with the Mainland authorities to maintain Hong Kong's leading position in the global supply chain."
- 2010-2011, p. 27: "To ensure that Hong Kong can better leverage its unique

advantages and functions during the National 12th Five-Year Plan (the Five-Year Plan) period, we will strive to enhance Hong Kong's status as an international centre for financial services, trade, shipping and logistics, and to develop the six industries where Hong Kong enjoys clear advantages.”

The 2011-2012 and 2014-2015 Policy Addresses did not propose any prospective suggestions on policies as to enhance Hong Kong's global status and international visibility and little weight was given in prospective recommendation of global participation in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 Policy Addresses. Until Carrie Lam's government made more emphasis on global aspiration in the Policy Address (2017-2018 and 2018-2019) and the proposal were put forward in relation to the traditional and key areas such as legal service, education, and research on Chinese medicine. It remains to be seen if Carrie Lam's government will continuously manage to find a new equilibrium to reassess Hong Kong's global status, whilst continuing the incorporation of the city into national strategy as required.

From the above analysis, it has become clear that the policy preference of Hong Kong is integrating more with China while its radiating strengths as a global city taken a less prominent position. Both the abovementioned institutional factor (i.e. the policy preferences chosen by the HKSAR government) and economic factor (i.e. The tendency of shrinking significance of Hong Kong in China's market in the future), first, verified what Deng Xiaoping perceived Hong Kong could be a great engine for China and its further global expansion already obsolete<sup>78</sup>; second, these factors create more rooms for China to interfere in Hong Kong's affairs, especially by bringing economic and political benefits to Hong Kong's different sectors, aggravating the social and political polarization process in post UM era and inciting unrest and confrontation between 2 groups of Hong Kong people: Who can vs. who cannot get direct economic benefits from the policies integrating with China<sup>79</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> Interview with Mr. Stephen Vines on 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2018, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, Hong Kong

<sup>79</sup> Taiwan scholars also noticed Mainland's economic polarization tactic in Taiwan, warning that Taiwan should take care of economically or cognitively disadvantaged groups, and further consolidate the will of the Taiwanese people to maintain political and economic subjectivity. See also Lin, 2018.

A high ranked government official admitted that since Hong Kong has joined “The Greater Bay Area” with China, the HKSAR has been fully institutionalized into China. The HKSAR has adopted China’s practice and rationale for the city’s economic policies in order to integrate itself into the national plan. The unique position of the HKSAR granted by Beijing has no longer sustained whilst other Chinese cities have followed the HKSAR to adopt the same approach to maximize their benefits via requesting the approval of implementing similar policies from Beijing. Meanwhile, cities of Pearl River Delta Region always employ the tactic which proactively integrates with the HKSAR to pursue policy advantages from Beijing together as the Chinese cities knew that they would have a higher chance to have successful feedback from the authority if the HKSAR is involved in the plan. By comparatively more complicated red tape of the HKSAR government, the official professed that the HKSAR could not catch up the pace of other Chinese cities so that the HKSAR, even it is part of the Greater Bay Area, has already missed a lot of chances initiated from the Central Government. From the above analysis of policy addresses and what the HKSAR government official revealed, in the meanwhile, ignoring the chances from international markets, the HKSAR already falls between two stools, especially that integrating with Mainland markets was proven to have too little benefits for Hong Kong per se and the HKSAR government distorted the ideas of how Beijing perceived Hong Kong traditional position as an international financial center for China’s national development<sup>80</sup>.

Though the original design of “One Country, Two Systems” implied both the preservation of Hong Kong original ways of life, systems, values and identity and the aspiration of Chinese nationalism can be contemporaneous (Tsang, 2003), political control and policy incentives turned out to be the reality of post-handover Hong Kong. Evidence from Beijing’s growing intervention in Hong Kong’s affairs already blurred the line between what is stipulated in the Basic Law and what has done by Beijing. But it seems that the HKSAR Government has underestimated the impacts of neglecting

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<sup>80</sup> Goodstadt (2018) has illustrated how the HKSAR government miscalculated and misinterpreted the China-Hong Kong relations in terms of regional economic development. Details see Goodstadt (2018), p. 161-193.

the international aspects of Hong Kong as a source of its soft power (Neves, 2003). For instance, Chief Executive Carrie Lam rejected a question from the English section of RTHK in a seminar held at Foreign Correspondence Club and said “English section is irrelevant to Hong Kong” can reveal her underlined attitude towards the concerns from the international community<sup>81</sup>. If Hong Kong is going to fully integrate with China, this is an active suicide as the less Hong Kong different from China, the less Hong Kong matters<sup>82</sup>. How the HKSAR government positions Hong Kong in the integration process and utilize the flexibility stipulated in the Basic Law would be worth to be discussed, which further implies how much sensitivity the HKSAR government has in order to narrate and envisage the nature of “One Country, Two Systems”, i.e. maintaining both high degree of integration with China and in the meanwhile Hong Kong hold high degree of autonomy.

Demonstrably over-intervention from Mainland China would not benefit the social consolidation in Hong Kong, i.e. that tug of war both trigger social discontent and whittle away the uniqueness and internationality of Hong Kong by simply putting integration with China and engaging with the global economy into the dichotomous narration. On the other hand, within Hong Kong community, intoxicating in an ideological battle and exhausting in social movements were insufficient to force Beijing to make any concessions on curtailing Hong Kong’s autonomy as Beijing will exert more influences in different sectors in Hong Kong. Hong Kong people attempted to accentuate the ‘two systems’ in the ‘one country, two systems’ principle by advocating independence or self-determination in Hong Kong and these are the strongest political stimulus towards Mainland China. Facing this political predicament, Hong Kong needs to re-contextualize its global and regional positions, not only just existing under the shadows of Mainland China and Western powers, but also creating a unique, pluralistic and sustainable position in the international stage. More pragmatically, increasing its indispensability and legitimacy within the international strategy of Mainland China would be a substantial countermeasure in the future.

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<sup>81</sup> Interview with Mr. Stephen Vines on 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2018, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, Hong Kong.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Mr. Stephen Vines on 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2018, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, Hong Kong.

However, the above analysis of Policy Addresses, to some extent, proves “Hypothesis H5: *With weak collaboration between government and civil society or the cultural sectors, there has been a weakening of the global identity of Hong Kong as a non-sovereign international actor*” is partly valid.

The institutional arrangements allow Hong Kong to have the autonomy to establish its external relations policies with other international counterparts. The mature practice of paradiplomacy of the city, however, is not enough sustainable to have a promising platform for its comprehensive engagement with the international community. Hence, this research puts forwards that soft power could be one of the effective narratives for the future positioning of Hong Kong which not only in tone with the strategic national plan of China but also provides a background against which Hong Kong’s policymakers could devise a paradiplomatic strategy. This study suggests that political and social actors in Hong Kong must help to strengthen the city’s global position through strategic investments and the deployment of its soft power at home and aboard. Taking paradiplomacy into consideration and boosting the soft power of Hong Kong can serve as one of the effective tools to improve the legitimacy of “One Country, Two Systems”.

## **5.2 Findings from In-depth Interviews**

### **1. Institutional Drawback: Lack of a responsible department / holistic and comprehensive planning and the room for the HKETOs officials to execute paradiplomatic power**

#### **a) The Main Responsibility of HKETOs**

In the interview, the representatives of the HKETOs recognized the economic efforts they have made through their office while collaborating with other Hong Kong outposts,

“Hong Kong is an externally-oriented economy; we rely much on overseas trade. This makes our external economic and trade relations so important and it explains why the HKETOs were established ... we work with other outposts very frequently as we don’t know how to work business-to-

business ... so we have to rely on the HKTDC [Hong Kong Trade Development Council] which includes a team of experts specialized in business to fill this gap.” (Mr. A)

“One of the main pillars of our work is trade, business, and economic-related events. These trade-related events include visits, talks and negotiations, and meetings or sometimes conferences. It is attributed to the (HKETOs’) objective: To strengthen Hong Kong external trade cooperation and network as well as to reaffirm Hong Kong SAR’s economic presence overseas.” (Mr. B)

**b) The Lack of a Responsible Department to Handle Overall External Affairs of the HKSAR**

The lack of a responsible department departing the overall planning and implementation will raise doubts about the effectiveness of the implementation of the city’s external policies. The representatives of the HKETOs admitted the following,

“Although I said my work covers every aspect, our focus is only on commerce as our mother is the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB). Although I told you that my work covers everything, our focus is on commerce and therefore not so comprehensive ... Simultaneously, Hong Kong does not have an ‘External Relations Bureau’ or ‘International Department.’ Therefore, I have to admit that there are no holistic tactics or strategies as there is no leading body. If Hong Kong has to develop a comprehensive strategy on external relations, firstly there must be a responsible body. The current situation is that everyone in the government avoids handling this issue, as the one to do it should have the mandate. We would have guidelines to follow and the policy would become more in-depth and accommodating if there is such a department.”(Mr. A)

“The ETO’s work includes trade, business, and economic-related events to strengthen Hong Kong’s external trade cooperation and network, as well as to reaffirm the HKSAR’s economic presence overseas. As there is a decreasing need to have trade agreements because of the principle of the free global market, this has laid sufficient grounds for the HKETOs to conduct their mission already, so we have been shifting to creating platforms for different institutions and communities, as well as fostering relations with governments.” (Mr. B)

“The events that we organized were in the short-term or theme-based, like fashion week, wine and dine festivals, etc. These events were isolated and fragmented. It is therefore hard to retain a long-term visibility of Hong Kong’s soft power overseas; for instance, Hong Kong only catches up with hot policies, like Fin-tech. However, it lacks concrete planning and strategies ... its economic self-motivations are yet to be discovered...” (Mr. B)

**c) The Autonomy to Execute the Daily Works of the HKETOs Offices**

“The space (to promote Hong Kong) is sufficient. We can work freely. We have to report our work back to Hong Kong, but it does not require prior approval, whether it is organizing a Chinese New Year dinner, a Gala Dinner, or HKPhil performance. The only concern is the budget but we are responsible for it. The Hong Kong headquarter provides a large degree of autonomy on what and how we do because the customs of each place are different.” (Mr. A)

Summarizing from the two interviewees from the HKETOs, the main responsibility of HKETOs is to build economic and trade networks for Hong Kong through constructing networks with governments and communities overseas. The economic aspect, indubitably, is the first priority of HKETOs. Hong Kong does seem to fulfill the ideal key practices of paradiplomacy as to extend and consolidate the external affairs of the HKSAR by the HKETOs’ international network. However, to be a paradiplomatic outpost of an international city, it is necessary to establish a more holistic sense on how to institutionalize the potential paradiplomatic undertakings. The fragmented structure and the institutional drawback for managing external affairs has put an overall limitation on the HKETOs’ works. It is salient that Hong Kong lacks a responsible department to manage Hong Kong’s external relations and radiate Hong Kong’s positive influences through long-term international engagement policies, hence, there is no overall strategy for the enhancement of external relations of Hong Kong and the HKETO officials could only organize short-term and theme-based events with lower and less sustainable impact overseas. Both Mr. A and Mr. B admitted that there is no effective external relations strategy which limits the generation of soft power for the city. Mr. B commented that HKETO was eager to sign agreements and establish a strategic relationship with the countries which have, for instance, mature Fintech

capacities but lacks policy coordination. On the ground of treating policies more than a “topic” or “discourse”, the city will not further enjoy the privileges by forming strategic relationships or signing agreements with other countries only if the government lacks forward-looking policies and plan. Regarding the centralized international department, Shen (2016) has suggested there is a need for Hong Kong to coordinate resources, train external affairs experts and manage Hong Kong as a city brand in order to oversee global affairs by establishing a centralized department like “Global Affairs Bureau” (p. 67). Instituting a bureau for global affairs intends to fulfill long-term development, but for the short term, it is recommended at least to have an institutionalized comprehensive guideline for building external relations and global image by the outposts. In the meanwhile, Mr. B highlighted that as the globalization principal is mature, the role of HKETOs has been shifted to non-economic events like film festival, art appreciation, sports, community services etc., which verified that within the global interdependence, the HKETOs would have to shift its resources to organize more soft events like film and arts as the free market principal already faded out the role of HKETOs overseas as there is no necessity for them to negotiate or facilitate trade agreements from time to time. The institutional space for fostering soft power in the international outpost hence is flexible. The interview also submits evidence that the HKSAR has the official platforms and ability to radiate its soft power by the official department HKETOs which is constitutionally allowed and it seems the Chinese government did not have the intention to intervene directly. On this point, the HKETOs’ officials admitted that they have full autonomy to design, organize and execute the daily works of the office and no need to report to the Chinese embassy and the Chinese government. Therefore, the room for the HKETOs officials to execute paradiplomatic power which is guaranteed under constitutional provisions and conventions exist and are enough. The officials could maintain the flexibility according to the changing needs of the international environments. However, the management of the HKSAR government is not sensible enough to have a coordinated and holistic working scope for the HKETOs and it makes the HKETOs always organize “events” or “activities” rather than sustainable plans for raising Hong Kong’s profile and hence, soft power to attract international audiences and international attention is limited. This

also can explain why the HKSAR government does not have a visionary and prospective plan for raising Hong Kong international profile and soft power enhancement.

## **2. Tensions between the Chinese government, the HKSAR government, and the HKETOs in terms of economic policies and political issues**

### **a) Beijing's Influence on the Daily Works of the HKETOs**

In respects of economic policies, the HKETOs' representatives emphasized that China could influence Hong Kong's involvement in international relations, giving the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as an example:

“Although Hong Kong is not a direct party of the BRI, China's BRI would influence the HKSAR government's preferences in shaping Hong Kong's international role. The HKETOs, therefore, would allocate more resources to promoting the BRI. We, again, will shape Hong Kong in the role of middle-man... ‘If you want to be part of the BRI, you have to start from Hong Kong’.” (Mr. B)

### **b) HKETOs' Response to Beijing's Influence**

“There are two philosophies behind my works: Firstly, we want to raise Hong Kong's profile, to let people know this place and let them be interested in Hong Kong. Secondly, we want to promote Hong Kong's uniqueness – there are various levels of uniqueness. Firstly, although it is an established fact that Hong Kong is a part of China, we want to tell others that Hong Kong is running a system different from the Mainland. *We do not want them to draw an equal sign between Hong Kong and China ...* From the perspective of the HKETOs, we will emphasize ‘One Country’ and ‘Two Systems’ in Hong Kong ... The elements of ‘One Country, Two Systems’ would make Hong Kong more effective to raise overseas interest in Hong Kong. We would also tell them that Hong Kong is a part of China, but Hong Kong's system is different ... We will exactly tell the people that “One Country” is not the only thing happening in Hong Kong, we also have “Two Systems”. If we don't emphasize on the “Two Systems”, there would be adverse effects on Hong Kong.” (Mr. A)

“The past few years, the HKETOs attempted to highlight the differences of Hong Kong as from other Asian cities, which is *Hong Kong is a part of China, yet not equal to China*. This notion will be interpreted selectively depending on

the targeted audience. We must consider our targeted audiences, context, nature, and environmental condition that will affect their ways of perceiving the message. For example, underscoring Hong Kong as part of China as to persuade Hong Kong is a gateway to enter China's market, but at the same time, I will supplement "Individual rights and freedom" that one may enjoy in Hong Kong. It is a subtle way of saying, you will lose your individual right and freedom if you pick to start your business in Mainland instead of Hong Kong. However, if China-Hong Kong relations at that period is seen as touchy, controversial, or international audiences raise questions about "One Country, Two Systems", we would re-direct the communication focus on promoting the HKSAR's high autonomy." (Mr. B)

**c) The Position which the HKETOs' officials Always Pinpointed in Their Daily Works**

"The positioning of Hong Kong as a springboard is what we always mention when promoting Hong Kong. It is totally workable to enter the Mainland market through Hong Kong, and you can also reach the Asian markets in Hong Kong at the same time. To be honest, the Hong Kong market which has only about 7 million people is not so big, but the markets that businesses can reach out from Hong Kong are significant." (Mr. A)

"We must obtain a sense of promoting Hong Kong's identity (like a city-state will do). Hong Kong is a special city. With our history, relations with the UK and China, and our international status, we must strive to cultivate our sense of self-awareness to what we have (culturally), as to highlight our city's uniqueness and to preserve it ...It is also about sustaining Hong Kong's relevance to the world as well as importance to China. How is Hong Kong different from other major cities of China, e.g. Shanghai, how are we balancing the Hong Kong identity while maintaining the role as China's middleman to the world? The HKSAR government must dedicate more efforts to articulate this identity." (Mr. B)

**The HKSAR government requests the HKETOs to deliver political message vis-à-vis international audiences**

"Political discourse is also widely adopted by the HKSAR government in recent years. Top-down standardized political lines such as "territorial integrity", "China has the full sovereign of Hong Kong" etc. has weakened Hong Kong international identity. Disregarding values they have developed and nurtured the society for years has created diplomatic awkwardness for HKETOs' external outreach, as Hong Kong government's position now appears to be "way too defensive". Of course, the HKETO itself is composed of political

elements, however, the HKSAR government forces the fellowships of HKETOs to take the top-down political lines already turned the HKETO to be a tool to deliver political messages overseas. The overseas business partners and governments always show their annoyances when they are forced to listen to those political declarations. I chose to make the political statements very gently and will not spend a lot of time to explain and illustrate them.” (Mr. B)

Indubitably that China can have direct influences on Hong Kong economic policies which have been demonstrated in the previous chapter. But one interesting point to have further exploration is how the officials of the international outposts interpret the China-Hong Kong relations and how they present “One Country, Two Systems” to the international community, which would result in absolute differences on managing Hong Kong external relations. In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping introduced the ideas of the Silk Road Economic Belt and Maritime Silk Road to outline China’s global strategy in a new era. In 2015, the Central Authorities laid down 5 key policy aspects of the BRI which cover the economic and human developments of 65 countries with a combined Gross Domestic Product of \$23 trillion and includes some 4.4 billion people of 62 percent of the world’s population (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2017). The BRI stretches across Europe, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, West Asia, and the Middle East which are served by 5 routes: (1) Linking China to Europe through Central Asia and Russia; (2) Connecting China with the Middle East through Central Asia; (3) Bringing together China and Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Indian Ocean; (4) Linking China with Europe through the South China Sea and Indian Ocean; (5) Connecting China with the South Pacific Ocean through the South China Sea and 6 international economic co-operation corridors: (1) The New Eurasia Land Bridge, (2) China-Mongolia-Russia, (3) China-Central Asia-West Asia, (4) China-Indochina Peninsula, (5) China-Pakistan, (6) Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar) (HKTDC Research, 2018a). Many of the countries along the routes and corridors are developing countries which are expected to stand to benefit from China’s new strategy. The BRI offers not only new markets and business opportunities, but also the mobility of capital and skills which would facilitate the construction of infrastructure, create jobs, and boost global trade.

Against this background, the HKSAR government has tried to envisage what roles it would take under the BRI. Since 2015, the Chief Executive has made use of the annual Policy Address and the Policy Agenda to introduce new policy initiatives and events to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the BRI. The Belt and Road Office has been set up to promote Hong Kong as a “Key Link” and a “Super-Connector” (Hong Kong Belt and Road Office, 2017). Since 2016, the Government and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council have co-organized the Belt and Road Summit every year (Belt and Road Summit, 2017). Hong Kong officials have talked about the BRI as the focal point around which economic policy and concerted actions are to be built (Hong Kong Economic Journal, 2017b). As there is no doubt that the BRI will shape Hong Kong’s economic priorities and external relations for the years to come, professionals and stakeholders have highlighted how Hong Kong could contribute to the BRI-related projects and stand to gain accordingly. For example, Charles Li, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong Exchanges (HKEX), underscored that Hong Kong was the key pivot to attract more international investment in BRI-related projects because of the city assets such as rule of law, free market mechanism, and sound institutions under “One Country, Two Systems” (Apple Daily, 2017; Connor, 2016; Yuen, 2016). Former Financial Secretary Antony Leung Kam-Chung emphasized that Hong Kong could offer its rich experiences and knowledge in international mergers and acquisitions and convinced that those advantages would certainly enhance the legitimacy of Hong Kong being the third-party guarantee in BRI-related projects (China Venture, 2017).

The two officials demonstrated consistency in interpreting and presenting “One Country, Two Systems” and the role of Hong Kong when they had to introduce Hong Kong to the overseas audiences. They professed that they spent most of the time to illustrate the differences between Hong Kong and China with accentuating Hong Kong’s international business environment and the articulation of universal values in Hong Kong society, which echoes the predominance of Hong Kong highlighted by Charles Li and Antony Leung. Emphasizing “One Country, Two Systems” as the principal of the HKETO is not only conforming to the official political lines which the Chinese government and the HKSAR government always emphasize in public, but also

indicating that they recognized Hong Kong should take advantages of being a part of China which would definitely benefit Hong Kong's trade volume and economic development. Moreover, they both acknowledged the damage to Hong Kong if they only emphasized "One County", it is implied that Hong Kong would be the best location to start a business instead of China if the international companies do not want to take any risks of diminishing individual rights and freedom. Furthermore, as the HKSAR government grant full autonomy to the HKETOs, the officials can perform flexibly and "transform themselves" (Mr. A) according to the shifting political and economic situation in both international and domestic domains. All these depend on the consciousness of the HKETO officials and how they interpret "One Country, Two Systems", Hong Kong-China relations and the soft power which Hong Kong possesses: values, freedoms, and networks. However, the above mentioned is not guaranteed if the HKETO officials do not recognize the importance of "Two Systems" and the significances of the uniqueness of Hong Kong in terms of values and freedom. The freedom and autonomy of the HKETOs can be retracted by the HKSAR government, the capacity for the HKETOs to promote Hong Kong's uniqueness and sustain its special status in "Two Systems" would become limited. It is indicative in the interviews that China has direct influences on Hong Kong's policy priority and policy orientation. Though HKETOs' officials recognized the significances of the position and the advantages of 'Two Systems', how they expand and strengthen these advantages to fortify the international status and global coverage of Hong Kong need to be carefully considered.

Once regional integration has been commenced in the HKSAR, the government emphasized that the regional integration like Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area (GBA) will in general benefit the HKSAR. Yet, few clarifications need to be made before asserting benefits will bring to the HKSAR. First, as Hong Kong is required to engage in the regional integration and collaborate with other Chinese cities, will the priority of Hong Kong's self-interests be lower as first priority will be shifted to maintain regional interests? Second, has the HKSAR government administratively prepared to collaborate with other Belt and Road Countries by considering its limited resources and administrative red tape? If there is

any time gap, it will make Hong Kong difficult to have direct and instant benefits from the national policies.

The officials also tend to take advantages from China when they have to incorporate national policies in their daily work, which underscores that the position of Hong Kong would be the entrance or window of profitable China's markets. It denotes that both officials regard Hong Kong as an international city and a Chinese city and the implication of how the city is different from other Chinese cities. Even though the policy orientation of the HKSAR government already inclined to integrate more with China than the international community as shown in the previous chapter, the HKETOs officials, conversely, show their understandings of the ability, capacity, and potentials of Hong Kong's international network and its east-meet-west identity has already contributed to the success of the city which should be always maintained. Being the role of "super-connector" or middleman is not necessarily contrasting to the city's identity, but the officials expressed that they have reservations on the efforts of the HKSAR government to preserve Hong Kong's identity as an international city.

Regarding the political aspects, two officials from the HKETOs clearly revealed that the HKSAR government has gradually shifted the HKETO from a paradiplomatic agent to a propaganda unit. The top-down defensive responses towards political issues in Hong Kong and the relations of China-Hong Kong made HKETO's works more challenging with diplomatic awkwardness. Once the HKSAR government requested the HKETOs to declare hardline approach of political stances regarding China-Hong Kong relations when they met the overseas stakeholders already contradicted the principle of "One Country, Two Systems" and also the working philosophy of the HKETOs. This contradiction hinders the effectiveness of the works and the long-term relations with the local businessmen and governments who indeed expect Hong Kong would have a more pragmatic approach to deal with international business partners and government-to-government relations by moderating the political issues. To a larger extent, this approach also harms China as China actually gains practical benefits from the principle of "One Country, Two Systems". Hong Kong gains a special status within the territory of China which is recognized by the international society, for instance, United States – Hong Kong Policy Act 1992 treats

Hong Kong as a special polity which can have special trade offer and trade permission of sensitive technology products and China can eventually access those products through Hong Kong originally China has limited access to those products (Ke, 2017). In the eyes of the international community, they already raised concerns over the implementation of “One Country, Two Systems” in Hong Kong and put pressures on China<sup>83</sup>. In political aspect, considering that China has become the second largest world economy, how it handles Hong Kong would be valuable for international references and as an indicator of its major political stances and attitudes towards other political issues (Mr. A). Alternatively, how the HKSAR government manages the relations with its central government would also contribute to the history of non-sovereign actors. The tension between the HKSAR government and the HKETOs and the responding tactics of the HKETOs officials is illustrated in Table 16.

**Table 16: The tensions between the HKSAR government and the HKETOs on the works of external affairs**

	The HKSAR Government's Demand	The HKETOs' Strategies / Reactions	Tensions / Limitations
<b>1</b>	No overall comprehensive institution / guidelines for the HKETOs to execute external affairs	They can only carry out short-term, event-based, theme-based activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those short-term activities will become routine works of HKETOs overseas</li> <li>• The long-term visibility of Hong Kong is doubted to be maintained</li> </ul>

<sup>83</sup> For instance, European Union recently expressed concerns on the promise of high degree of autonomy in the HKSAR. Details see Cheng, 2018.

	The HKSAR Government's Demand	The HKETOs' Strategies / Reactions	Tensions / Limitations
2	Granting full autonomy and enough freedom to the HKETOs	HKETOs officials always emphasized Hong Kong's special status, the city's identity in China and articulating universal values as the "selling points" of Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The consciousness and sensitivity of the HKETOs' officials would be the key of how to position Hong Kong vis-à-vis overseas audiences</li> </ul>
3	Requesting the HKETOs to follow Chinese national plans such as BRI and Greater Bay Area	Allocating resources to promote national policies, but simultaneously, the offices will utilize the national policies to invite overseas businessmen to start a business in Hong Kong, highlighting how to use Hong Kong to explore China's market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HKETOs officials understood the city's interest in national plans would be crucial for the sustainability of Hong Kong's position and identity</li> <li>Still, the consciousness and sensitivity of the HKETOs' officials would be the key of how to position Hong Kong vis-à-vis overseas audiences</li> </ul>
4	Requesting the HKETOs to	Making the political statements gently and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HKSAR government changes</li> </ul>

	The HKSAR Government's Demand	The HKETOs' Strategies / Reactions	Tensions / Limitations
	articulate political messages when they communicate with overseas audiences with the "correct" political lines along with the Chinese government and the HKSAR government	will not spend a lot of time to explain and illustrate the political statements	the HKETOs from paradiplomatic unit to a propaganda unit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Still, the consciousness and sensitivity of the HKETOs' officials would be the key of how to position Hong Kong vis-à-vis overseas audiences</li> </ul>

### 3. How seriously have the HKSAR government and the HKETOs taken Hong Kong's soft power?

#### a) The Promotions of the HKSAR Overseas

"I always assumed that many people know Hong Kong well, such as Hong Kong runs "One Country, Two Systems" and Hong Kong is an international port. We sometimes take it for granted, but in fact, many people do not know about Hong Kong ... You might expect we might tell something more in-depth (in overseas activities), but that is not the case ... I think the promotion work of Hong Kong has not been carried out well at the very beginning." (Mr. A)

"Unlike other progressive Asian countries, like Malaysia and Thailand, I seldom or nearly have never seen any advertisement of Hong Kong tourism in foreign (western) media, e.g. The British Broadcasting Corporation (The BBC). Marking the 20th anniversary of the HKSAR, our government has allocated more resources and international coverage in foreign media to promote Hong Kong such as Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and Cable News Network (CNN). In which the HKSAR government adopted a soft promotion with broadcasting video on CNN, a documentary about Tai O Fish Village and its development. However, it is unlikely that such resources will be sustained in the immediate future." (Mr. B)

## **b) The Incomplete Interpretation of Soft Power by the HKSAR Government**

“Hong Kong’s soft power(s) are often associated with our economic strengths, qualities, and advantages that attribute to Hong Kong’s position as a financial hub. Meanwhile, the foreign applications of soft power are more on the side of “values” (universal values). It is interesting to witness such approach towards the interpretation of soft power either in the HKETOs or the government. Hong Kong tops in various freedom index, but we do not have the consciousness to mention such championed value(s) (freedom). Values like “freedom” and “liberty” are what makes us a free society as it is, Hong Kong has yet to promote these values that are crucial to our society and what the government has done to maintain the level of liberty, i.e. Hong Kong is far from active in advocating its inner values. Though Hong Kong always tops various freedom indexes, we have not cultivated those values like freedom and liberty that make us a free society. The Hong Kong government has been very passive in articulating those values ...this sense of self-awareness within Hong Kong society is the key to transform these championed values into Hong Kong’s soft power.” (Mr. B)

“Hong Kong’s major attractiveness for tourism is derived from business-oriented events like exhibitions, conferences, and fairs. The HKSAR government didn’t intend to project an “all-rounded” image for tourism but a sole business and trade presentation to overseas audiences. This leads to a weak presentation of Hong Kong’s image.” (Mr. B)

“Singapore and Hong Kong are always compared in many ways. In terms of soft power, people here think Hong Kong is stronger. Singapore offers substantial benefits (“Jetso” in Cantonese) to attract them to invest, but what Hong Kong can offer is not benefits but networks, values, and freedom in the city.” (Mr. A)

“The way which the HKSAR government responds to protests and demonstrations has changed. Ten years ago, the HKSAR government would keep their distance from the official role comment civil disobedience or protests, in order to project Hong Kong as a society full of liberty and freedom and the government is supportive to deliver the image of an open city. However, after recent political movement(s), the HKSAR government has left values behind, rather embracing a suppressive and defensive approach to attach the HKSAR more to the PRC politically.” (Mr. B)

Both HKETOs officials conveyed that the HKSAR government does not perform effective, holistic and maintainable promotions of Hong Kong overseas. Raising one place’s profile is the first step to accumulate soft power resources, which most part of it should rely on the government’s effort to have promotions and initiatives

overseas. The limited promotions will further impede the portrayal of the city's image and identity, which additionally straitjacket the influences of its cultural products, tourism development, economic exchange, etc. The interviews from both HKETOs officials demonstrated the HKSAR government does not identify the significances of long-term promotions of Hong Kong overseas and tends to depend on the HKETOs, which are only granted limited resources in terms of staffing<sup>84</sup> and budget<sup>85</sup> (Mr. A and Mr. B). It is pronounced that being the government of an international city, the HKSAR government does not have a holistic and maintainable promotion plan of Hong Kong overseas. Furthermore, the HKSAR government also exhibits an incomplete interpretation of soft power, especially it displayed a predilection for the economy as the pillar of Hong Kong's soft power.

It is perceivable that the HKETOs officials identified the characteristics and the values of Hong Kong could benefit the city's image and hence, to foster its soft power. However, the HKSAR government underestimates the values originated from the Hong Kong society and has not been able to integrate them into its paradiplomatic policies even Hong Kong is given the guaranteed paradiplomatic power stipulated in the Basic Law. The HKETOs always adhere to "One Country, Two Systems" and show the "uniqueness" of Hong Kong in their daily work, in essence, what the HKSAR government advocates, on the contrary, is limited to economic aspect. It seems that the HKSAR government has self-limitation on enhancing all-inclusive soft power. This should have extended to how the HKSAR government perceives and manages our cultural policies and tourism policies, which would undeniably strengthen the foundations of soft power. The official interpretation of soft power will further dominate the direction and presentation of Hong Kong tourism and cultural promotion which tends to only stress the unitary direction of tourism in Hong Kong: Consumption and economic activities.

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<sup>84</sup> Depending on the region it serves, there are ranging from three to twelve staff in each HKETO stations overseas.

<sup>85</sup> The estimate expenses of All HKETOs overseas for 2018-2019 will be \$425.3 million. Details see Government Secretariat of the HKSAR government, 2018.

The relations between values and soft power were already well illustrated by Nye. Nye (2011b) has emphasized that states could develop soft power through public diplomacy like broadcasting and exchange programs, but the non-state actors such as NGOs, universities and religious organizations could impact on the public and governing elites in other countries, hence to fashion a suitable environment for augmenting soft power. The interaction of civil societies and non-state actors, particularly, would generate milieu goals like democracy, liberty, human rights etc. (Nye, 2004a, p. 90-97; Nye, 2011a, p. 101). The HKSAR government chooses to ignore the significance of values promotion via institutional and non-official channels, which would not only limit the export of the image and the identity of Hong Kong to overseas audiences but also incidentally putting some unwarranted limits on the cooperation between the government and other sectors like the international NGOs. The soft power of Hong Kong is hence curbed by the self-limitation of the HKSAR government and there is uncertainty about how the paradiplomatic powers provided by the Basic Law can help to expound the essence of “One Country, Two Systems” practically. In addition, when there is a discrepancy of value interpretations between the government and the society, people in the city will use collective actions and social movements to preserve the values they identified<sup>86</sup>. The conspicuous social movements in the past few years certainly attracted the attention of international media and Hong Kong was on the headline of some local newspapers (Mr. A). On one hand, the business newspapers overseas tend to silent out Hong Kong political issues, on the other hand, the international media are interested in reporting political issues of Hong Kong such as the Causeway Bay Bookstore Incident and the Umbrella Movement, which have already stimulated discussions world wide because of the overseas media reportage. As the incidents and social movements are highly related to human rights conditions and the autonomy of the city, the international communities are also interested in how China handles its capitalism HKSAR (Mr. A and Mr. B). To some extent, this is also advantageous to Hong Kong’s image as Hong Kong become more renowned in the

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<sup>86</sup> A lot of literatures proved that the relationship between the identification of values by the participants and the emergence of social movements is significant. Details see Ingrehart, 1990; Stern, Dietz, Abel, Guagnano, & Kalof, 1999; Pichardo, 1997.

international level and more distinguishable from China and other Chinese cities (Mr. A and Prof. Kurata Toru<sup>87</sup>).

The other way round, the HKETOs officials showed that they can identify Hong Kong's soft power in a broader sense compared to the HKSAR government. The HKETO performs coordination role of the international outposts of Hong Kong and it bears an indispensable responsibility to communicate with target audiences overseas. It is so salient that the officials possess a broader sense of soft power in order to connect with the international majority. The dissimilitude of interpreting soft power between the HKETOs officials and the HKSAR government will lower the internal integrity and legitimacy, i.e. the HKSAR government is no easier to get the identification from the officials. This will further affect the efficiency and legitimacy of the government.

#### **4. Does the HKSAR government try to have dialogues with different sectors on specific issues?**

“When I worked in Oxfam, in earlier years, I have more chance to have direct interaction and communication with the government officials. After C.Y. Leung took the office (i.e. 2012), I have very little chance to communicate with or establish a dialogue with the government officials. I could contact them for direct dialogue before but during C.Y. Leung era, they rejected to meet us. The usual practice of the civil society is to form an alliance (聯席) which gathers NGOs with similar values and objectives and to meet the government officials under one alliance. C.Y. Leung's government did not offer us any chance. I just had one chance to meet Matthew Cheung (張建宗) during C.Y. Leung's government. However, I have proposed the meeting for 1 year before I met Cheung.” (Ms. Au Mei Po)

“A lot of research we have to do in order to understand some sensitive issues in the society, for instance, the Hong Kong final governor Christopher Francis Patten allowed me to conduct the human rights situation report of Hong Kong prisons in the colonial era. Now it is not feasible because the HKSAR government did not allow me to do that. This kind of report has great impacts

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<sup>87</sup> Prof. Kurata Toru expressed that the Japanese thought that China and Hong Kong have no difference as they did not have the chances to differentiate them. But after the Umbrella Movement, the Japanese newspaper and TV commanded more coverage on how Hong Kong people resisted the PRC so Hong Kong gets a more distinctive image now in Japan. Recently NHK broadcasted a two-hour special topic TV programme on the freedom of speech and the independent bookstores in Hong Kong. Details see Hong Kong Readers, 2018.

on how the international society sees Hong Kong's human rights condition, so I can say this just depends on how the government interprets the significances of this kind of work." (Mr. D)

"The role of government has never been active and supportive. Film-making in Hong Kong always relies on our industry, it wasn't until recent years the HKSAR government provides more financial supports towards Hong Kong local filmmaking. In addition to the unsolvable copyrights issue, incomprehensive legal protection, the social environment, and atmosphere is not built for nurturing creative industry like filmmaking ... However, as long as the financial support from the HKSAR government has increased, it will waste money and resources if it does not really understand the current situation of the local film industry. I couldn't say it is the main factor to cause, but it does play an important role." (Ms. Deniece Law)

For sovereign states, Nye (2004a, 2011a) has discussed how culture, political values, and foreign policies have become the main resources for expanding national soft power. For non-sovereign entities, both political values and foreign policies have to be considered as coming under the purview of paradiplomacy. The key for non-sovereign entities is to examine how they can convert their paradiplomatic powers to policy instruments which will boost their soft power. Research, surveys, and dialogues with other groupings with social reform agendas are advised to be taken into consideration before implementing policies related to global coverage and soft power enhancement. For instance, studies and surveys about the self-perception of Hong Kong people and how international others perceive Hong Kong are crucial for policy design and implementation in international perspective. Constructing dialogues with stakeholders is indispensable to comprehend and envisage potential soft power which the government cannot get from just reading documents. Three interviewees from the international NGO and film industry revealed that there are limited interactions between the HKSAR government and their sectors, to a certain extent, the government does not welcome to have communications with them. Any sensible and practical policies which can foster Hong Kong's potentials are unable to be delivered overseas.

Three interviewees illustrated the ignorance of the HKSAR government to have dialogues with non-public entities and hence, blocking itself to envisage potential soft power of Hong Kong from different sectors. For instance, Ms. Au Mei Po has studied

and researched the rights of foreign domestic helpers for 20 years and a lot of local NGOs had also done a lot of research on this topic, the government has not even studied them. Until the case of Erwiana Sulistyaningsih<sup>88</sup> drew the attention from international media, the HKSAR government finally met and discussed with the alliance for a solution. This case proves the HKSAR government does not have a visionary insight to foresee the impact of the rights of domestic helpers on human rights record of Hong Kong and how it affects the international status of Hong Kong. The government refuses to communicate with the respective sector in which reducing the opportunities to perceive the current situation and thus puts the city's human rights record under international surveillance. The international community starts to question the city's regulations, the rights of minorities in the city and even the quality of Hong Kong people. Those bring irreversible damage to Hong Kong soft power. The HKSAR government also does not discern the values of research especially in the human rights issue, which is highly associated with the performance of soft power. The government on one side did not recognize the reports established by foreign organizations and regard those researches are "foreign interventions", on the other hand, it limits local research and further exploration on ameliorating human rights situation in Hong Kong. This attitude curtails Hong Kong's possibility of boosting its soft power by its edge of human rights which Hong Kong human rights condition far outstrips China. Evidence from the Human Development Index published by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2016, Hong Kong ranked 12th out of 188 places while China positioned 90th (The United Nations Development Programme, 2016). Simultaneously, the human rights condition in China directly hinders the soft power of China proved by the Soft Power 30's report on soft power development in the national level, which reviews that "China's soft power pursuits are somewhat undermined by its hardline approach to foreign policy and human rights." (The Soft Power 30, 2018).

To be one of the key resources of soft power, Hong Kong films have earned global recognition and exerted international influences since the 1970s. Equipping with

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<sup>88</sup> Erwiana Sulistyaningsih is an Indonesian domestic helper who was suffered from long-term abuse by her employer in Hong Kong and the case was widely reported internationally. Details see The Guardian, 2015; BBC, 2015; Whiteman & Kam, 2015.

effective marketing strategies, language ability<sup>89</sup>, unique style of shooting<sup>90</sup> and renowned film celebrities, Hong Kong films have absorbed the global audiences, capitals, and inspiration, which made Hong Kong films still pivotal in the global film industry. Film exhibitions are always the major events organized by HKETOs overseas, how to enhance Hong Kong film as a kind of powerful tool to promote Hong Kong's global influence, which can be achieved by conducting sustainable research and dialogues overseas and foster the possible collaborations with Hong Kong film industry. But two filmmakers commented that the government just took advantages of Hong Kong films and has never played any role to communicate with the Hong Kong film sector. Reviewing the institutional setting<sup>91</sup>, lacking in the official and professional recognition from the government already shows the rationale of lacking prospects and does not respect the local filmmakers at all. Even the government has invested in local film productions, the officials left little room for building trust and having collaboration with the filmmakers as they saw themselves as an investor of the films but not the facilitator of the film industry for the city (Ms. Deniece Law and Mr. C). The mentality of the HKSAR government unquestionably undermines the paradiplomatic power and seems to blur the connections between the paradiplomatic power and effective policy instruments (Diagram E). Moreover, if evidence-based research and having dialogues with other sectors have not been considered as the supports for policy instruments, it is difficult for the local government to put forward the collaboration method with the central government from parallel-harmony framework to cooperative-joint framework as the strengths and weaknesses of the involved sectors are not well-comprehended by

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<sup>89</sup> Mr. C pinpointed in the interview that the English press kit was crucial in promoting Hong Kong films to the global audiences in the past. Press kit basically is a press book, which includes background information about the film, the production crew and the rationales of the theme especially for those historic movies. Bio of leading director(s), actor(s) and actress(es) are often the important perspective to understand the film also presented in the press kit. In which cultural and historical background shall always be the stressing point of Chinese films, it ensures our audiences possess sufficient understandings towards the background of storyline and this is in particular useful to let the foreigners understand the films (Mr. C).

<sup>90</sup> For instance, Director John Woo (Ng Yu-sum 吳宇森) successfully inspired Hollywood with his unique style of shooting: slow-motion actions in action movies. Furthermore, Director Wong Ka wai and his *Chungking Express* (重慶森林) introduced new approaches of using stop motions and voice-over. Cantonese movies have somehow influencing movie industry worldwide (Mr. C).

<sup>91</sup> Film issues in Hong Kong are under the administration of Home Affairs Department which is belonged to Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the officials do not specialize in the development and the potentials of creative industry (Mr. C).

the local government. Thus, institutional innovations in the HKSAR government and collaboration between public and other sectors are thus highly recommended to sustain the development of soft power for Hong Kong.

## **5. The impact of international NGOs on Hong Kong soft power advancement and China-Hong Kong relations?**

### **a) Hong Kong Used to Be a Nurturing and Practicing Hub for International Civil Society**

“During the 80s and 90s, Hong Kong used to be the center for Asian political dissenters and they could be the asylum-seekers in Hong Kong. They were mainly from Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, and Taiwan, where the countries have little space for civil society’s development at that time. Hong Kong provided supports like shelters and language training, finally, they were sent back to their home countries. Hong Kong acted like a hub for them to absorb knowledge and foster political awareness. All because Hong Kong has freedom and Hong Kong basically got the support from the Asian region.” (Mr. D and Ms. Au Mei Po)

### **b) The Importance of Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression to Hong Kong**

“For the Chinese scholars, they have a lot of experiences in researching those (sensitive) issues but they would not record and publish it. If you ask them, they will tell you, but even not in the formal meeting. They admitted, “I cannot publish it but if you ask, I will tell you.” This is related to the restriction of freedom of press and freedom of speech in China in general and they recognized that it will be too impactful if they publish it officially. This will definitely limit the development of China. After the year 2000, the Chinese scholars have more chances to get in touch with other countries to have academic exchanges and they could perceive more about the drawbacks of the Chinese government and social issues in China, but still, they cannot record and publish their works. Around the year 2015 / 2016, the Chinese government also started to oppress the public discussion of feminism or sexual abuse and harassment in China which was discussable before, that means China by that time has entered another era.” (Ms. Au Mei Po)

“Hong Kong’s liberal studies and China Studies are outstanding, as no other places could replace Hong Kong’s geographical advantage to China. Hong

Kong is the only place within China's territory can publish academic articles about China." (Prof. Chen Chien-fu)

"The international NGOs realize that the GONGOs (Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations) from China always publish some fake data and reports, they will reveal and verify it on the spot (in the international seminars)." (Mr. D)

**c) Hong Kong has Marked Effect on China's International Development and Engaging China into the International Stage**

"China needs to take the international community into consideration when China deals with Hong Kong. China cannot just simply ignore these political mathematics. For instance, the case of Lee Bo <sup>92</sup> clearly illustrated this orientation. As Lee Bo is a British citizen and the international society cannot just ignore the incident which was highly concerned with the human rights issue. The EU countries at that moment tended to use human rights as the business leverage with China and stressed China to immediately release Lee Bo." (Mr. D)

"When I worked in Amnesty, some people from China would like to speak to me to get useful information. They asked my opinions about some issues, for instance, The Administration of Activities of Overseas Non-Governmental Organizations out of the Territory of China, they would like to ask my opinion as Amnesty would have to deal with a lot of international NGOs and their law issues. Or about the political situation of Hong Kong, they would like to ask me how I feel or simply get other people's information. This is my bottom line and I will not disclose any information about others. I would like to share my opinions on Chinese laws and Hong Kong policies. For instance, during the Umbrella Movement, the issue which Amnesty most concern was the freedom of speech and assembly, and this was a hardcore statement on the Umbrella Movement. The aims of seeking my opinions because I am familiar with laws and I am Hong Konger working in an international organization. Even PRC is an authoritarian regime, they want to know how an international organization comments / views on those issues, in order to prepare themselves. Even the PRC is a strong authoritarian regime, they have to know how to develop common languages with the international community, of course, they do not wholeheartedly feel that they have to do that, but still, they will approach me to ask my opinions. Meanwhile, they would like to know how Hong Kong people comment on those issues." (Ms. Au Mei Po)

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<sup>92</sup> Lee Bo and 4 other Hong Kong citizens were disappeared in Hong Kong and have been taken to have investigations because they were suspected to sell prohibited books in China, led to international allegation towards Beijing's violating Hong Kong local constitution. Details see Lewis, 2016.

**d) The Ignorance of the HKSAR government about Global Issues and Their Relevance to Hong Kong**

“For labor issues, Hong Kong also participates in International Labour Organization (ILO) and Hong Kong should know about how the international communities discuss, debate and comment on the labor issues. Even Hong Kong was not entitled as an individual participant in these international organization like the UN or ILO, when Hong Kong has to institute labor policies which either follows the criteria or standard of international labor Conventions (ILCs) and Recommendations or for some complicated policies, you cannot just follow those conventions as they are so broad and do not stipulate specifically for some specific issues. For other specific issues, Hong Kong follows the standards and guidelines set by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). For instance, the issue of migrant workers, this is the convention of Hong Kong to follow the guidelines of OECD as Hong Kong participated in OECD meetings. But the HKSAR government now does not eager to follow the guidelines of OECD to deal with any human rights issues of the migrant workers in Hong Kong. The situation is the HKSAR government officially claims that Hong Kong attaches to international conventions or standard, but indeed, it does not follow and handle cases according to those standards or guidelines. However, the international standard is something progressive.” (Ms. Au Mei Po)

“Except OECD, a lot of countries including China really concern about the issue of human trafficking, they will refer to an international anti-trafficking protocol which provides a mechanism for them to handle the issue of human trafficking. However, the HKSAR government insisted that Hong Kong does not have the issue of human trafficking or claimed that human trafficking is not a serious problem in Hong Kong. However, the HKSAR government does not have any data or reports about this issue. The HKSAR government does not join the international protocol and neither does it know the current concepts, terms, and definitions which are already totally different from the past definitions. There is a checklist to define human trafficking. For instance, if you are invited to work in another place, the condition does not match with the ones written in the agreement, this should be considered as one type of human trafficking. The HKSAR government should update itself and not simply declares Hong Kong does not have this kind of issue. They do not want to admit that Hong Kong has this kind of problem, but indeed, they limit themselves to access the information.” (Ms. Au Mei Po)

Both Mr. D and Ms. Au Mei Po have over 20 years working experiences in international NGOs based in Hong Kong. They both admired Hong Kong used to be a

nurturing and practicing hub for international civil society. Hong Kong has a long history of receiving political dissenters from other places in Asia that comparatively have immature civil societies than Hong Kong. It shows that Hong Kong at the very beginning has accumulated the resources and consciousness for strengthening its civil society. Regarding the law framework, even though Hong Kong was not a member of the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention), in 1992, the British colonial government has adjusted the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane, Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) in order to force the Chinese government to apply the international standard of treating political dissenters and refugees in the HKSAR after the 1997 handover (Wang, 2016). However, the independence and the practice of offering legal assistance to the non-refoulement claimants is seriously criticized by the legal professions and the implementation of the opaque appeal process has been delayed by the HKSAR government as the Decisions of the Director of Immigration and the Torture Claims Appeal Board (TCAB) are not yet issued (Centre for Comparative and Public Law, Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor & Hong Kong Unison, 2018). This serves as one of the evidence that even international law has been constitutionally applied in the HKSAR, the practice of the HKSAR government hitherto fell behind the international standard and this fritters away the internal soft strength of the civil society in the city.

Luckily that Hong Kong civil society can still release research findings and reports on the subject of human rights issue by granting the rights of freedom of press granted by the Basic Law. However, the scholars and researchers in China still are not allowed to publish important research and reports in this area. Hong Kong has the ability to retain its potentials to reserve the soft power of publishing and academic of China's issues, while the Chinese government still does not overcome its suspicions towards academia and NGOs.

The essence of academic exchange and tertiary education generates a free and open society to discuss, comment and evaluate the social conditions from a professional and analytical angle, which is underpinned by the values of freedom of speech, freedom of press and embracing diversity and pluralism in the society. Though China tries to

suppress Hong Kong academics, Hong Kong still is the only city within the territory of China able to inspire political perfection in China<sup>93</sup>. Hong Kong has its prospects to fill up the academic gap between China and the international community and serves as the platform to have international academic exchanges with the rest of the world specifically for those are interested in China's development and its political and social issues. As a result, academic freedom is one of the crucial soft power in the region which other places could not replace Hong Kong within a short period.

The two interviewees from Hong Kong civil society have experienced a lot on how Hong Kong has marked effect on China's international development and engaging China into the international stage. The cases they provided demonstrate the weight and the value of Hong Kong as an international city in China's territory in the non-economic aspect. The international relevance of Hong Kong and its internationality perspicuously assist the city to retain its autonomy against China and attach itself with the international standard of universal values, in this case, human rights and freedom of press. This proves that the more Hong Kong's involvement in international society, the more the city can have the bargaining chip when dealing with China and preserve "One Country, Two Systems" in a more practical sense. As China still has a limited international participation, China needs to seek opinions from Hong Kong people who have experiences in international affairs to perceive how international community thinks about particular issues, in a more precise description, Hong Kong is the only platform and channel for China to comprehend and envisage international comments on China. As long as China is still a closed society and embracing its authoritarian ruling, it needs the HKSAR's internationality to be the windows of China in terms of facilitating legal development, universal values, civil society, etc. Therefore, the HKSAR is not only the "super-connector" between China and the rest of the world in terms of economic and financial opportunities particularly in the national policies like BRI<sup>94</sup>, in this paper the author would like to put forward that the term "super-connector"

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<sup>93</sup> Speech by Prof Helen Siu, Project Citizens Forum: What makes Hong Kong special? On 9 June 2018, Admiralty, Hong Kong and Relon, 2018.

<sup>94</sup> The former Chief Executive C.Y. Leung has positioned Hong Kong as a "superconnector" in the national strategic plan of China, aiming at promoting Hong Kong as an essential part of China's economic plan. Details see news.gov.hk, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2017.

of Hong Kong can be also applied to the level of international engagement and civil society connection between the international and the Mainland. Hong Kong civil society has influential impacts on the international community, for instance, the networking of some international support organizations can have its obligations to perform lobbying and diplomatic duties in the overseas parliaments which verifies that their works are not just limited to domestic or regional. Or some of them have the validities to issue international submissions in international organizations like United Nations in order to raise public concerns over the issues related to rule of law, democracy, freedom in the HKSAR, etc. (Mr. D). Specifically, compared to the Mainland China, Hong Kong has a more outstanding and prestigious position in overseas parliaments to call resolutions or hearings of particular issues, even though China has more resources to form government representatives. Though Hong Kong has fewer resources compared to China, the Hong Kong NGOs have a more pivotal position in international organizations, for example, they could have direct lobbying with foreign diplomats, local NGOs and the parliament members with the following reasons (Mr. D):

1. Hong Kong has a similar ideological base with international organizations, which the foreign politicians would have political benefits, i.e. votes in public elections, if they assist Hong Kong to strive for similar values like democracy, freedom of speech or rule of law in the public hearings or resolutions.
2. Even Hong Kong is not a sovereign state, the international community always respects Hong Kong.
3. The research and reports published by Hong Kong NGOs are always uploaded online so other overseas NGOs and political entities can access it freely, while China still has limitations on this aspect because of its limited press and academic freedom.
4. Hong Kong, which is a signatory party to a large of international conventions and therefore under United Nations periodic scrutiny, has been a unique entity. China has tried but failed to speak for Hong Kong.

5. The international organizations, to some extent, would seek the advice from Hong Kong NGOs about the authenticity of the NGOs from China, as they do not trust China's NGOs but they totally trust the NGOs from Hong Kong.

Hong Kong has already maintained a solid relationship with international organizations based on the strength of shared values, collaboration experiences and explorations and genuineness. Comparatively, Hong Kong has more international connections in which can ameliorate China's unfavorable position in international organization related to civil society's development, hence, to explore the possibility for China's public diplomacy. Equally, this connection can be the political leverage within the China-Hong Kong relations to reserve Hong Kong's autonomy and identity as an international city. The key is how the HKSAR government perceives the significances of Hong Kong's intentionality and hence, its undertakings in China's global strategy in a broader sense but not limited to economic perspective. The internationality of Hong Kong helps the city maintain dynamics with China which put pressures on China to respect Hong Kong as a global city and hence, to shift its policies or even political actions in the HKSAR.

The international engagement gave capacity to the international NGOs in Hong Kong to react to the meddling from China, e.g. its violations of rule of law in the city. Hong Kong's international NGOs further demanded the international society, i.e. foreign countries or international organizations, to react or declare its attitude and stance publicly in the international stage towards the actions of the Chinese government in the HKSAR in order to exert international pressure on China. This tactic has effectively altered the attitudes of international stances towards China's actions on the HKSAR and eventually China adjusted its attitude and action in the HKSAR several times at some critical moments<sup>95</sup>. This proves that China should consider international rules and values if it has to have full engagement with the international and sharing the

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<sup>95</sup> The two examples provided by Mr. D were restricted to be published in this paper requested by Mr. D. Instead, the author generalizes the examples given by Mr. D.

global markets with others. As a result, the role of the HKSAR is a very significant agent for potential changes of the political system of China, this also explains why the Chinese government is interested in how the Hong Kong key leadership of the international NGOs perceive on issues concerning the international development of China. Professor Cabestan foresees democratic system will eventually replace the authoritarian political system in China. As Hong Kong is the only city in the territory to experience democracy,<sup>96</sup> it has the capacity to evaluate and reform China's political system (Relon, 2018). Hong Kong can serve as the key outpost of China to explore the directions and practices of democratization and reviving the civil society in China.

Being an international city, the HKSAR government should take the initiatives to consolidate its internationality not limited to economic perspective. Ms. Au Mei Po has cited two examples in the interview to demonstrate the inattentiveness of the HKSAR government to push Hong Kong as a real global city. Right after the interview with Ms. Au Mei Po, the U.S. Department of State released Trafficking in Persons Report 2018 which listed Hong Kong the Tier 2 Watch List<sup>97</sup>. Hong Kong was listed from 2016 to 2018 as the Tier 2 Watch List while during 2011-2015 Hong Kong was steadily ranked under the Tier 2<sup>98</sup> (U.S. Department of State, 2018b, p. 215), which shows the degeneracy in this aspect of the HKSAR government. The report manifested that the HKSAR government did execute administrative undertakings to eliminate the trafficking problems such as establishing committee and legislating laws, but "some

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<sup>96</sup> According to The Democracy Index 2017 published by The Economist Intelligence Unit, Hong Kong was positioned the 71<sup>th</sup> while China was ranked the 139<sup>th</sup> place out of 167 places, in the meanwhile Hong Kong was categorized as flawed democracy; Some scholars like Alvin So, Brian Fong and Kwong Ying Ho define the HKSAR as hybrid regime with limited electoral mandates for the political leaders but the city still possess promising civil liberty. Details see So, 2017; Fong, 2013; Kwong, 2018.

<sup>97</sup> Tier 2 Watch List of Trafficking in Persons Report means "countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards AND:

- a) The absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing;
- b) There is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year; or
- c) The determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take additional future steps over the next year (U.S. Department of State, 2018a).

<sup>98</sup> Tier 2 of Trafficking in Persons Report means "Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards." (U.S. Department of State, 2018a).

law enforcement officers did not properly investigate incidents with clear trafficking indicators reported to them by NGOs” (p. 215), especially regarding the cases of sex trafficking (Standnews, 2018b). This reflects the HKSAR government did not have updated human trafficking indicators which meet the international standard like the 2000 UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol (United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, 2000). This results the government could not recognize the seriousness of the human trafficking in the city and took a firm attitude towards the report which the HKSAR government “strongly disagreed and took exception to the report.” (The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2018). The report verifies what Ms. Au Mei Po has mentioned in the interview. This proves, first, the HKSAR government does not have well-communication with the international NGOs which are familiar with the international standard of human rights issues; second, the government does not take the lead to closely attach to international regulations and raise Hong Kong’s international profile in terms of shared values with the international community. In the nutshell, the above case demonstrates the dialogue with other sectors is crucial for attaching Hong Kong to the international standard, if not, this would create great impacts on the image of Hong Kong.

## **6. To what extent the HKSAR government influences the development of cultural industry which is regarded as one of the key areas for fostering soft power of Hong Kong?**

### **a) The Policies of Managing the HKSAR’s Film Industry Influenced the Development of the Soft Power of Hong Kong**

“Hong Kong-China co-production films bring impactful outcomes to the Hong Kong film industry. The co-production discovers a new market but the cost to join this marketplace is waiving the quality of Hong Kong films goodbye. Investors from Mainland China always overly fantasize about Hong Kong movies, thus the Hong Kong filmmakers just pay very little effort to produce co-production films, self-repetition is always the strategy. Directors and producers achieve excessive economic reward by reusing film ideas from the past which are already proven to gain popularity and profits in China, e.g. Journey to the West (西遊記). When they (directors and producers) discovered it is such an easy way to make money, they just could not resist the economic

temptation. The co-production films totally changed the mentality of the Hong Kong film industry.” (Mr. C)

“To a large extent, Hong Kong-China co-production films influence Hong Kong film development by a lot. First of all, the value diversity in films between China’s production and Hong Kong’s production is noteworthy. A movie like Wolf Warrior (戰狼), showcases the value of the rising Big China ambition. In co-production films, the storyline has to attract Mainland audiences. It leaves little rooms for creativity, as being a market-oriented film producer should go through self-censorship during filmmaking. The co-production films finally would be similar and eventually creates a cycle of ideological disaster (思想災害). Now it has become normality that funding comes directly from Mainland China. They are now the biggest source of funding in the Hong Kong film industry. However, investors from China are mostly in favor of only some certain types of films. In order to attract them to invest, local producers will avoid to “step across the line” when proposing their storyline. For example, in corps-robbery movies, the justice side must always stand with the corps, or the types of films about ancient history and science fiction (unrelated to contemporary reality) are the most popular genres in China’s film market. Of course, romance is one of the main pillars in the Chinese film market too. When you submit a film proposal to Mainland investors for investment, you may anticipate rejection or request for changing the storyline. It depends on the producer’s willingness to compromise in exchange for investment and how he or she perceives the bottom line. For the sensitive political topic like the 1989 June, 4 Tiananmen movement would be definitely rejected.” (Ms. Deniece Law)

**b) The HKSAR Government Does Not Pay Attention to the Sustainability of Hong Kong Film Industry**

“The missing generation in the Hong Kong film industry affects the overall film industry tremendously. It is usual to see the gap of generations in every industry. But for Hong Kong film-making, the 1990s generation have an unclear role in continuing the legacy for the Hong Kong film industry. For example, up till now the higher positions in the industry are still occupied by famous stars from the previous generation: Ng Yu Sum, Tsui Hark etc. Of course, they contributed greatly to the industry, what I am trying to say is, the above-mentioned situation revealed a problem of missing generation of talents in the film industry. Professional Training for creative service industry should be invested by the HKSAR government. The problem is the film industry has never been the economic drive of Hong Kong, neither do people value it as a prime development focus. It is not only the fault of government, but the mentality of Hong Kong people also falls for only money-making industry contributes to the city’s survival, one’s survival. Such a mentality is really bad for the cultivation of local arts and culture.” (Ms. Deniece Law)

“If the HKSAR government provides supports like scholarships for the students, let them release from financial burden, boost for their creativity and experience the process of creativity, they may not just see this industry as a job but an art. This is one of the key engines to nurture the next generation to create. Film, on one hand, is art, but at the same time is a commodity. If the Hong Kong film industry flourishes, both art and commodity should have their markets. The government will not be just limited to provide funding to have a talk or to invest in the production of one or two films, it can also provide supports to nurture Hong Kong talents. This would be a more important tactic for sustainable development of Hong Kong film industry.” (Ms. Au Mei Po<sup>99</sup>)

“Taiwan recognizes filmmaking in a very positive way, the Taiwan government invests and cultivates talents for the film industry, which is a key to maintain a respectable film industry. When Director Hou Hsiao-Hsien (侯孝賢) received an international award, the Taiwanese president telegraphed Hou to send him a personal regard. Hong Kong is the most pathetic one, the government does not even recognize the importance of films, the situation is much worse than Communist China, which at least realizes that a film is a powerful weapon for enlightenment and propaganda ... The Hong Kong government sees the value of filmmaking is merely commercial and profit making.” (Mr. C)

### **c) The Possibilities of Hong Kong-China Co-Production Films Influence China in a Soft Way**

“Film industry of Hong Kong in particular already figured how to fulfil Mainland investors’ expectations while managed to have their movies funded by rich pocket Mainland investors ... The increase of Hong Kong-China interaction in the film industry may influence China gradually. Can’t say the influences will be huge and the social change will be immediate, but through soft power like films and news, Hong Kong can project the immediate information back to China.” (Prof. Chen Chien-fu)

Both Prof. Kurata Toru and Prof. Chen Chien-fu mentioned about Hong Kong movies are one of the most outstanding soft powers of Hong Kong in the interviews. Since the Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) arrangement in 2003, Hong Kong-China co-production films reached 90% of the total film productions of Hong Kong (Chan, Fung, & Ng, 2007). Through the cooperation between China and Hong

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<sup>99</sup> Ms Au Mei Po studied film and media in Hong Kong Baptist University for her bachelor degree and she has worked in Hong Kong film industry for 2-3 years.

Kong, Hong Kong can have opportunities to explore the Mainland market and make profits in China<sup>100</sup>. Even though Hong Kong films can reach more broadly in China's market, the filmmakers have to modify or even relinquish Hong Kong local elements such as the local identities of Hong Kong, in order to satisfy the requirements of Hong Kong-China co-production films. Or the Hong Kong film-makers have to pander the ideology of Mainland, as to ensure that the films can be shown in China's cinemas (Li, 2013; Ho, 2011). Hong Kong Director Johnnie To Kei-Fung revealed that there were a lot of difficulties to take care of the investment from China, China's censorship, the taste differences between the audiences from China and Hong Kong and the preservation of local culture simultaneously (Hkfilmart, 2012; HKPost852, 2017). Thus, the quality of Hong Kong films has been declining as the films need to fit the tastes of Chinese audiences and meet the censorship requirements in China. The filmmakers would tend to set money-making as their objectives if they choose to produce co-production films (HKTDC Research, 2012).

Hong Kong is always associated with its local film productions in the mind of international audiences. To a very large extent, people recognize Hong Kong through Hong Kong films and its TV programs. Dr. Cheuk commented that this is highly affiliated to the cultural soft power of Hong Kong which is recognized by the international market and the favorability of international audiences, especially from the Asian countries (Zhang, 2017). Hong Kong-China co-production films altered the structure of Asian film market, making Hong Kong film leading position collapsed and redirected Hong Kong towards China's market (Lam, 2016). The profits and market accessibility of the Hong Kong-China co-production films override the value, creativity, and uniqueness represented in Hong Kong local films, provide Hong Kong with fewer opportunities to present itself and its identity as a distinctive city in China to the rest of the world. For instance, Hong Kong filmmakers had to give up the genres of gangster, horror and soft porn which Hong Kong films are skilled on because the co-production

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<sup>100</sup> Under the CEPA arrangement, Hong Kong companies can access and distribute productions in the Chinese market directly. Hong Kong investors can invest in China's cinemas with high limited than 50 percent set before. Hong Kong-China co-productions will be regarded as domestic productions which will not be subjected to quota limitation of 20 non-Chinese films in each year. The ratio of Hong Kong production crews to the Mainland ones has been raised to 50%:50% from 30%:70% (Shen, 2014).

films should follow the regulations set by the Chinese government<sup>101</sup>. Yau (2016) has analyzed the changes and the developments of Hong Kong gangster movies after 1997 handover. It raised the examples of how the Hong Kong gangster movies violate the regulations of films set by the Chinese government, in particular,

*“The criminals are often portrayed as heroes in most gangster movies ... The cop-and-robber dichotomy mirrors the ongoing conflict between the underworld and the state apparatus and praises the righteous behaviors and moral practice of the former ... ” (p. 54).*

Davis and Yeh (2008) commented that the collaboration of Hong Kong and China film industry provides a platform for China to glorify itself and make people fear of its extravaganza (p. 48), hence, to strengthen the Chinese identity in the globalized world. As film is a significant tool to foster soft power, for instance, the impact of Hollywood has always been utilized by the U.S. government to boost its soft power and have positive influences in its foreign policies (Aydemir, 2014) and the case of Bollywood helps India boost its soft power and as an effective tool of public diplomacy (Thussu, 2016). The Chinese government put film co-production under the CEPA which not only brought impacts on the direction of economic development of the HKSAR, in the meanwhile, it rationalized the cultural integration and social integration in the city (Cheung & Law, 2013), thus, Hong Kong has lost its space and platform to radiate its influences and profile through film and hence, abate the soft power of Hong Kong hastened by the economic collaboration of CEPA for film production. This also demonstrates that Hong Kong’s leadership does not have any ideas of the importance of cultural products to the soft power of Hong Kong by handling local films as a business.

Hong Kong local films used to be an effective and reliable soft power resource for the city. The local films, however, have been losing its edge to the imported productions, the box office revenue of Hong Kong local film has dropped remarkably

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<sup>101</sup> State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of the People’s Republic of China standardizes the regulations and the directions of creativity on the film productions. The co-production films should conform to these regulations. Details see State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of the People’s Republic of China, 2008.

from HKD 1.2 billion in 1992 to HKD 250 million in 2017, averagely around 200 local production films in the early 1990s dwindled to 50 local productions in 2017 (Our Hong Kong Foundation, 2018, p. 7-8). Film exhibitions are always the major events organized by HKETOs overseas to showcase the city's soft power<sup>102</sup>, how to enhance Hong Kong film as a kind of powerful tool to promote Hong Kong's soft power may be achieved by conducting sustainable research and dialogues overseas and foster the possible collaborations with Hong Kong film industry. Both Ms. Deniece Law and Mr. C commented that it was ironic the HKSAR government always uses films for the promotion of Hong Kong's cultural strengths, but the government just took advantages of Hong Kong films and has never been active and supportive to Hong Kong film industry<sup>103</sup>. For example, the HKSAR government always hesitated to provide venues for film shootings. Even the government has invested in local film productions through different schemes since 2005<sup>104</sup>, the officials left little room for building trust and not eager to collaborate with the filmmakers as the government officials presented themselves as investors for the films but not the promoters of Hong Kong film industry and local culture<sup>105</sup>. This reflects the HKSAR government reviews Hong Kong films as an economic vehicle rather than a cultural asset for promoting the HKSAR's soft power. This mentality will further limit the potentials of Hong Kong films as a crucial source for Hong Kong soft power. The above case demonstrated that even though the institutions and paradiplomacy allow the HKSAR government to have the freedom to develop its film industry, the self-limitation of interpreting cultural products by the government actually hinder the development of the city's soft power. This also reflects that dialogues with other sectors will bring positive impacts on formulating policies

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<sup>102</sup> Interview with two HKETO officials, Mr. A and Mr. B on 30 Aug 2017 and 9 Oct 2017.

<sup>103</sup> Interview with two Hong Kong local filmmakers Ms. Deniece Law and Mr. C on 27 Nov 2017 and 26 Jan 2018.

<sup>104</sup> There are three kinds of film production fund can be applied from Hong Kong Film Development Council: 1) First Feature Film Initiative; 2) Film Production Grant Scheme; 3) Scheme for Financing Film Production. Applicants have reflected the difficulties when they apply the above funds. Complicated application procedures, no funds are provided for online films, the amount of funds is not enough to cover different kinds of film genres and there is no observable con (Hong Kong Film Development Council, 2018; Our Hong Kong Foundation, 2018, p. 16).

<sup>105</sup> Interview with two Hong Kong local filmmakers Ms. Deniece Law and Mr. C on 27 Nov 2017 and 26 Jan 2018.

which would both directly benefit the film sectors and Hong Kong's overall performance of soft power.

On the topic of Hong Kong film development, apart from the administrative arrangement, the HKSAR government does not pay attention to the sustainability of the Hong Kong film industry. The HKSAR government does not seem to take any initiatives to ensure the continuity of the Hong Kong film industry or has any visionary plan for fostering potential soft power originating from Hong Kong films<sup>106</sup>. Talents cultivation such as providing trainings and scholarships to potential talents would be one of the effective tactics to sustain the Hong Kong film industry. However, the government does not comprehend the situation of “missing generation” of the Hong Kong film industry. This perception is easily perceived from the areas that the official research concerned. The research office of Legislative Council (2016) has investigated the “challenges of the film industry in Hong Kong” which concentrates on the profits of box office, the changes on the structure of film entertainment market and the impacts of co-produced movies under the scheme of CEPA, but it does not review the talent gap in the industry or propose related strategies to attract talents to have further development in the film industry. Another research conducted by HKTDC Research (2018b) makes a remark about the film industry in Hong Kong, highlights how much the HKSAR government invests in Hong Kong film industry and the awards received by Hong Kong filmmakers. Except for the numbers, the report never touches on the prospect of the Hong Kong film industry. Ms. Au Mei Po indicated in an interview that as a student of film and media major, she has to pay for the rent of shooting equipment and other possible fee by herself in order to complete her final year project. The government is advised to provide financial support to those who cannot afford the shooting expenses which serves one of the constructive directions to nurture potential talents for the Hong Kong film industry. Furthermore, it is the role of government to disseminate the values of films in the society and avoid the overemphasis of the connection of money and films which the rationale the government always emphasizes

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<sup>106</sup> At the time of writing this thesis, the 2018 Policy Address started to provide financial supports to nurture talents in film sector by providing providing trainings particularly in scriptwriting. Details see paragraph 144(i) of 2018 Policy Address. (The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address, 2018).

in the public<sup>107</sup>. The mentality of HKSAR government towards film industry is preoccupied with commerce and economic advantages and this mentality leads to the unconsciousness of the influences of films which are able to promulgate certain kinds of universal values in order to nurture the habitats for local film developments and attract the talents to have more contributions in the industry. Ms. Ruby Yang, who was awarded the Academy Award for Best Documentary Short Subject, was not optimistic towards the HKSAR government on how it can support the development of documentary films even she wrote a letter addressing directly to Carrie Lam, asking for a serious consideration of her suggestions. She finally got the response from Carrie Lam “I have advised Commerce and Economic Development Bureau to consider your suggestions and have a follow-up.” (Chen, 2018). This demonstrates the government regards film production as always under the umbrella of economic policy rather than cultural policy. This also explains why the government does not have the percipience to contemplate the importance of films for the development of Hong Kong soft power.

Hong Kong-China co-production films, alternatively, offers Hong Kong some opportunities which can further influence China in a soft way. This is in accord with what director Johnnie To Kei-Fung emphasized the roles of co-production films could be varied. If the mission of the co-production film is for profits, the film would be used to accumulating capital for the next film which will not further need to consider the censorship from Mainland (HKPost852, 2017). Many filmmakers, on one hand, have to fulfill the requirements of co-production films, on the other hand, they infilled a lot of local Hong Kong elements as to retain the identity of Hong Kong in the co-production films. This is what Certeau (1984) mentioned the “tactics” which would be applied flexibly by different industries to the “strategies” which are top-down administrative arrangements of the government (Zhang, 2015). Ranging from the promotion tactics and scene settings to plots, castings and shooting techniques, the Hong Kong directors ingeniously input Hong Kong uniqueness and local characteristics into the co-production films invested by the Mainland Chinese. For instances, the co-production film *Two Thumbs Up* (衝鋒車) used red mini-bus as the

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<sup>107</sup> For instance, news.gov.hk, 2015.

theme of the film and the red mini-bus represents Hong Kong culture: Efficiency (Zhang, 2015). This also resonates with other four interviewees<sup>108</sup> who have underscored in the interviews that the flexibility of Hong Kong people is one of the crucial soft powers of Hong Kong.

### 5.3 Discussion

As a matter of fact that Hong Kong is an outstanding non-sovereign international actor and undoubtedly that China has to maintain its HKSAR's international status for both political and economic reasons. On one hand proving China can administer a capitalist city and showcase its determination to exercise "One Country, Two Systems" which could be also applicable to Taiwan in the future; on the other hand, the internationality of the HKSAR would help China explore the possibility to have economic benefits by executing national strategic plans in the global stage. As a result, the HKSAR is continuously granted paradiplomatic power stipulated in the Basic Law which guarantees Hong Kong can continue its external affairs and international engagement after 1997 handover. According to what Neves (2003) investigated, the Chinese government did not have a thorough considerations on how to or in what aspects should the HKSAR government exercise its paradiplomatic power and its external affairs, particularly, the relation of China and the HKSAR government is under "separation" rather in conflict or cooperation manners (Neves, 2003, p. 299). The condition of "separation" leads to the HKSAR having "no chance to participate in the national foreign policy decision-making process and influence the Central government's options" (p. 299). So institutional hindrance represents the paradiplomacy of the HKSAR will not as a cooperative framework described by Soldatos (2015)<sup>109</sup> with Beijing, which the HKSAR could not find a legitimate role to

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<sup>108</sup> Except Prof Chen Chien-fu, Mr. A, Mr. B, Mr. D and Mr. Stephan Vines have also stressed that the flexibility of Hong Kong people contributed to the success of the city.

<sup>109</sup> Soldatos (2015) has illustrated the relations of central government and sub-national government can be cooperative or in parallel situation (p. 38 & p. 40). Cooperation means part of the paradiplomacy of the sub-nation is under the coordination by the central government (co-ordinate) or, in joint-approach to face with other international actors. For the case of HKSAR, it is in parallel situation with China, i.e. China accepts independent external affairs of the HKSAR with or without the monitoring from China.

have valuable contributions in China's global strategy. This makes the HKSAR leaders choose to explore economic advantages from regional cooperation and relies on China to have extensive and continuous economic integration. However, the nation's leaders always expect Hong Kong should maintain its market-oriented economy and internationality to order to facilitate Mainland's global development. In 2009, Wen Jiabao, the Premier of China between 2003 and 2013, stated that,

*“Hong Kong with the status of an international financial center is established not by a government decision but through market competition... with a long history of financial management, extensive channels of financial operation, a full-fledged legal system and a rich pool of financial expertise.” (Wen, 2009)*

Li Keqiang also emphasized the contributions of Hong Kong was to build networks between China and the international financial markets, in particular, to turn China's market to a “more law-based, market-oriented and global” (Xinhua, 2016), which implies China cannot do this by itself. This showcases that sustaining Hong Kong's international status through different paradiplomatic channels will increase the values and weights of the HKSAR in China's national plans.

Once China started to further intervene Hong Kong by different means particularly since 2003, notably, using laws and constitutions to manipulate Hong Kong and tries to re-interpret the “One Country, Two Systems” principle, these actions attracted international attention on how China take the promise further in its international city. Up to the present, paradiplomatic autonomy is still allowed in the HKSAR government and to a certain extent, the Chinese government grants the HKSAR government the right to have external relations in non-political aspects and for those policies should not be related to foreign policies. However, the research data indicates the HKSAR government does not have the consciousness to utilize the space and autonomy to raise Hong Kong's international profiles, disseminate Hong Kong's values and consolidate Hong Kong's identity as an international city.

The HKSAR government tries to turn the HKETOs as a propaganda unit which will further ruin Hong Kong's preponderance in international competition and the significance of Hong Kong in China's global strategy. There is a huge difference found between the perceptions of the works of international outposts by the HKETOs officials and the HKSAR government. The HKSAR government sees the dissemination of political loyalty towards China is more important than what the HKETOs officials perceive: The consolidation of international personality of Hong Kong and the comprehensive soft power promotion overseas. This showcases that the cognizance of HKETOs officials is higher than the HKSAR government and they even recognize the international profile of Hong Kong is crucial in Hong Kong-China relations which can reserve more autonomy for the city. Although the institutional deficiencies exist, how the HKETO officials execute their paradiplomatic power overseas would be sufficiently significant and indicative by the fact proven from the research findings that the HKETO officials have full freedom to decide how to implement paradiplomatic strategies overseas. This, at least, creates some capacity for the HKSAR to execute its external relations. But if one day the Chinese government and the HKSAR government retract the freedom which now the HKETOs enjoy and the officials are requested to execute more political missions to complete overseas requested by the authority, the paradiplomatic role of the HKETOs overseas will be withered. This associates with how the authorities interpret the subjectivity and the identity of Hong Kong as a special administrative region, and to what extent they cherish the uniqueness of Hong Kong in terms of values and international identity. The room for the HKETOs officials to execute paradiplomatic power which is guaranteed under constitutional provisions and conventions is proved enough but the interaction between the HKSAR government and the HKETOs on executing Hong Kong external relations and its soft power is not satisfied. This stems from the different interpretation of soft power from the government and the officials and the fragile structure for coordinating Hong Kong external affairs. The above verifies "*Hypothesis H1: Both institutions and values of the HKSAR are crucial for boosting the city's soft power.*" and "*Hypothesis H2: The institution of the HKSAR limits the fostering of norms and values in Hong Kong society.*" are valid.

The HKSAR government believes that the economy as the pillar of Hong Kong's soft power restrict Hong Kong to be a more distinctive global city and this further puts a boundary to interact with the civil society and other sectors which are pronounced in soft power enhancement. This perception echoes why the government does not interact with the international NGOs based in Hong Kong and the cultural sectors like the film industry. The paradiplomatic power of the HKSAR government has not been yet transformed into different sectors and reflects it in the policy implementations. The HKSAR government only regards the city's economy as the predominant policy but ignoring the development of particular sectors which can contribute to the city's soft power. Even Nye emphasizes the private resources of soft power brings more advantages to the national image and international influence than the public ones, the insight, and supplement from the government would be very crucial to motivate and encourage different sectors to have more global outreach. The research proves that the dynamics between the public sector and other sectors would create key resources for boosting soft power for the city. The research also proves that both public and non-public resources are important for soft power enhancement for a non-sovereign international actor and the non-public resources help the public one to expand the possibilities of paradiplomacy for the non-sovereign entities (Research Question 7). The situation now is that the HKSAR government has insufficient dialogues with the civil society groupings with social reform agendas and does not frequently follow the updated international regulations. The government does not have a comprehensive interpretation of all-inclusive soft power and even a documentation to record Hong Kong's external affairs but an annual report presented by the HKETOs in the Legislative Council each year<sup>110</sup>. Where the government invests is not what the target sectors actually need. This discordance makes the government fail to spot the potential soft power resources. The transition from step 3 to step 4 in Diagram E disrupts and the paradiplomatic ambit has been separated into the public domain and private domain with very limited synergy. The paradiplomatic ambit cannot be transferred to the level of practice and hence, the soft power of Hong Kong is very

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<sup>110</sup> For instance, details see Legislative Council of Hong Kong, 2015.

confined. Furthermore, no further feedback loops could be maintained as step 3 to step 4 is disrupted, the soft power of Hong Kong can be analysed as stagnant.

The public resources from the government indeed could nurture environments and formulate institutions for cultivating general soft power by aggregating values and identity for the people in the city. The resources from different sectors and the civil society can exercise and implement strategies which can boost the soft power for the city on the international stage. Thus, the communication and collaboration between the government and other sectors can complement each other and enrich a more diversified soft power outcome overseas. Nye did not elaborate on how the public and private resources interact and impact each other which this research intends to explore how the interaction could enhance soft power for a non-sovereign international actor by taking Hong Kong as an example. The HKSAR government can nurture the environment and cultivate the values like human rights, freedom, inclusiveness etc., in the city. The government also has its responsibility to attach to international rules and regulations. It will directly enhance the non-public sectors to execute programs or promote Hong Kong with a stronger identity and value attachments. The cultural products, tourism, and the civil society will evolve with stronger affiliation to the identity and value of the city. For instance, China shows its self-restriction on establishing investment treaty with W based on different interpretations on the liberalization of markets and the involvement of third party, i.e. arbitrary court, when both parties need to deal with trade disputes. Hong Kong and W have an ongoing discussion and the above-mentioned criteria would be acceptable to Hong Kong as Hong Kong and W have shared values on those issues. The HKETO official carries optimistic views on the establishment of the trade treaty between Hong Kong and W<sup>111</sup>. This manifests universal values are essential for exploring collaborations with the international community and leads to potential economic benefits. The above case also demonstrates how values work in the international economic collaboration, which Hong Kong is the only city that still possesses these “unique features”<sup>112</sup> within China’s boundary (Wang, 2017). The

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<sup>111</sup> W represents the country which both China and Hong Kong would like to establish trading treaty. As W is a key word to identify Mr. B, the author has to respect Mr. B in order to avoid any keywords which might identify him.

<sup>112</sup> Prof. Mak Sui-choi highlighted this point in the interview by Forbes.

above analysis validates *“Hypothesis H4: The paradiplomatic powers provided by the Basic Law for the HKSAR have not been fully utilized by the HKSAR government to articulate and promote the city’s soft power.”* and *“Hypothesis H5: With weak collaboration between government and civil society or the cultural sectors, there has been a weakening of the global identity of Hong Kong as a non-sovereign international actor.”*

Furthermore, Nye identified values, cultures and foreign policies are the main soft power resources to further foster state’s soft power internationally. This research intends to submit an alternative for non-sovereign international actors which do not have any legitimacy to have its own foreign policies. Findings from the interviews are generally supported among three sources: scholars group, HKETOs and non-public sectors. Some of the examples are illustrated in Table 17 after triangulating three groups’ findings. Three sources support that values and Hong Kong civil society are significant to increase Hong Kong’s international profile and its soft power. The officials from the HKETOs recognize the significances of universal values in both their works and as the origin of the image and identity of Hong Kong, which would have positive effects when they have to work with overseas stakeholders; Both the leaders in international NGOs and scholars commented Hong Kong’s internationality and the predominance of Hong Kong international NGOs create a buffer zone and act like a bargaining chip in Hong Kong-China relations.

Thus, this research would propose value would be the foundation for cultivating soft power through cultural products and international image for non-sovereign international actor like Hong Kong. Culture and city image stem from the values of the city, which can be reflected in the cultural products like films, TV programs and in how the government promotes the city overseas. As the HKSAR government does not recognize the weights of the values cherish in the Hong Kong society, this attitude affects how it perceives Hong Kong’s internationality, how should be the promotions of Hong Kong overseas and how the HKSAR government manages the industries and sectors which are highly related to soft power enhancement and the international standard of some social issues like human rights. Three sources also have the consensus on the preservation of international relevance of the HKSAR and the HKSAR

government lacks a holistic promotion plan for Hong Kong overseas. It is remarkable that in the daily works of the HKETO's officials, they regard Hong Kong as an autonomous city taking advantages from China's market as their priority of external affairs overseas. The quality and consciousness of the officials of international outpost and the freedom to have flexible management of external affairs are the crucial elements of paradiplomatic power of the HKSAR. But this is not guaranteed in perpetuity and this is not much effective on the overall international profile of Hong Kong as the HKSAR government has self-limitation on promoting Hong Kong as an all-inclusive global city. The abovementioned mentality further exerts influence on how the government manages the cultural policies, such as film industry. Neither a long-term plan for enhancing Hong Kong film industry nor maintaining enough communication with the industry, the government does not actively engage the cultural industry to actualize the paradiplomatic power in a practical way and restrain Hong Kong's soft power. The above analysis also corroborates "*Hypothesis H4: The paradiplomatic powers provided by the Basic Law for the HKSAR have not been fully utilized by the HKSAR government to articulate and promote the city's soft power.*" and "*Hypothesis H3: The insufficiency of debates, deliberations, negotiations and promotion of values in Hong Kong society will undermine the city's soft power.*" are valid.

The comprehension of the position of Hong Kong and its preponderance in the national plan of China would deeply influence the further development of the city. Only relying on economic performance will not help the city survive as Hong Kong is an international city but not limited to an economic one<sup>113</sup>, which needs a holistic recognition from the international society. Hong Kong has to retain its significances in China's global strategy, economic performance is not sufficient to preserve its role as China has no more necessity of depending on Hong Kong to have economic integration with the global market<sup>114</sup>. Instead, soft power is the element which China cannot

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<sup>113</sup> Several scholars mentioned "Hong Kong is not just an economic city", for instance, Wong (2017) and Chan (2015).

<sup>114</sup> Not only in economic aspect, in the past, China relied on Hong Kong's ports to have maritime services to import and export the goods in and out the country. Currently, Guangzhou intends to replace Hong Kong to be the maritime services leader of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area. Details see Yick, 2018.

develop in short-term or just mock from other countries which are successful in soft power. Hong Kong is advised to foster its soft power in order to expand its paradiplomatic power as to sustain its irreplaceable values in China’s national plan which already invested a lot on public diplomacy but not yet proven to be successful and convincing<sup>115</sup>.

**Table 17: Triangulation of findings: Consensus / Pattern among 3 groups of interviewees**

1. The importance of universal values in the HKSAR and how the values work for the city’s soft power		
Scholars Groups	HKETOs	Non-Public Sectors
Hong Kong as a civil society plays a critical bridging role in mediating and softening the relationship between China and Hong Kong.	The HKETOs recognize the significances of universal values in both their works and as the origin of the image and identity of Hong Kong but the HKSAR government.	<p>Film industry: Co-production films sacrifice some of the values originally presented in Hong Kong films which presents the uniqueness of Hong Kong.</p> <p>Civil Society: Hong Kong has shared values and common language with the international society so that Hong Kong has a higher status than China in the international network of civil society</p>

<sup>115</sup> China has doubled its spendings on public diplomacy since President Xi assumed power in 2011, which RMB\$60 billion has been budgeted in 2018. Details see Clover and Fei, 2018.

		and even China needs to seek for an opinion from Hong Kong civil society key leaders.
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2. The importance of internationality of Hong Kong		
Scholars Groups	HKETOs	Non-Public Sectors
<p>More foreign media establishing in Hong Kong would be beneficial for improving Hong Kong's soft power</p> <p>Retaining Hong Kong's international visibility is very important.</p>	<p>HKETOs always highlight Hong Kong's networks and its global status during their work.</p>	<p>Civil Society: The internationality of Hong Kong forces both the international society and China to respect Hong Kong as an autonomous city in the boundary of China.</p> <p>Media: Internationality is the key to Hong Kong's development</p>

3. The promotions of Hong Kong overseas		
Scholars Groups	HKETOs	Non-Public Sectors
<p>Hong Kong Tourism Board has made less effort in promoting Hong Kong.</p>	<p>The HKSAR government has a limited recognition towards promoting Hong Kong as an all-inclusive global city.</p>	<p>The HKSAR government utilizes films as a promotion tool overseas but does not respect the filmmakers and stakeholders in general.</p>

4. The stance of the HKSAR government towards Hong Kong films production as one of the effective soft power tools		
Scholars Groups	HKETOs	Non-Public Sectors
Hong Kong has lost the leverage in movie and music industries if compared to the past.	As there is no holistic plan for Hong Kong's external affairs, only short-term or event-based programs are always launched and it is hard to retain the long-term visibility of the HKSAR overseas.	<p>Film industry: The HKSAR government does not respect the film industry and does not maintain long-term dialogues with the industry. Nor the government has the intention to nurture the environment and mentality for fostering the development of the creative industry.</p> <p>Civil Society: The HKSAR government does not pay attention to nurture the next generation in the film industry by limiting the numbers of media platforms (e.g. limiting the TV licenses) in Hong Kong.</p>

5. The Capacities of Hong Kong Soft Powers		
Scholars Groups	HKETOs	Non-Public Sectors

Similarities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Society</li> <li>• Human Capital</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Society</li> <li>• Overseas Hong Kong expatriates (Human Capital)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Society</li> <li>• Human Capital</li> </ul>
Differences		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural diversity</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Academic and Education</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Cantonese Culture</li> <li>• Hybrid culture</li> <li>• Films</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity and Inclusiveness</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Language</li> <li>• Safety and Security</li> <li>• Stable Business Environment</li> <li>• Laws and Regulations</li> <li>• Professionalism</li> </ul>	<p>Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language</li> </ul> <p>Film:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internationality</li> <li>• Language</li> </ul> <p>Civil society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom of Press</li> <li>• International networks</li> </ul>

6. The Limitations of Hong Kong Soft Powers		
Scholars Groups	HKETOs	Non-Public Sectors
Similarities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China's intervention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China's intervention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China's intervention</li> </ul>
Differences		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political legacy</li> <li>• Livability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited international profile and ineffective external affairs policies</li> <li>• Outdated ways of communication of the HKSAR government</li> </ul>	<p>Civil society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hong Kong is not attached closely to the international standards and guidelines</li> </ul> <p>Media:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values presentation</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Lack of concrete and visionary planning</li> <li>• Lack of ambitious young leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The HKSAR government per se</li> </ul> <p>Film:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient platforms for film and TV industries</li> </ul>
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## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

This study is conducted during the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR. While Hong Kong is widely regarded to be a global city, our analysis provides insights on how the soft power can be delineated, facilitated and consolidated within the paradiplomatic boundaries according to the Basic Law and how Hong Kong's soft power can in turn consolidate the identity of Hong Kong as a non-sovereign international actor. We diagnose how the HKSAR government and its officials perceive soft power and the practice of paradiplomacy. The findings in relation to the research questions will be summed up in the following paragraphs.

First, the values of Hong Kong in a globalizing China remain relevant and their importance are growing. Those values are not restricted to the economic ones. Hong Kong is the most globalized city within China's territory with distinct features to help China's quest for her "peaceful emergence". Hong Kong offers an environment to maintain the level-playing field for all stakeholders. Thus, Hong Kong is well positioned to offer what China needs by branding itself as a unique city with an international heritage and forward-looking global values. The key is how to further develop Hong Kong's unique characteristics in order to sustain and expand its values in a globalizing China in the future.

Second, this study intends to present a critical appraisal of Hong Kong's soft power by incorporating Nye's indicators and some other widely used indicators provides an overview of the performance of the soft power of Hong Kong. However, the quantitative measurements do not provide insights on the complex interplay between perceptions, recognition and interactions between Hong Kong and the stakeholders. Regarding Hong Kong's practices of paradiplomacy, for example, except lacking a responsible department to oversee the overall planning and implementation of an international issue, the HKSAR government satisfies most of the requirements of paradiplomacy of a non-sovereign political entity. However, it is important to ask how these paradiplomatic duties are carried out by the HKSAR. This study shows that the

government has yet to meet the needs of different sectors and it has been found lagging behind in terms of introducing stronger policy initiatives and measures to promote the city's soft power and global presence.

Third, the analysis of the institutional and normative foundations of Hong Kong's paradiplomacy and soft power illustrates how the HKSAR should have utilized its resources better. The empirical analysis has provided a background against which Hong Kong's policymakers are expected to be able to devise a paradiplomatic strategy to further buttress and strengthen Hong Kong's soft power. The paradiplomacy of Hong Kong should serve as one of the effective tools to boost the legitimacy of "One Country, Two Systems" and the identity of Hong Kong as a global city. Hong Kong is a global actor which is able to celebrate diversity in norms and standards that are different from those in China, and the idea is to have Hong Kong's unique global identity and values defended against such overbearing narratives as "integration" with the Mainland or "isolation," and to have the city's interests materialized through an action-oriented paradiplomatic strategy in a consistent manner. Hong Kong is advised to go beyond mere expressions of optimism or pessimism in order to put forward a strategy that serves to retain a high level of visibility, recognition, respect, and legitimacy of Hong Kong in the international arena and an action plan to advance its interests and values, hence, its soft power.

Fourth, reviewing the political and social changes in the HKSAR since the handover is crucial for a proper understanding of the China factor that has seen to have undermined Hong Kong's soft power assets. China exerts tight control and intervenes the city's affairs would not help at all. The Umbrella Movement demonstrates that the civil society has fought the perceived "Mainlandization" as a threat and responded by the consolidation of local identity and resistance to further integration with China.

Fifth, content analysis and discourse analysis of 2007-2019 Policy Addresses have shown that the policy preferences of the HKSAR government during the last ten years have shifted from "the global" to "the subnational", to nearly full-institutionalization of Hong Kong into the national and subnational policies demanded by the Central government. Simultaneously, the HKSAR government is eager to

institutionalize Hong Kong's intermediary roles between China and the world, and less as an individual entity globally. This policy orientation implies that public and private resources would be directed towards meeting national preferences rather than taking Hong Kong's global strategic position as a priority, which in long term may deteriorate Hong Kong's quality of being a global city.

Sixth, even though it is always said that Hong Kong is one of the most active non-sovereign international actors, this research indicates that the HKSAR government has practiced self-limitation by focusing on the economic aspects of the city's soft power only. This policy preference has had negative impacts on how the government perceives the values in the civil society, the necessity to establish a department or holistic plan for the city's external affairs, the perceptions of the roles of paradiplomatic outposts like HKETOs, how the HKSAR government manages the cultural policies and tourism policies and how to maintain Hong Kong as a global city. Though the HKETOs officials can identify Hong Kong's soft power in a broader sense, the HKETOs are not tasked to develop Hong Kong's soft power in a sustainable way. The lack of trust between non-public sectors such as the film industry, the academics, and the civil society and the prevailing policy focus on strengthening the city's finance and economic status with respect to China's rise to power has not done justice to all stakeholders and players who otherwise could make considerable impacts on enriching and enhancing Hong Kong's global attractiveness. Furthermore, the institutional integration of the Hong Kong film industry with the one in China serves to weaken the soft power of Hong Kong. The opportunity offered by co-production with the Chinese counterparts under CEPA has altered the mentality of most of the Hong Kong filmmakers and their investors. Meanwhile, the international NGOs in Hong Kong have struggled to sustain their relations with the HKSAR government.

In a nutshell, the paradiplomatic powers of the HKSAR government have not been not fully utilised to help facilitate the development of the city's soft power, which could raise Hong Kong's international profiles and disseminate Hong Kong's values and consolidate Hong Kong's identity as a global city. So far as soft power is the element which China cannot develop in short-term, Hong Kong is advised to foster its soft power independently in order to demonstrate a unique city identity.

Theoretically, the HKSAR has served here as a case of non-state actors to contribute to the debates about soft power and paradiplomacy in the field of international relations, by adapting and applying the concepts of soft power and paradiplomacy to explain and evaluate the strengths and shortcomings of Hong Kong's institutional and normative foundations of its global profiles. As far as the study of Hong Kong is concerned, this study has raised a new area of research on both soft power and paradiplomacy, namely, to enrich the definition and coverage of paradiplomacy but not limited to institutional ones.

Though Nye (2017) has convincingly argued that soft power is originated from civil society, this study provides evidences that one should not lose sight of the fact that the government may facilitate, control or obstruct the development of soft power. Insofar as the civil society does not exist in a political vacuum, the roles of the government and policymakers in the projection of a polity's soft power overseas remain under-researched. In order to facilitate a comprehensive spectrum of soft power, this study submits that government has an obligation to formulate policies to foster one's soft power. The interplay between civil society, government and other stakeholders should be considered seriously by the policymakers to design a comprehensive strategy.

As paradiplomacy and soft power are proposed here one of the key concepts to analyse Hong Kong's state of affairs under "One Country, Two Systems", Hong Kong is not the only non-sovereign entity to explore the potential of paradiplomacy. Sub-national polities such as Catalonia, Norfolk Island, South Tyrol and Macau, another Special Administrative Region of China, may be in comparable circumstances. We believe that further comparative studies between Hong Kong and these polities will enhance the conceptualization and theorization of paradiplomacy and the exercise of soft power in contemporary global politics.

Moreover, one may also consider in what ways and to what extent religious interactions between China and Hong Kong are pertinent to further research into Hong Kong's soft power. We may submit that cross-border religious bodies like churches, affiliated schools and charitable organizations may embody attractive ideas and values

for their counterparts in China, but the projection of soft power is inevitably affected by the hard power of the Communist regime. For example, there remains fundamental disagreement between the two systems over what religious freedom amounts to and what rights churchgoers enjoy. In other words, with regards to the institutional and normative foundations of religious affairs, we may extend the present theoretical and analytical framework to this new area of research.

This study has taken the first step and paved the way for future study about on the visibility of the HKSAR overseas, exploring how Hong Kong people perceive their city globally as much as nationally, scrutinizing how Hong Kong people and people from overseas identify or position Hong Kong in the global community, understanding how Hong Kong people position themselves in the global-national-local nexus and investigating how global opinion leaders and political leaders narrate the HKSAR and its global position on a wide range of issues of common concerns.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: The Interview Procedures**

Interviewees were invited to participate in the interviews voluntarily and the interviewees were informed of the objectives, procedures, methodology and the potential applications of research data. Each interviewee has signed an informed consent statement which strictly follows the requirements set by Hong Kong Baptist University. The interviewees can choose to be or not be identified in the research and the author will not disclose the details of the interviewees if they have declared not willing to be identified in the research report. Both the interviewees and the author received a copy of the consent statement with the signatures of the interviewees and the researcher. Confidentiality of all data and communications during the research and the anonymity of the interviewees would be ensured in all research data, reports and documents (ESRC, 2015). The undertakings of honesty, objectivity, integrity, carefulness, openness and social responsibility would be guaranteed in the whole research process and in the dissemination of research documents (Resnik, 2015). The content of the research was audio-taped and transcribed into document form (Appendix B).

## **Appendix B: Transcriptions of interviews**

**Name of Interviewees: Prof Kurata Toru**

**Position and Affiliation: Professor of College of Law and Politics,  
Department of Politics, Rikkyo University, Tokyo**

**Date of Interview: 1st September 2017**

**Place of Interview: Tokyo, Japan**

Part 1: General perception and soft power of Hong Kong

### *1. How would you perceive Hong Kong?*

In Japan, most of the people think that the biggest characteristic of Hong Kong is ‘chaotic’. Yet, I have to point out clearly that the word ‘chaotic’ does not possess a negative meaning. Instead, it means that Hong Kong is full of variety and with great capability. The city is well-blended with variegated cultures from both the East and the West, with Japanese culture inclusively. Hong Kong people, in my opinion, are always zestful, cheerful and optimistic. Besides, they are straightforward as well – they are willing to express themselves without reservation.

### *2. Compare to other global cities (E.g. Tokyo, Singapore etc.), what kinds of advantages or disadvantages do Hong Kong have?*

Hong Kong and Singapore: As a tourist, Hong Kong is more fascinating than Singapore. It is because Singapore is a bit ‘too good to be true’. The city-state is excellent in city management, with extraordinarily clean roads and convenient transportation. Everything seems perfect in Singapore, and yet it is also the reason that makes the city lose the glamour which Hong Kong possesses. It is true that Hong Kong gives people a sense of ‘mess and chaos’, but such ‘mess and chaos’ conveys infinite possibilities, which seem to be reminding me of another mysterious world under its veil. Chungking Mansions and Sham Shui Po were the two places that I always love to pay a visit. I feel carefree and casual every time when I visited there. I do not need to dress up formally as usual and can easily immerse into this

little and warm community. It just feels like being myself without caring about how people think of me. That feeling was great.

Hong Kong and Tokyo: First of all, I have to confess that I am a typical Tokyo guy, so somewhat I may not be able to comment from a foreigner's perspective. Personally, I think Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan city with high density, which makes transportation much time-saving and convenient. However, Tokyo is located at the centre of the hugest plain of Japan and, due to its geography; it is not as advantageous as Hong Kong in terms of transportation.

Nevertheless, I also notice that Hong Kong's largest disadvantage would be its livability. I found that the general living space in Hong Kong is particularly small and the living environment is also comparatively worse than other cities. The property prices, yet, are astonishingly exorbitant.

3. *What kinds of soft power (resources and capacities) that you think Hong Kong has?*

Undoubtedly, Hong Kong movies are one of the most outstanding soft powers of Hong Kong. Many Japanese know Hong Kong from its movies. They are famous for its fast-paced plots, among which Kung Fu and action films are particularly unique. A few years ago, there was a survey conducted in Japan on people's most familiar Chinese figures and Jackie Chan ranked the top. Apart from action movies, Hong Kong's vampire films were once very popular in Japan back in the 1980s. *Mr. Vampire* (1985) was one of the examples. Everybody in Japan knew that the vampire was from Hong Kong films when I was still a primary school student.

Additionally, Hong Kong's cityscape is extremely mesmerizing – especially those streets with signboards protruding from the buildings, the skyscrapers and the night scenery. They are so visualized and amazing. Nathan Road is the most typical street that I love the most.

4. *In a more specific way, any limitations Hong Kong's soft power?*

Hong Kong is, after all, a city of China. And if the Hong Kong government over-emphasizes the benefits of itself, it may incur criticisms for being negligent of the national interests of mainland China. Hence, this, more or less, could have restricted the Hong Kong government in developing the soft power of Hong Kong.

Apart from that, Mainland China likes a double-edged sword to Hong Kong, which could be either an advantage or a disadvantage to Hong Kong. For example, after signing the CEPA with China, there have been a rising number of co-production films between Mainland China and Hong Kong. Indeed, a 1.4-billion market is extremely attractive to the Hong Kong movie industry. It is also a fact that China is overwhelmingly predominant than Hong Kong as the city only takes up 0.5% of the entire population of China. Nevertheless, relying too much solely on the Chinese market could also mean that Hong Kong's films are less influential in the international market especially the Chinese audience's appetites are quite different from Japan and other markets around the world.

5. *What kinds of prospect on soft power that Hong Kong has?*

Honestly speaking, I believe that the prospect of Hong Kong on soft power is still uncertain. In particular, Hong Kong has lost the leverage in movie and music industries when compared to the past. Unlike now, in addition to Kung Fu action films, movies directed by director Wong Kar-wai, pop songs of Faye Wong and Kelly Chan etc. were really popular in Japan back to the eighties. However, these Hong Kong icons were now far and few between.

Therefore, I believe that celebrities and public figures are exceptionally crucial to the soft power of a region as it could possibly soften the hostility which might be caused by historical reasons between two different places. I have to point out that, until today, Jackie Chan is still the most popular celebrity in Japanese's eyes. I am convinced that Hong Kong's soft power could be hugely enhanced if a famous star with great charm became the icon of Hong Kong.

6. *Do you think that Hong Kong leadership recognize, understand and aware of Hong Kong's soft power? If yes, in what way? If no, how could you perceive that?*

Since Carrie Lam has just been the Chief Executive for two months, plus, she used to be a civil servant over the past decades, hence, I do not have much knowledge about her in terms of promoting Hong Kong's soft power. However, I do observe that the Hong Kong government, in particular, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), has made less effort in promoting Hong Kong in Japan. When I was small, I could always watch the advertisements on the television about Hong Kong and that was the way most of the Japanese learned more about Hong Kong. I reckoned the major reason behind such phenomenon was the fact that the government has to cater for the growing numbers of Mainland visitors to Hong Kong, which has become the majority of the foreign visitors in Hong Kong.

Comparing Hong Kong with Taiwan, I personally believe that the Taiwan government could have done much better promotional works in Japan than h Even Kimura Takuya, the famous star of Japan, also helped Taiwan to promote their tourism. I also knew that certain Taiwanese train companies have cooperated with ours in promoting the railway tourism for both two places. As you may have known that the commonality between these two places is the railway culture.

In general, due to Japan's tightening relationships with both South Korea and China, Taiwan naturally becomes the top priority for Japanese when it comes to travelling. Moreover, Taiwan has donated a lot of money to Japan after 3.11 Earthquake in 2011 and the Japanese were very grateful for their kindness.

## Part 2: Civil society, The Umbrella Movement and soft power

### *1. How would you perceive the development of the civil society in Hong Kong?*

Between 2003 and 2008, it is apparent that China and Hong Kong has had a stronger and closer integration than ever before. Within that period of time, most of the Hong Kong citizens tended to have a stronger national identity. However, after the 2008 Beijing Olympics, a growing number of Hong Kong people started to reflect upon themselves over such ever-closing relationship between Hong Kong and China, worrying that this might cause Hong Kong losing some of its unique characteristics, competitive edge etc. In recent years, I see a group of people began to come out and express their desire for changing the status quo, in the hope that Hong Kong's culture could be well-preserved. Such as the emergence of the movie

“Ten Years” could be perceived as the ideological change of the civil society in Hong Kong. Such ideological change could be positive to Hong Kong’s soft power.

I do have some concerns about the development of Hong Kong’s civil society after the Umbrella Movement. I am worried that the civil society would become much more divided in terms of both opinions and scales of development. Some people who were once good friends might betray to each other due to their political difference. And this would pose harm to Hong Kong’s civil society. Besides, I am also worried that the general civil power of Hong Kong might be diminished by Mainland. Many people concerned about Hong Kong because they hope that the advanced and developed civil society of the city could help change the future development and direction of China. For example, many religious bodies, green groups, charities, and non-governmental organizations from Hong Kong have a lot of connections and relationships with the Mainland. And they have long been actively improving the status quo of China. However, as President Xi’s regime is quite hostile to the development of civil society, added with the recent movements in Hong Kong, China has taken a more hardline approach towards the NGOs. As a matter of fact, when the relationship between gov-to-gov becomes more tightened, Hong Kong’s civil society plays a critical bridging role in mediating and softening the relationship thereof. It is a pity that due to the above reasons Hong Kong has been less involved in it in recent years.

2. *Do you think that the Umbrella Movement promote a sort of Hong Kong’s soft power? Why and how?*

The Umbrella Movement in 2014 has undoubtedly raised the Japanese’s concerns over Hong Kong. Before that, most of the Japanese held relatively negative impression on Hong Kong. As Sino-Japan relations does not go very well over many years and that they once tended to believe that Hong Kong was heavily influenced by China after 1997.

I knew that, after the 2011 Japanese Earthquake, Hong Kong has donated a lot of money to Japan, and yet this was not widely reported. The focus of the Japanese media, instead, shifted to the actions taken by some Hong Kong activists in defense of the Diaoyu Islands (also known as Baodiao Movement) which took

place on 15 August, 2012. That was the day commemorating the end of the Second World War. To most of the Japanese, it was supposed to be a peaceful and solemn day. Nevertheless, the Baodiao Movement has stirred up the row among Japan after the massive reports conducted by the local press. Japanese, therefore, disliked Hong Kong people and had a bad impression on Hong Kong since then.

Such impression turned to a more positive side after the Umbrella Movement as Japanese people, after learning from the news reports from the television, started to realize that Hong Kong citizens possessed a different set of values with that of the Chinese government. In China, everyone knows that demonstrations and protests are strictly prohibited and freedom of speech is also seriously restricted. But now they began to understand that Hong Kong people were, in fact, quite similar to them in terms of pursuing democracy and freedom. It was the Umbrella Movement that acted as a turning point of Hong Kong and changed the negative impressions of Japanese. They started to see Hong Kong and China separately – they appreciated that Hong Kong, while being a part of China, also possessed its uniqueness. Hence, I agreed that the Umbrella Movement could be regarded as a very important source of soft power for Hong Kong.

Another significant change after the Umbrella Movement was the separation of the NHK's newsrooms. Before the movement, NHK located their editorial office in Guangzhou; but they chose to have their Chinese branch in Hong Kong after the outbreak of the Umbrella Movement. This was an important move as there was rising coverage about Hong Kong than before, ranging from the political and economic aspects to social development and culture of Hong Kong. Therefore, I believe that attracting more foreign media to establish their branches in Hong Kong is beneficial for improving Hong Kong's soft power.

### Part 3: The balance between internationality and integration with China

#### *1. How would you envisage Hong Kong's international profile now and in the future?*

First, I feel certain that Hong Kong's status as the international financial center is still unshakeable. With the ever-increasing influence of China in the international arena in recent years, Hong Kong, indeed, enjoys a greater capacity. I

believe that Hong Kong can maintain its international edge in the future for many business deals and academic exchanges are still conducted in Hong Kong. That being said, many efforts are yet to be made for Hong Kong if it hopes to have a greater impact on the world. Focusing only on the Chinese market will result in foreigners forgetting Hong Kong's specialness in the long run.

2. *Do you agree that it has become harder to promote Hong Kong globally against the background of the rise of China and growing pressures on Hong Kong to integrate better with China?*

I agree that there is a growing influence of China over Hong Kong after its reunification since 1997. During the 1980s, Japanese visitors in Hong Kong reached the peak and you could hear people speaking Japanese on the street quite often. Today, you could hear Mandarin more than before – no matter on the roads or from MTR stations' broadcast. Notwithstanding that, these changes are part of Hong Kong's history and thus, it is not surprising to have such changes. I do not really agree that Hong Kong's culture will be lost throughout "Mainlandization"; instead, it is rather precise to see it as a natural change along with the difference of the historical backdrop and a growing number of Mainland visitors. However, Japanese tourists and Chinese tourists are quite different in tastes. Hong Kong is filled up with myriads of jewelry shops and pharmacies in order to cater for Mainland tourists' needs, which causes less variety of shops and fewer choices for other tourists. This could be a crisis for Hong Kong since, as I have mentioned before, what makes Hong Kong so special is of its cultural diversity.

3. *Would you think that the more integration with Mainland China, Hong Kong would have more difficulties to maintain its international status / internationality? How would you perceive the balance between internationality and integration with China?*

I think Mainlandization and internationalization are not mutually exclusive. It is essential for Hong Kong's survival while simultaneously promoting the interactions in both aspects. However, sometimes, external perception over Hong Kong also varies from time to time based on different issues. Therefore, Hong Kong

should better strike a balance between the issues and its image. First, while Hong Kong is a part of China, it should also maintain its characteristics. Second, despite being geographically small and huge in population size, Hong Kong could pose a great influence in the world with its vast networks.

4. *Would you recommend new tactics / strategies to help Hong Kong to retain a high level of international visibility and significance?*

As Hong Kong is a city, the government should adopt a positive non-intervention policy and let people have their heads. I have long been reiterating that it is the government's responsibility to strengthen its promotions to the world so that the international community would have a better and stronger understanding of Hong Kong. Speaking from the Japanese's perspective, there will be a great potential in the market if Hong Kong could promote more on its healthy products in Japan. As Hong Kong enjoys the world's longest life expectancy, many Japanese do want to know Hong Kong people's secret recipe for longevity. In short, it is only by letting the entire world knows more about Hong Kong's advantage could they city be memorized by the globe.

5. *By and large, do you think Hong Kong has an effective external relations policy? If yes, why? If not, why not and how the policy could be improved?*

Personally speaking, the Hong Kong government under CY Leung's administration lays more emphasis on internal links with the Chinese government more than foreign relations with the international community. The policy perhaps should be better adjusted along the progress of Hong Kong's internationalization. Certainly, I clearly understand Hong Kong government's difficulty in enhancing the internationalization of Hong Kong since the principal officials of the cabinet are appointed by the central government. In spite of that, I still believe that much more could be done by the government. Just as the abovementioned, Hong Kong could improve its international status and bolster its soft power by strengthening cultural exchange with other countries. More promotions and advertisings should be carried out as well in Tokyo in order to raise its popularity and reputation externally.



**Name of Interviewees: Prof Chen Chien-fu**

**Position and Affiliation: Associate Professor of Graduate Institute of China Studies, Tamkang University, Taipei, Taiwan**

**Date of Interview: 19th December 2017**

**Place of Interview: Taipei, Taiwan**

Part 1: General perception and soft power of Hong Kong

*1. How would you perceive Hong Kong (soft power)?*

Hong Kong's soft power is best embodied among different Chinese and Asian communities. Same as what brought up before media is one of the strengths of Hong Kong soft power spectrum. Apart from media, films, arts and literature could also be considered, especially for those artworks that are forbidden in China, it is where Hong Kong shines.

Hong Kong soft power can be seen in its financial capacities, its unique position as a Special Administrative Region, an international port. Besides, universities and its academic reputation are one of Hong Kong's strength. Quite a number of Mainland students came to Hong Kong for higher education.

Top-notch/ elite Hong Kongers don't usually go into politics for a career. Hong Kong is outstanding in finance and academic research, however political development is in comparison less significant and diminishing due to political reasons. As Hong Kong develops, some soft power is fading, political influence and development is one of the examples. Hong Kong youths' awareness of politics awakened since the Umbrella Movement. The soft power which Hong Kong possess is not tangible, but very fragile and flawed. I keep tracking on the controversies over Hong Kong LegCo members. It is sad to see how the power of removing a member from office already in the hands of few, which to many democratic states very hard to accept. Hong Kong is outstanding in all other aspects except politics; you need to and pay more attention to it.

2. *Compare to other global cities (E.g. Tokyo, Singapore, Taipei etc.), what kinds of advantages or disadvantages do Hong Kong have?*

Like I said, Hong Kong's charm is in its human capital, comparing to any other country, Hong Kong's position in this aspect is richly blessed. Tokyo or Singapore they don't share the same ties with China, geographical advantage and international status. Singapore number one university attracts international students but its' one-party dictatorship has made itself less attractive. Hong Kong in comparison is more vivid than Singapore, at least Hong Kong has more flexibility. Tokyo is big in size indeed, but they don't have the urge to step out of their zone. Japan does not have its own military, which is dependent on American's hard power. This has led to the growing support of Japan militarism, in that they believe Japan must have its own army and ability to self-defense.

The most possible pair of comparison is Hong Kong versus Singapore and Taiwan versus Tokyo. Hong Kong and Singapore are both weak in political influence, while Taiwan and Tokyo they are both the capital of an island country.

3. *Does Hong Kong has its attractiveness? Is Hong Kong attractive to you?*

Sure it does. Comparing to Singapore, Hong Kong is more attractive to me. The street food in particular. Hong Kong and Singapore share the same kind of city construction, e.g. Flat design, and they were both once colonized by the United Kingdom. Since the handover, the youngsters of Hong Kong have moderated their self-expectations, it is not rare to see Hong Kong-Taiwan exchange in this generation, for instance, social movement and academic exchange. Hong Kong's Liberal Studies and China Studies are outstanding, no other places could replace Hong Kong's geographical advantage to China. However it is sometimes the case that the more you understand the more you dislike it.

4. *What kinds of soft power (resources and capacities) that you think Hong Kong has?*

Human Capital is the most attractive part of Hong Kong's soft power. It is the unchangeable factor because human will always exist in Hong Kong, unlike other capacities that are dependent on others things. In China, there are a lot of ghost

town with no human capital, but Hong Kong is always crowded, and will always be.

The humans of Hong Kong especially the younger generation is more likely to fill with the passion to bring social changes. There are quite portions of human capital moved out of Hong Kong during the 1990s, due to the insecurity they perceived for the approaching handover in 1997. Yet after 1997, seeing Hong Kong didn't collapse and running well under One Country Two Systems, they chose to come back to Hong Kong again.

In recent years China has tightened its restriction towards Hong Kong, more and more Hong Kongers chose to migrate to Taiwan to pursuit a better living quality, which Taiwan indeed is an easier place to live in. In addition to the hopeless political condition of Hong Kong's democratization, Taiwan is now an option for Hong Kong people. People in Hong Kong used to have faiths in Hong Kong democratization, but faiths and hopes no longer exists.

Nowadays Hong Kong is led by elite leaders, the upper class and businessmen. Class of Middle-low is the social class that will first be comprised and sacrificed in the future. Hong Kong as part of China though with no sovereign has maintained a certain degree of freedom, a very precious right to held democratic election, freedom of speech, and social movement. The increase of Hong Kong-China interaction, e.g. Co-production films may influence China gradually. Can't say the influences will be huge and social change will be immediate, but through soft power like films and news Hong Kong projects the immediate information of China.

*(If China figured Hong Kong's soft power is growing, do you think China will harden its restriction on us?)*

Well, the more China suppress, the more the Hong Kong public will react, like Fa Lun Gong, regardless of whether it possess threat to the society, Fa Lun Gong with the help of media it caught social attention that in return reinforced people's sentiments towards Chinese government. Sometimes new force of ideology emerged from the suppression. Like a ball, the harder you hit it on the floor, the higher it rebound.

Absolute suppression is never practical, even in Israel-Palestine conflict the suppression was never absolute. The military invasion of Palestine from Israel triggers people's anger, which reinforces or justifies Palestine's decision to mobilize its local army to fight back. Control from the PRC in return recognizes the Hong Kong identity and its importance, it is not a wise move

*(Can you tell me what are the best qualities and the limitations of Hong Kong's human capital?)*

Hong Kong people are "smart", very creative, flexible, and worldly (很會鑽). Some Mainlanders scam people, why would they scam people? In countries with weaker economic capacities people are more likely to scam as every business deal is critical to their living. Well, Mainland Chinese from the east-north side are less likely to do so, they are either super rich or too pure to scam others. In this sense, Hong Kong people are smart and know how to work the world.

A better way to describe Hong Kong's human capital is smart, street market, very good at making money. Film industry in particular already figured how to fulfil Mainland investors' expectations while managed to have their movie funded by rich pocket Mainland investors. Taiwanese in contrast are not smart enough to attain such deal. Hong Kong amongst all other Chinese regions is best at dealing with Chinese influences, it takes more than a few brilliant brains to bargain with China.

However, if this smart practice is interrupted and lost in generation, the younger generation with insufficient social experience they might not be strong enough to bring leverage on China. Creativity is a cost of compromising. There are quite a lot of political elites and leaders switched to business sectors, political legacy is weak, connection and communication across generations are weak too. In arts and culture, at least there is an industry for it, e.g. production, however in politics, there is no corresponding industry. Besides, politics is a zero sum game, either you live or I die. Without a legacy and inheritance, politics is certainly the most concerning issue.

5. *Do you think that Hong Kong leadership recognize, understand and aware of Hong Kong's soft power? If yes, in what way? If no, how could you perceive that?*

Political studies and social studies are very outstanding, but there is no way to make change. Teachers are all scholars rather than practical people. Experiences therefore failed to be accumulated. The same problem happens in politics of Hong Kong too. If you take a look at the age distribution of those who are in power, it is impossible to keep the political legacy running. (repetition\*)

Business leaders are facing crises too, even for giant like Lee Ka Shing. The boss of Apple Daily came to Taiwan before, finding out there's not much in Taiwan ran back again. Leaders from Hong Kong keep searching for their place, some of them chose to leave, some of them stay. Most of the media are sold to mainland investors, during election season it is easier to see political propaganda from these papers. Only Apple daily is an exception. If things continue to stay this way, freedom of media will be diminished, soft power of Hong Kong will be hugely damaged. The worrying future is media of Hong Kong no longer take the role to monitor and criticize the government.

## Part 2: The development of civil society in Hong Kong

### *1. How would you perceive the development of civil society in Hong Kong?*

The existence of civil society is accumulative. There are civil societies searching out to the disabled and the poor. However many of these civil societies have their funding source from the government, even if they know injustices exist they cannot make their voice heard. Civil societies that are political, their role becomes more significant only in election seasons, normally government funding is less likely to be allocated to the political civil societies. Apart from NGOs, civil societies are shrinking under the influence of Central government. These societies are constantly adjusting their expectation and role in the society.

## Part 3: Internationality and Mainlandization

### *1. Do you agree that it has become harder to promote Hong Kong globally against the background of the rise of China and growing pressures on Hong Kong to integrate better with China?*

I admire Hong Kong people a lot, I think they are really smart. Hong Kong remains its autonomy and fight along the battle against Chineselization for so long. Under the protection of One Country Two Systems, Hong Kong has its own political system of some sort, but Chinese infiltration policy is unpredictable. Infiltration policy includes immigrants, talents and money. Of course when the majority still speaks Cantonese, the sense of self-protection of Hong Kong people is strong; yet, when there are more than half of the population speaking Putonghua, you might still got a chance to fight, when its less than one third of the population using Cantonese as mother tongue, Hong Kong people will not fight anymore.

Hong Kong has its glorify history, under One Country Two Systems Hong Kong can no longer escape from Chineselization. But when internationalization has become an excuse for Chinese-lization, you really need to pay more attention to that. Different from Taiwan, we (Taiwan) are geographically separated by a strait, for Hong Kong it is closely linked to the China's soil. The possible future for Hong Kong, either Hong Kong grows stronger and stronger, competitive enough to stand against China; or Hong Kong is turning weaker and incomparable to resist Chinese influence.

Hong Kong's demography has changed completely throughout the past 20 years. Even for those Mainlanders who speak Cantonese, they don't share the same history and cultural experience as local Hong Kong do.

2. *Would you think that the more integration with Mainland China, Hong Kong would have more difficulties to maintain its international status / internationality? How would you perceive the balance between internationality and integration with China?*

For sure. Ranging from water resources to economic foundation, everything that makes Hong Kong is dependent on China. When Hong Kong finally fall into one of the city of China, the survival of Hong Kong values is at stake.

*(Is One Country Two Systems simply a slogan?)*

In globalization, the power struggle between the majority and the minority always favor the majority. Minorities' interests rely on majority's recognitions. Hong Kong becoming a part of China completely is just a matter of time. The only variation is, during the process of Chinese-lization, whether a new identity will be forged?

*(Do you think Hong Kong's ideology or identity is part of our soft power?)*

Probably yes. Hong Kong's ideology and identity allows a greater degree of freedom and critical thinking. The absence of these qualities made Hong Kong nothing different from Mainland. Freedom in particular will be the biggest cost. It leads to the consequence that more and more Hong Kong people choose to move out of there to Taiwan. Affordable living cost and comfy living style in Taiwan is always the reasons why Hong Kong people choose to come over. Although we don't have the same economic drive and resources, one can always survive in Taiwan. In Hong Kong if you are neither rich or powerful you are simply part of low-ended population who deserve no attention and receive little resources from the government. Social classe is very distinctive in Hong Kong: in the upper class it is usually topped with professions, businessmen, and powerful leaders; the middle class is normally comprised by the civil servants, teachers, owners of middle-small size enterprises; the lower class is of course, the underprivileged, uneducated and low-income population. For the middle class, they don't really have the urge to "escape" from Hong Kong, for them (civil servants in particular) they are just serving a different boss. Even if people from the middle class wishes to leave they are facing a huge trade-off which deters them from doing so. For lower class, they don't even have the capacity to leave. If One Country Two System could be prolonged by a decade and a half, perhaps the values of Hong Kong can survive the system, if it is the other way around, Hong Kong will be merging into China in a very high pace.

3. *Would you recommend new tactics / strategies to help Hong Kong to retain a high level of international visibility and significance?*

Well... leaders from all aspects must take their best steps to help Hong Kong. In terms of intellectual leaders/ elites, their role is to educate the next generation

through communications and reservation. Recorded experience is effective in making the knowledge more inclusive and widely acknowledged. Quite a portion of Hong Kong scholars they are from Mainland, local scholars became a minority in the universities. As the matter of retaining Hong Kong's very own international visibility, no one really dare to write about it anymore.

For economic elites, free trade and capitalism is crucial to maintain Hong Kong's unique status as the financial hub of Asia. You can never let One Country as the principle to take away the unique status. Once it is taken away it is just the second prior or even the third prior city of China. You must enhance the irreplaceable-ness of Hong Kong, remain all of its freedom qualities.

For cultural elites, indeed they have done a great job already especially for film industry. What worries me is the trend of more and more local media and press are sold to the Chinese investors.

If we look at the divide the question into categories, you may see there are still room of improvement in some aspects, some are rather hopeless and becoming more insignificant.

Different industries have their own role and strategies in dealing with One Country Two Systems policy. For political leaders, they have to work on bettering the election system, reviewing functional branch and democratic elements of Hong Kong. Except for violence and radical acts, is there any other effective ways to sustain Hong Kong autonomy?

Hong Kong is experienced in political confrontation comparing to Taiwan. Right now I really can't think of anything one can do in politics.

As for elites from the press/ media industry survival rate is rather low. Media functions in a day-to-day basis, you need a lot of money to do that...and money comes from China. General public still rely on the remaining producers to project the ongoing of China, and this is the soul of Hong Kong soft power.

Independent films never a competitor of Hollywood movie, but you must get through this stage to ensure media's survive in Hong Kong.

The advantage of being a scholar is, he or she can always forward information and knowledge from an Ivory Tower point of view, without scholar

passing on the important knowledge and experience it is impossible for our future generation to learn about such information.

Two main soft powers of Hong Kong: 1) soft power rooted in Cantonese culture and 2) free and democratic election are still worth to explore. Without these two major components Hong Kong soft power will get weaker.

*(Taiwan is very strong in its country's soft power, what do you think?)*

I don't think it is strong. Taiwan is rather lucky we have a beautiful landscape and a strait away from Mainland. Yet, I don't agree Taiwan's soft power is stronger than Hong Kong. Hong Kong is the one and only, the unique place still able to strike against China for such a long time without compromising everything (identity, civil society and mobilization). Hong Kong certainly will be collected by China, but its persistent efforts mean something. If the same thing is happening to Taiwan, pretty sure it won't take long for Taiwan to collapse.

Taiwan is powerful in terms of political civil society, we have two-party system that allows check and balance and power rotation. You cannot compare the two. Hong Kong is still the role model for the rest of China, but to sustain its significance Hong Kong needs to find its own path under one country two system, a smarter path, and it is the only way out.

4. *By and large, do you think Hong Kong has an effective external relations policy? If yes, why? If not, why not and how the policy could be improved?*

Hong Kong has its own way in dealing with the imperialist Britain and the rising China. If you ask around, people will say the same that Hong Kong's soft power is hidden in the silver lining of political studies. In my opinion, I think Hong Kong has a much stronger soft power capacity than Taiwan. Hong Kong experienced colonization then later returned to China, in this struggling transition you still managed to foster a new identity throughout the process, to me I think it is very impressive. Look at India, it was once the colony of the UK, India is indeed a big country with huge population, do they have a strong civil society today? No, I don't think so. Maybe there is, but not well-known.

Hong Kong was once the heaven for illegal migrants, everyone can simply come and go as they wish, which hardens the creation of a new identity, but Hong Kong did it. Only to keep a short term collective history is hard enough, not to mention creating identity.

You should be very proud of yourself, how Hong Kong survived under the colonization rule then now the suppressing influences of China. If you study Hong Kong soft power from the regular perspective, analysis through political, socio, and economic filters that wouldn't stand out Hong Kong as it is. Thinking from a different perspective you may look into the problem from other angles, for instance: Chinese history, Communist party and British Law and how did these factors stimulate the formation of Hong Kong soft power. In that the specialties of Hong Kong will be highlighted.

Hong Kong identity starts without a solid sense of State and nationality, to be honest Hong Kong successfully retained its position up till today is really outstanding already. Macao in contrast is a great disappointment, they don't even enjoy a slight touch of freedom anymore. China won't even apply "One Country Two Systems" on them anymore, simply put direct interference as they are not going to fight back anyways. Hong Kongers still have the strengths to confront Chinese influence. Macao in comparison is more practical economically, they also failed to educate their next generation about their own identity.

Hong Kong is a place of civilization, Hong Kong people can always find their ways to confront and resist the authority. Perhaps someday Communist regime collapses or China realizes the need to open up itself to meet the global expectations, Hong Kong will again be the role model of China.

You have been mentioning "Chinese-lization" "integration with China", perhaps its the other way round: "Hong Kong-lization" and it is China who needs to learn from Hong Kong. "Hong Kong - China-lization" is probably an interactive and two-way development. What Hong Kong can do is to provide itself more alternatives for the future of One Country Two Systems, don't stubbornly think it must be a dead-end, rather, being flexible to adjust is the key for Hong Kong's future.

**Name of Interviewees: Mr. A**

**Position and Affiliation: HKETO**

Part 1: Projection of Hong Kong's soft power attributes overseas

*1. How the HKETO projects Hong Kong's soft power attributes overseas? What are the duties and goals of your office? And what factors does your office consider before executing the promotion work?*

Let me start with some background information. Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of China. Article 156 of the Basic Law states that the HKSAR may establish economic and trade missions overseas. The Basic Law also indicates HKSAR can handle all issues, except foreign affairs and defense which the Central People's Government is responsible for. As you may know, Hong Kong is an externally-oriented economy, we rely much on overseas trade. This makes our external economic and trade relations so important, and why the HKETO was established. Looking particularly to our office in Y, I can say we cover almost everything you can imagine about Hong Kong-Y relations – such as trade, economy, business, investment, cultural exchange, and tourism exchange. It is like a negative list – all but foreign affairs and defense. Therefore, our office does not have a very specific working scope. Even if a Hong Kong tourist got injured in Y and required assistance, we would offer help.

The scale of our office is small. We only have three Administrative Officers (AOs) and fifteen members of local staff. Our service covers the entire Y and Z. With limited staff and a large area to cover, we cannot deliver much, so we mainly work as an agent or an intermediary between Hong Kong and Y. Our role is similar to embassies or consulate-generals carrying out diplomatic missions.

In practical terms, firstly, our office manages government-to-government relations. We are a government representative. We mediate communications between Hong Kong and Y governments. When the government of Y would like to discuss an issue with the Hong Kong government, we would help to contact the responsible government department.

We also work on government-to-business relations. It is kind of one-way that we tell the business sector matters about Hong Kong. In my personal opinion as a Hongkonger, I always presumed that many people know Hong Kong well, such as (the facts of) Hong Kong runs “One Country, Two Systems”, and Hong Kong is an international port. We sometimes take it for granted, but in fact many people do not know (these).

*(Are there any more examples?)*

There are many occasions when I introduce myself that I am from Hong Kong, their first response is “the language of Y is very difficult,” they don’t even know where Hong Kong is. If they don’t even know where Hong Kong is, you can’t expect them to understand “One Country, Two Systems”, our history, our strengths as an international financial center. Regarding government-to-business relations, one of our main functions is to deliver these facts. We have different means to deliver, like organizing some networking events. We would penetrate our messages softly through those events. For instance, we held a gala dinner last month to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the HKSAR. Although the people of Y do not really care about the anniversary, we cherished this occasion to invite many elites in Y to come.

Our Principal Representative delivered a keynote speech there. In the speech, we would like to tell the audience how Hong Kong has changed in the past 20 years from aspects such as infrastructure, industrial development, economic structure -- how our GDP grows, how the number of tourists increases. Our purpose of embedding the above information is to tell the people in Y that Hong Kong is an advanced place. You might expect we might tell something more in-depth, but that is not the case.

*(Let me have some follow-up here. The problem is the audiences here do not have a thorough understanding about Hong Kong. Do you think it is because the promotion work has not been carried out well from the very beginning?)*

You can say that, but... Our office was established in 19xx. It is in fact the older generation in Y who knows Hong Kong well. Maybe because a few decades ago, there wasn’t a place that was as unique as Hong Kong. In the 70s and 80s, Hong Kong’s economy began to prosper, and the goods from Mainland China had

to be exported via Hong Kong. The older generation had come across or even visited Hong Kong. Those who do not know Hong Kong are the younger ones. If you ask me whether the promotion is inadequate, I would say if no promotion was done, they wouldn't even know, that's why we are promoting. It would be best if we can spare no cost to promote, but it may not be possible in our context. Also, in the first place, we have to arouse the people's interest in Hong Kong besides promoting the city.

*(Y might be a special place which has a strong soft power and tourism. Most of the people in Y cannot speak English fluently, but this country can still attract millions of tourists. As a Hongkonger living in Y now, are there any attributes that Hong Kong can learn from Y?)*

I think Y's soft power comes from its own culture. On the contrary, Hong Kong's culture is from absorption. By absorbing other cultures, Hong Kong's culture becomes a new and unique entity. I do not see it possible for Hong Kong to learn the Y model. Y has a large population and land, her culture has been long developed, and her society is mono-ethnic with very few foreigners; whereas Hong Kong is very diverse. When I promote Hong Kong in Y, I would stress on the contrast between Hong Kong and Y – Hong Kong has all sorts of people, culture and food, unlike Y food is the majority in Y. The people of Y would be interested in Hong Kong when they heard this.

*(We have talked about your job duties and your office's substantive work. Are there any "philosophies" or "system of values" behind the promotional activities? I believe there is a working philosophy for every institution.)*

We are here to "sell" (promote) (Hong Kong), so there must be some keys that we want to "sell". Firstly, we want to raise Hong Kong's profile, to let people know this place and let them be interested in Hong Kong. Secondly, we want to promote Hong Kong's uniqueness – there are various levels of uniqueness. Firstly, although it is an established fact that Hong Kong is part of China, we want to tell others that Hong Kong is running a system different from Mainland's one. We do not want them to draw an equal sign between Hong Kong and China.

*(Excuse me, I really want to do some follow-up here. On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the HKSAR, an undeniable fact is that many things in Hong Kong have*

*changed. I quote the media, “Hong Kong is Mainlandized”. It seems Hong Kong has no difference with Chinese cities -- not only the general public, the academia also feels that Hong Kong is now similar to the China’s cities like Guangzhou, Shenzhen or Tianjin. Yet, your office advocates the importance of the “Two Systems”. Therefore, it is very interesting from my point of view. Externally, you want to say, “We are not Beijing, we are not Tianjin. We are Hong Kong.”)*

I don’t agree with your point. From 1997, Hong Kong has changed. I have to admit that some aspects of Hong Kong have inclined slightly to Mainland. There are more Mainlanders in Hong Kong. But I do not agree that Hong Kong is similar to Guangzhou. Instead, there are great differences. I won’t spend time to explain the differences in detail, but from the perspective of the ETO, we will exactly tell the people that “One Country” is not the only thing happening in Hong Kong, we also have “Two Systems”. If we didn’t emphasize on the “Two Systems”, there would be adverse effects on Hong Kong.

*(Are there any examples?)*

Doing business in Mainland and Hong Kong is different. If a businessman here planned to establish a company in Hong Kong yet (s)he thought Hong Kong is similar to the mainland, the picture would be different. Hence, we balance our emphasis on “One Country” and “Two Systems”. We never say Hong Kong is an independent country. We tell people about “One Country”, and deliver “Two Systems” at the same time. This is important. What we are doing is to get the fact straight, telling the people in Y that “One Country” is correct yet do not omit “Two Systems”. They wouldn’t know if you didn’t tell them. For instance, we often tell the people in Y that we hold Hong Kong passports, and they are astonished. We treat the HKSAR passports as normal, but the people in Y don’t even know, and they would ask why there is such thing. Therefore, such elements of “One Country, Two Systems” would make us more convenient to raise the people in Y’s interest in Hong Kong. We would also tell them Hong Kong is part of China, but Hong Kong’s system is different, so entering Hong Kong does not mean entering China – entering Hong Kong is dealing with something very different and unique. That is our mission.

*(I guess nobody else in the academia would consider interviewing you (officials of your office), because the others may think that the ETO solely follows the HKSAR government's orders and presents what the HKSAR government presents. However, the importance of your role is that you are the one who communicates with the target audience, and your vision or attitude greatly affects Hong Kong's external work. For example, the trading environments in Hong Kong and China are totally different. For a profit-making businessperson in Y, I believe Hong Kong's system or institutional design would facilitate his/her trade better when compared to China. If "diplomats" like you have such attitude, more results would be achieved with less effort.)*

We work in this way all along in the past 20 years. About promoting Hong Kong's uniqueness, I can tell you that all ETOs around the world have the same mission. This is my philosophy behind my job. We all know what Hong Kong's uniqueness is. If it was lost, Hong Kong would not be Hong Kong anymore.

*(Back to the operational part. Do you think that your office working close with other outposts like the HKTDC?)*

Yes, very frequently. Let me start with some background information. I've just said we work on government-to-government and government-to-business relations, but there is a gap. As civil servants, we don't know how to work on business-to-business. We can't help a businessperson in Y who wants to find places to sell his/her goods in Hong Kong, so we have to rely on HKTDC. This is also why the government established HKTDC – to have a team of experts specialized in business to fill this gap. HKTDC has two offices in Y and we collaborate very frequently. For gala dinner or other major events, we often swap the roles as the organizer and the supporting organization. Other than HKTDC, there are also the Tourism Board, which promotes Hong Kong as a tourists' place, and InvestHK, which specifically targets for investment. So you can see that each member of the Hong Kong family, including ETO, TDC, TB and InvestHK, has its own responsibilities and complements each other. To give an instance, we invite you to invest in Hong Kong, and then you would ask, "What are the requirements? How to do the business registration? How much would it cost to set up an office?" We do not know much about these, so we would refer to InvestHK to answer you.

Therefore, the ETO sometimes acts as the leader and coordinator, nonetheless we require assistance from other members of the Hong Kong family.

*(Do many people in Y initiate to approach you for assistance in searching business opportunities in Hong Kong?)*

That's often the case. Once my colleague told me that there was a cold call from a wine company, then I met the representative of the company. (S)he said they wanted to sell their wine to Hong Kong, but they were not sure about Hong Kong people's preferences, so they would like to get some tips from our office. Then, I shared that Hong Kong people admire Y much, so it is likely to succeed when the packaging or promotion strategy containing elements of Y.

Hong Kong is attractive indeed. There are a huge number of eight to nine thousand foreign firms in Hong Kong, in which the number one origin is Y. I think there are quite a number of reasons for this. Y has a large cultural difference in doing business with China, yet Hong Kong has an internationalized business environment. The positioning of Hong Kong as a springboard is what we always mention when promoting Hong Kong. It is totally workable to enter the Mainland's market through Hong Kong, and you can reach the Asian markets in Hong Kong at the same time. That's why the Japanese businesses like to set up business in Hong Kong. To be honest, the Hong Kong market which has only about 7 million people is not so big, but the markets that businesses can reach out from Hong Kong are significant. Hong Kong also has a role of trend setter. The role was even stronger in the past when we had a strong show business, nevertheless we can still make such impact. When a brand is popular in Hong Kong, it certainly can enter the Chinese market.

*(Certainly, and it does not only apply northwards, but southwards. The Indonesians, the Thais and the Vietnamese like Hong Kong very much. This may be caused by historical factors. I used to communication with some South(east) Asians. Their first impression of Hong Kong is about its internationality and celebrities. Therefore, I agree that Hong Kong is a springboard to anywhere, because we speak both Chinese and English fluently.)*

Also, there are people of every nationality in Hong Kong. When something becomes popular, it is able to reach out a diverse audience. The impact will multiply when they share with their communities, but of course it is quite intangible. Therefore, we feel that the people in Y like Hong Kong. Of course, they like Singapore too. These two places are comparable in many ways. In terms of soft power, they think Hong Kong is stronger. On the other hand, Singapore can offer substantial benefits ('jetso') to them, so there is a fierce competition.

## Part 2: Soft power, role and structure

*(What kinds of soft power do you think Hong Kong has? It is fine to mention strengths and limitations.)*

I really think Hong Kong is a unique place, but not every Hong Kong citizen can appreciate its uniqueness. When I look into Hong Kong from a different perspective as an ETO representative, I find out I understand Hong Kong more in-depth and appreciate more its uniqueness. As I am in Y, it is unavoidable to compare Hong Kong and Y. When you compare every day, you'll realize how good and interesting Hong Kong is. An important task of working in the ETO is to find topics to chat about with the people in Y. Even we are in Y, we would pay attention to what Hong Kong is happening, especially those novel and bizarre events. To be honest, I may not notice these when I was in Hong Kong. Take PMQ as an example. It was opened in 2014, and I have never visited there when I was in Hong Kong, but after I came here, I realized PMQ interests the people in Y much, because it is successful, and it is a must-go tourist attraction with a lot of things see indeed. PMQ then becomes a topic for us to initiate conversations with the people in Y. Under such circumstances, I must first know more about PMQ and meet officials of PMQ.

In Y, my brainstorming way is, "What special things of Hong Kong would I introduce to the people in Y?" My angle of examining Hong Kong would be different from the past, so I can see that Hong Kong is a special place -- many things in Hong Kong cannot be found in Y.

*(As a Hong Kong native, you are serving as the foreigners' eyeball to discover what they think is brilliant. We grow up in Hong Kong, and we cannot discover this, but if I lived in Y for three years, I would discover the*

*beauty of Hong Kong. Your perspective as an outsider inspires me to think more about my research. Very good. Then how would you perceive yourself in promoting Hong Kong's soft power overseas? Is your position or role important? If yes, how important?)*

Yes, it's important. Our office is the only representative office here. Without us, no one else would promote Hong Kong in Y. Therefore, I think the ETO is important, and the HKSAR government has been expanding the ETO network over these years -- we now have 12 overseas offices. Hong Kong won't 'die' without the ETOs. If we didn't have this office in Y, Hong Kong and Y would still have businesses as always. That was the case before we were. We, however, are performing as a catalyst here – the people in Y may only know about things related to business, and we are here to tell them about Hong Kong's culture. I also accommodate (Hong Kong) performing groups' visit to Y like the HK Philharmonic Orchestra (HKPhil), HK Chinese Orchestra, some dance groups and quartet. We'll have Romer String Quartet coming in October. We accommodate a Hong Kong performing group's visit to Y and Z every quarter. Mostly these performances are ticket-selling. Of course as the sponsors of the performances, we would have some complimentary tickets. Let's say the HKPhil performance, I would take the complimentary tickets to reach people we think are important, such as parliamentarians whom I perceive can influence the Hong Kong-Y relations or Y's foreign policy. Usually, (s)he won't respond to me, but it will be an opportunity if we have complimentary tickets, especially if (s)he favors orchestral performances. If (s)he comes to the performance, I will start the connection with him/her by an exchange of name cards and an informal conversation, and then we can follow up.

When we require his/her assistance or we want to deliver some messages to him/her, it would be less odd to approach him/her compared to a cold call. This is what I meant by using different methods to penetrate the Y's contexts. Nevertheless, no matter how we do it, our work has two ultimate goals: to raise Hong Kong's profile, and to inform the people in Y about Hong Kong's uniqueness.

*(As an Administrative Officer, your working space is always provided by the institution. At your position, do you think you have enough space to promote Hong Kong's soft power?)*

The space is sufficient. We can work freely. We have to report our work back to Hong Kong, but it does not require prior approval, whether it is organizing a Chinese New Year dinner, a Gala Dinner, or a HKPhil performance. The only concern is budget – we are responsible for it. The Hong Kong headquarters provides a large degree of autonomy on what and how we do, and it has to be the case, because the customs of each place is different. For example, holding a reception is fine in Y, but it might not be the case in Berlin. Thus, it is not for Hong Kong to control each ETO's work every year, how to execute it, and who to cooperate with. This is also why AOs are chosen to manage the ETOs -- we get used to be self-responsible and flexible. We enjoy great autonomy, and I don't see many limitations.

*(How would you assess whether the event is successful, like for a gala dinner?)*

Firstly, the guest list – whether its composition is our targets. In a gala dinner, I will definitely invite the CEO rather than a manager. The second would be the number of participants. It is undesirable to have only ten people in a business seminar. Furthermore, whether the rundown can feature the messages we want to deliver. I urged my boss to deliver a 20-minute speech in the gala dinner, because there is a section introducing Hong Kong. The speech was about Hong Kong's developments in 20 years, because I want to cherish that opportunity to hint the participants where Hong Kong's uniqueness is. Mentioning Hong Kong's developments is just superficial, the underlying message is like this: We have the Basic Law and "One Country, Two Systems" since 1997, they brought to a series of developments in Hong Kong which has an international business environment, so on and so forth. We would also consider whether the format is suitable and effective in delivering our messages ... I forgot to mention budget, meaning proportionality, but there is no clear formula to calculate this.

### Part 3: Internationality, global status and integration with China

*(The world nowadays is highly competitive. Many countries would suddenly become prominent. In fact, it is now preferred to compare cities rather than countries, and this applies to my thesis too, because cities have more*

*flexibility and space to develop. You are now in Y, then let's take Y as instance. As global cities, what advantages or disadvantages do Hong Kong and Y have respectively?)*

In recent years, Y is eager to become an international financial center. When I first heard this, my response is, “Are you kidding me? How can you be an IFC, when you don't even have an English version for internet banking?” You know that Y is not an international place. Not to mention whether the people can speak English, when I visited Z for example, interestingly, their ATMs have displays of eight languages – English, Chinese and even Portuguese if I remember correctly. I think Hong Kong's number one advantage is we are really an international city, whereas Y is not. An individual who doesn't know Chinese can live well in Hong Kong. However, I personally can prove that living in Y is difficult without the language of Y. Even only taking (a parcel) in the post office can be a great problem when you cannot speak the language of Y. And you can't make an order in restaurants when the menu has no pictures for you to indicate. On the contrary, Y has a large population which implies an enormous domestic market, and a large area to develop. The roads are wide, and unexpectedly you can find a huge park in the (city) centre. This is a weakness of Hong Kong, as land is necessary for development, and Hong Kong has difficulty in further developing, while Y still has a lot of potential. The buildings in the city center such as W and Q districts are dense, but there is still a lot of land when we go a bit further. (A: Yah, go north, like the district of E is already empty.) Y also has reclamation plans, and the people are okay with that. Hence, when it comes to development, Hong Kong has many limitations, such as land and resources, yet Y is abundant in these.

Hmm... I should also mention mentality. Hongkongers' mentality is first-class. (Q: For example?) My on-field experience living here is: you have to follow a set of rules in Y. (Q: They are rigid. They are polite, they are disciplined, but they are very rigid. I clearly feel that.) This creates a deadlock to innovation. On the other hand, Hongkongers are flexible. Any demands can be fulfilled as long as you have the money. Cha chaan teng is a good example representing Hongkongers' mentality. We are open-minded. We don't have a default formula to complete a task, it's fine to see a question from different approaches. Some may think Hong Kong's education is not good, but the truth is Hongkongers really have a flexible mind. I

couldn't observe such mentality when I was in Hong Kong. (Q: I agree with you. I had never thought we are that flexible before coming to Y). This is the reason for Y's stagnation in innovation in the recent two decades. Z emerges because they can do whatever they desire, whereas the people in Y follows strictly to the rules and refuses to be flexible. Nonetheless, their (the Japanese's) mentality has its advantage of being extremely professional in their own field. Therefore, it's a matter of opinion, but Hong Kong's flexibility is its competitive edge.

*(Let me elaborate a bit more. The global cities I mean are able to accommodate different cultures... Language is not the only barrier. Mentality, what you have just said is also one. By my definition, the most important attribute of a global city is flexibility. It would encounter different people with different situations. The (local) people there would need to improvise. I think I am familiar with Y. I like some qualities of Y, but I understand Y has its limitations too. (A: They want you to adapt to them.) They also don't understand why they should be the ones to change. This can be seen in transport.)*

Further than not understanding, they are not inclusive. It is more than usual to meet foreigners of any ethnicity in Hong Kong. No matter you are a tourist or a resident, you won't feel strange about this. Hong Kong is a highly inclusive place, but same as your understanding, Y is reluctant to change for others. Only you should change to accommodate them. If you want to live here, you are the one to speak and behave like the people of Y in order to fit in the society. It is a matter of opinion, but I think when we talk particularly about global cities, flexibility and inclusivity are both vital.

Hongkongers do not fear foreigners. When a foreigner on the street asks them something, they do not escape. They will try their best to help. I think Y is very different on this. This is a kind of soft power as a global city. On the other way round, Singapore does not share the problem of Y. Its inclusivity is also strong. To be frank, Singapore is our major competitor, so the places are always being compared. As a staff member of the ETO, I always hear questions starting with "Singapore and Hong Kong..." (Q: Really? Would people in Y always ask this?) True, wherever I go. (Q: What would they ask?) For instance, "Singapore told me that the tax of first three years is waived, the rent is halved, and they would recruit

staff for me, if I set up a business there. What can you offer?" You know that we won't 'distribute' money. I became silent. What I can only say then is, "We have one thing which is different from Singapore..." That's why at the beginning I told you we have to promote both "One Country" and "Two Systems", not leaning on only one of them. At such occasions, we would stress on the market potential of Mainland China. Under the "One Country" framework, Hong Kong has many privileges, such as CEPA (Closer Economic Partnership Agreement) and language barrier-free with the mainland; at the same time, we connect to the world. We have always been the connector between the mainland and the world. The only difference is: before the Reform and Opening-up, we directly exported goods to the mainland; now we are exporting services and soft power. Singapore does not have these attributes. What they have is a market with their 4 million people (Fact check: the current population of Singapore is about 5.6 million). Undoubtedly, you can reach out other countries such as the Philippines from there, but you can also do so in Hong Kong. Hong Kong's convenience to enter to Chinese market is irreplaceable by Singapore.

*(Some follow-up. Do your so-called clients think entry to the mainland market is important?)*

A: Yes. Businesspeople are simple. They go wherever they can gain profit. Politics is another aspect, but they'll go wherever they can gain profit. Nevertheless, they have some hesitation, because of the risk and their unfamiliarity of Mainland China. At the same time, they trust Hong Kong people, as the latter work straightforwardly and both parties have been cooperating for a long time. That is why Y is the largest origin of foreign firms in Hong Kong. They perceive Hong Kong as a platform for their business.

*Let me put it in this way. Would Hong Kong's function as the medium or springboard between China and the World decline one day, if Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen or even Zhuhai can perform Hong Kong's role?*

Yes... Nothing lasts forever. I have to admit that Hong Kong's role as a springboard would decline one day, but I don't think it will occur in the foreseeable future. Hong Kong definitely has its strengths, and the most interesting thing of Hong Kong is that we transform. We know how to improvise. If this interview was

taken place 30 years ago when Hong Kong was still an entrepot and China was relying on goods from Hong Kong, and the similar question was asked, “Would Hong Kong’s role as the ‘goods window’ of China diminish one day?” I would also answer ‘yes’. Back to the present day, China has already opened its economy and business of goods is no longer a way, so we have to find alternatives ourselves, and the solution is services. Therefore, there must be one day that Hong Kong’s role as the springboard will decline, but it does not necessary mean Hong Kong itself will decline too. We wouldn’t know how Hong Kong will change by then, but Hong Kong has been consistently transforming in these 20 years.

*(The upcoming questions are a bit sensitive. If you don’t feel good, it’s fine that you refuse answering. It has been 20 years since the handover. I suppose you have been a civil servant for X years. You worked at various positions and you had different observations. In these 10 years, do you see Hong Kong’ global status or internationality declined due to the handover?)*

This is a good question. I won’t answer you in bureaucratic language. My viewpoint is... undeniably, the handover has its negative impact. However, something revives (絕處逢生) because of the handover. There are things cannot be done when we were a British colony, but we can do them ourselves under the name “Hong Kong, China” because of the handover, because of “One Country, Two Systems”, because we are now Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

On another level, the Hong Kong-China relation is an eye-catching topic of the international media. In a way, Hong Kong has become more renowned after returning to China, because China is emerging. Who doesn’t know the country of China? Then everyone will know there is a place called Hong Kong within the territory of China. Sometimes there will be news about Hong Kong. In the recent two or three years, when there were some big events in Hong Kong, the international media would put them on the headlines. (Q: Even in Y? For the Umbrella Movement?) Sure, sure. Any major incident would become the headlines.

*(I am shocked about this, because among the international community, it is understandable that the UK concerns about the collective actions like marches and protests in Hong Kong, but even Y? I was so astonished by the amount of media coverage in Y three years ago)*

Let me add something. I am not trying to flatter, but I think somehow they (the media in Y) wanted to see how China would handle the Umbrella Movement. To foreign media and organizations, China's discourse and actions towards the HKSAR is the indicator of her major policies. China's attitude towards Hong Kong could imply their tactics in handling other issues. This is one of the reasons for the foreign media to be interested in Hong Kong.

The US may be interested in democratic movements, but I don't think Hong Kong's democratic development wholly contributes to the international media's attention on Hong Kong. Another issue is that Hong Kong is an issue to China. The media are interested in China as she is now the second largest economy, so they are interested in – please allow me to put it this way -- the 'tidbits' (花邊新聞) of China and put substantial effort in reporting them. This is my personal view and does not represent the government's stance.

Responding back to your question, the handover brings something – I don't need to indicate them clearly -- that the people don't like. Yet something has revived (絕處逢生) after the handover, because with the establishment of the HKSAR, we can do more. There are more and more ETOs. We (ETO) were part of British embassy, but now we are an independent office. We need not report to the Chinese embassy. We once had to follow the British embassy to build relationships. Now we can do it on our own. This is another example showing our international status. The Basic Law clearly states that we now have our own say. So I would say: the negative things would affect others' perception on Hong Kong, but in terms of profile, we think Hong Kong's international status has increased.

Part 4: Further feasible strategies to improve the external relations policy of Hong Kong

*(We can now go to the last part about projection (展望). In terms of external relations, I suppose the institutions responsible would be the four you mentioned: ETO, TDC, TB and InvestHK. Basically, your office would be the coordinator among them, so you are the official body to execute external relations. If you want to maintain or achieve a higher level of international visibility and significance, what are your tactics/strategies?)*

Something is currently unsatisfactory. Our name now is Economic and Trade Office, and our 'mother' is (we are under) the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB). Although I said my work covers everything, our focus is on commerce and therefore not so comprehensive. At the same time, for various reasons, Hong Kong does not have an External Relations Bureau. (Q: Y...Yes, as it may not be an appropriate action in politics.) You are quite sensible (明白事理) on that. We also don't have something like an International Department. (Q: It won't be done by HKSAR as such a small place.) Therefore, I have to admit that there isn't a set of complete tactics or strategies, as there is no leading body. For instance, the Environment Bureau leads Hong Kong's environmental policy, then it would publish policy documents. We, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau leads the policy of the ETOs, then it would only publish a policy document concerning commerce and economic development. If Hong Kong has to develop a complete strategy on external relations, firstly there must be a responsible body. The current situation is everyone in the government avoids handling the issue. Therefore, I cannot recommend any strategy to help Hong Kong maintain (the high level of international visibility). I don't have the mandate to do so, and the one to do it should have the mandate.

*(Some follow-up. If the HKSAR government established the External Relations Bureau one day, and it manages all four bodies, I believe it would have a complete strategy for all factions (各大門派). Would it be good or bad?)*

This can be good or bad. The advantages are: we have guidelines to follow, and the policy would become more in-depth and thoughtful. The adverse side is... We currently enjoy high autonomy as there are no guidelines. The outcome would be nice when the autonomy is held by the right people, but it may not be the case when unsuitable people have the control. Therefore, a clear policy means a clear direction, but it might also lower the autonomy of the ETO. It may not be desirable, because every place has its own customs. A uniform policy may not work in some places. It's a matter of opinion.

*(Again some follow-up. I suppose you have interacted with your colleagues in other ETOs, such as those in Berlin and New York. Do they share your difficulties at work?)*

A: No, there are differences. As far as I know, the ETOs in the US can rarely meet politicians and enter the political circle; whereas we can easily do so in Y. The parliamentarians are friendly to us. It might be caused by the differences in the politicians' culture. In Indonesia for instance, you can't use email to contact the politicians, because they won't reply. Phone calls won't be any better. It isn't like Hong Kong government which is very responsive. And in Y, you would need at least two months' notice to arrange a meeting. If Carrie Lam (the Chief Executive) will visit Y and would like to meet someone, two months' notice is required, otherwise it can't be arranged, unlike in Hong Kong, it is possible to arrange a meeting for next week by email. Our government structure is responsible and highly efficient. I didn't notice this when I was Hong Kong, even after I entered the government, until I came here. Things cannot be completed even with more time.

Indonesia is of course another story (world). Our colleagues there would face different difficulties. They may have a different target group to reach out. As everyone in the US cares about Hong Kong much, the ETO there may already be busy only answering media enquiries about the events in Hong Kong. For the case of Y, the media of Y are relatively mild. They won't do much follow-up after enquiring. (Q: Their media culture is different too.) Therefore, we face less pressure from the media and have more time to do other things. All in all, different ETO face different situation. My experience in ETO of Y does not necessarily mean I can "survive" in the ETOs in the US. Of course, AOs have to survive in any environment.

*(Last question: do you think Hong Kong has an effective external relations policy? This term is quite tricky (可圈可點). You can define it for me. Yes or no?)*

I cannot say there is completely none. It is a fact that Hong Kong realized the need to set up ETOs many years ago. We (The ETO in Y) were established in 19xx. We know that the establishment of ETOs from the very beginning reflects the government culture that we should develop external relations. We recognize the importance of external relations. We would pay effort on it. Yet, at the moment, we

don't have a complete set of strategy. Nevertheless, we Hongkongers have the mentality of adapting to the environment and perform our best in the limited space.

**Name of Interviewees: Mr. B**

**Position and Affiliation: HKETO**

(W as the place of the HKETO which Mr. B works)

Part 1: Projection of Hong Kong's soft power attributes overseas

*1. What does your office do to promote Hong Kong? What elements about Hong Kong that your office has considered before executing the promotion work?*

Let me use my work at ETO in W as illustration, our work contains two major pillars:

1. Trade, business and economic related events. These trade-related events include visits, talks and negotiations, and meetings or sometimes conferences. It is attributed to the objective: to strengthen Hong Kong external trade cooperation and network as well as to reaffirm the HKSAR's economic presence overseas.
2. The non-trade related events, which involves cultural, sports and community activities. Platforms like Film Festival, Tournaments, Games, Art appreciations are widely adopted and becoming more and more popular.

The non-trade related event becoming more and more popular in ETO's work. First it is the descending need of actual negotiations and bargains to reach a trade agreement. In recent days, states become more open than before, unlike the old days ETO's were to bargain for trade quotas and settlements through formal negotiation. However, free market's predomination in European states even the globe has laid a sufficient ground for ETO to conduct its mission already. Thus, focuses are shifted to creating platforms for reaching out to different institutions as well as communities, fostering relations with foreign state's governments.

*(For the non-trade events as communication platform, how did it workout?)*

It depends on the nature of activities, whether that activities/ industry itself possess a basic support and recognition. In that Hong Kong's Film Industry is significantly outstanding and popular. People (audience) overseas are looking for

something that's different from Hollywood movies. Hong Kong film-making fulfilled this criterion, famous director like Wong Ka Wai is often being picked by us as the representative of Hong Kong film industry.

However, to promote other forms of cultural means like comics, fashion, animation, music and art performances are rather difficult. For example, Hong Kong's orchestra units, big or small, are predominately influenced by the west. Yet, using a western-nurtured culture to promote Hong Kong might not lead to any ideal results. Of course, there is exception. Events like Asian Youth Orchestra, that showcases Hong Kong as a medium to cultural integration and where east meet the west, are very popular.

This response to the point that what kind of soft power we possess, an open cultural setting, and an accepting social atmosphere. Most importantly, Hong Kong's best qualities are enshrined in its diversity and inclusion. Any cultural heritage will find its way of performance and presentation in Hong Kong.

*(What elements about Hong Kong that your office has considered before executing the promotion work?)*

It depends on what kind of event we intend to organize or simply, what is the message we would like to deliver. Different "values" or "soft power" facilitates the promotion work at different levels. For instance, values like respecting individual rights and freedom, an independent justice and judiciary and an open social atmosphere are the "values" that we often employ as we promote Hong Kong. Although it is hard to look into people eyes and telling them what we are saying is 100% true.

However, the selection of values is rather ambitious and rather difficult to distinguish whether it is original Hong Kong's, or it is rooted from colonial Hong Kong. With our history with the British and current position in China, it is hard to define what qualifies as Hong Kong's unique qualities.

*2. Any "philosophy" or "system of values" behind the promotional activities?*

The "philosophy" behind value selection is based on the targeted audience, context, nature, and environmental condition. Flexibility is crucial in this subject.

The past few years, there were ETOs attempted to highlight the differences of Hong Kong as from other Asian cities, which is “Hong Kong is part of China, yet not equals to China”. This notion will be interpreted selectively depending on targeted audiences. We must consider our targeted audiences, context, nature, and environmental condition that affects their way of how to perceive the messages.

*(Is it applicable to divide business related audience, ETOs may focus on “part of China”, meanwhile as for cultural exposure, ETOs would highlight Hong Kong’s uniqueness as in “not equals to China” instead?)*

Normally it cannot be divided in such clear and distinguishable division. The selection itself is very subtle, no fixed format, as sometimes siting our “values” in one way also implies the other half. For example, putting Hong Kong as part of China as to persuade others that Hong Kong is the gateway to enter China, but at the same time I will supplement “Individual rights and freedom” that one may enjoys in Hong Kong. It is a subtle way of saying, you will lose your individual right and freedom if you picked to set your business in Mainland instead of Hong Kong. Thus “part of China” or “not equals to China” might not be advantageous all the time.

Timing and current situation are also important. For instance, if China-Hong Kong relation at that period is seen as touchy, controversial, or diminishing “One Country Two Systems”, we would re-direct the focus on promoting the HKSAR’s high autonomy.

*3. Do you see your office working close with the others like HKTDC? If so, how? If not, why not?*

The scale of our work is very limited, normally three to four staff in one office, which is highly insufficient. In addition, to distinguish ourselves as a SAR we intended not to leverage ourselves with Chinese Embassies and other institutions like Confucianism School, Chinese cultural center, and CPG’s subordinated agencies, this also makes our promotion work harder. Of course, we keep on doing our job, but THE events that we can handle are in short-term and must be theme-related, like Fashion week, Wine and Dine Festival. These festivals are very isolated

and independent. It is therefore hard to retain a long-term visibility of Hong Kong soft power in W.

Unlike other progressive Asian countries, like Malaysia and Thailand, I seldom or nearly never saw any advertisement of Hong Kong tourism on foreign (western) media, e.g. The BBC. Marking the 20th anniversary of HKSAR, our government did allow more resources and out-reaching to foreign media in promoting Hong Kong. For instance, the ABC and CNN. In which the HKSAR government adopted a soft promotion with their video on CNN, a documentary on Tai O Fish Village and its development.

However, it is unlikely that, such resources will be sustained in the immediate future.

*(Why not to adopt social media?)*

The boundaries are still unclear. Hong Kong's major attractiveness for tourism is derived from business-oriented events (e.g. exhibitions, conferences and fairs). Using social media in this regard is not that effective. Rather HKTDC uses position-relevant promotion to strategically promote respective events. The HKSAR Government didn't intend to project an "all-rounded" image for tourism from the role of ETO, but merely just for a business/ trade presentation overseas.

*4. Did you receive any instructions / guidelines from HKSAR Government in terms of external relations and the global profile of Hong Kong? If yes, what are they?*

Yes, we have. In times, political leaders themselves have their own policy preferences. We as ETOs might sometimes promote policies that influence Hong Kong's involvement in international relations. One typical example: Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Although Hong Kong is not a direct party of Belt and Road Initiative, central people's preference over BRI would influence the HKSAR government's preferences in shaping Hong Kong's international role. ETOs therefore would allocate more resources in promoting respected subject.

We again will shape Hong Kong as the role of a middle man, as in "if you want to be part of Belt and Road, you got to start from Hong Kong"

There are policies that the HKSAR government would like the ETOs to work accordingly to promote their upcoming initiatives. For example, in recent years, the HKSAR government wanted to develop unconventional industries, like innovation and technology, and start-up enterprise. ETO's role thereafter would be sending invitations to big companies, like google, who are mature and well-known in that field to extend their business to Hong Kong in order to nurture a suitable environment for such new industry. We also did that with Fintech, where ETOs get on with talking to countries with mature Fintech capacities, to form agreements and strategic relationships.

Besides policies that are advocated by the political leadership, ETOs are also responsible to foster communication and bonding with overseas Hong Kong expatriates. Which is a major force not only strengthening Hong Kong's soft power overseas (民間後備) and building a positive image of the SAR but also a practical source to recruited talents to designate their career in Hong Kong.

However, it wasn't easy. There are three groups of oversea Hong Kongers: elder generation, business owner, and younger generation that were targeted, yet, each of these groups has their own reservation linking with ETO:

- Elder Generation: more likely to be in favor of "Hong Kong is part of China" notion as they haven't been through the current social development.
- Business Owners/ Businessmen: they already have their connections with Hong Kong, or they have settled their mode of businesses.
- Youth generation: ETO is currently serving as medium to provide placement, internship, cultural exchange opportunities to youths in Hong Kong. ETOs also brought Hong Kong's culture to the youth who show their interest in Hong Kong. However, due to ETO's limited resources (human resources) and outdated information/ communication system (No Facebook page), it hardens ETO's efforts to achieve this point.

Only a few officers use social media to stay connected to the crowd. However, a top-down, official element still retained in its way of communication. Not to mention our webpage (HKETO's webpage) resembles the typical Information Services (GIS) style, information took form as press releases, which is not interactive and attractive enough.

I personally use LinkedIn but it has its limitation with information sharing in the youth circle. Institutionalization and reforming ETO communication services is one way to resolve this problem. It also relies on the HKSAR government itself to make ETO accessible, visible, and presentable.

## Part 2

*1. Have you heard of the concept of “soft power”? If so, what kinds of soft power (strengths or limitations) that you think Hong Kong has?*

Yes, I have heard the term. Of course the roles and responsibilities of ETOs often touch upon “soft power”. The term, however, neither do we forcefully emphasize the existence of soft power nor will it functions as a conscious framework in our work. For whatever except the hard-line politics, policy making, negotiation and bilateral agreement, I will regard them as the elements of executing soft power, which works the term soft power is subconscious.

Although soft power is an important part to our work, especially in promoting Hong Kong’s uniqueness, our set of soft power is very different from soft power in western (European) cultural communities. Hong Kong’s soft power(s) are often associated with our economic strength, qualities and advantages that attribute to Hong Kong’s position as financial hub, for instance: Hong Kong people are practical, reliable, and we have a stable social condition. Meanwhile, foreign applications of soft power are more on the side of “values” (universal values).

It is interesting to witness such approach of soft power interpretation in ETOs or the government. Hong Kong tops in various freedom index, but we consciously derive ourselves from mentioning such championed value(s) (freedom). Values like “freedom” and “liberty” are what makes us a free society as it is, Hong Kong has yet to promote these values that are crucial to our society and what does the government do to maintain the level of liberty. Hong Kong is far from active in advocating its inner values.

*2. How would you perceive yourself/ your office / your position in promoting Hong Kong’s soft power overseas?*

I think regardless of whether Hong Kong is a city state, we must obtain a sense of promoting Hong Kong's identity (like a city state will do). Hong Kong is a special city. With our history, relations with the UK and China and international status, we must strike to cultivate our sense of self-awareness to what we have (culturally), as to highlight our city's uniqueness and to preserve it. A strong sense of self-awareness within the Hong Kong society is the key to prompt any championed values to Hong Kong's soft power. As of today, Hong Kong government has been very passive in doing so.

It is also about sustaining Hong Kong's relevance to the world as well as the importance to China. How is Hong Kong different from other major cities of China, e.g. Shanghai, how are we balancing the Hong Kong identity while maintaining the role as China's middle man to the world? The HKSAR government must dedicate more effort in articulating this identity.

*3. Do you think you have enough space to promote Hong Kong's soft power within the designated structure / institution? Why / Why not?*

Via Media: Foreigners could understand Hong Kong via media as this is the most convenient and popular way, it is also a visible platform in promoting or maintaining. Hong Kong's presence, as for foreigners it. However, these information and updates are very limited and not sufficient to obtain a comprehensive understanding of Hong Kong. Recent coverage on Hong Kong: For instance, CWB Bookstore Incident and The Umbrella Movement have stimulated discussions across states or even worldwide through media reportage. Besides the trending coverage on Hong Kong's human rights suppression and China's rising intervention in the region, western media also covers the following fields:

- Trade and Businesses: As typical businessman does, recipients with interest in Hong Kong business news tend to silent out political issues.
- Political movement/ HK-China Relation/ Cultural promotion: Cultural promotion is rare to see. Foreign audiences naturally struggled with questions like: "Isn't Hong Kong already part of China?"; "Does Beijing has direct control over Hong Kong?"; "How does One Country Two Systems work?" topics as such are seldom explained throughout by the

media, special political arrangement like “high autonomy” is never in their (foreigners) political landscape or horizon. It thus creates difficulties in promoting Hong Kong’s position and identity.

Via Government: The way government responding to protests and demonstrations has changed. Ten years ago, government would keep their distance from the government’s role in civil disobedience or protests, in order to project Hong Kong as a society of liberty and freedom that the government is supportive to its cause. However, in recent political movement(s) the SAR government has left values behind, rather to have embraced a suppressive and defensive approach.

Political discourse is also widely adopted by HKSAR government in recent years. Top-down standardized political lines such as “territorial integrity” “the sovereign right of China in Hong Kong” has weakened Hong Kong’s identity internationally. Disregarding values they have developed and nurtured the society for years has created diplomatic awkwardness for HKETOs’ external outreach, as Hong Kong government’s position has now appeared to be “way too defensive”.

Of course, ETO itself is composed by political elements, however HKETO’s fellowship in the HKSAR government’s political lines is turning ETO a tool to deliver political messages overseas.

### Part 3: Internationality, global status and integration with China

*Compare to other global cities, what kinds of advantages or disadvantages do Hong Kong have?*

There are realities that we all refuse to accept; true it may be. For example, Shenzhen has already passed us in Fintech and innovative tech in marketing. Hong Kong’s exposure in technology development is narrowed and limited to financial sector only. Not to mention Hong Kong is reliant on Mainland’s supply and technological support. We have a large market, however large and mature market sector like ours often encounter limitations in technological upgrade. We got dragged behind by our “success”.

Like in Mainland there are not much protocol, rule and regulations to follow, which gives them flexibility. For as long as I stayed in Europe, I seldom see any

innovative technologies, projects and system that's compatible to Mainland's WeChat Pay 微信支付 or Alipay 支付宝. In that a small and pre-mature banking market serves as an advantage for its Fintech development. These developed European states shared a similar problem as Hong Kong for having an over developed and a mature market structure.

Fintech in Hong Kong is not that visible, even fields like automation, bio-tech and such are all heavily reliant on Mainland's support, especially on resources and supplies.

*1. From your working experiences, how people from other countries / places perceive Hong Kong?*

There are two-sided opinions towards this question: Positive and Negative. In terms of positive, Hong Kong is well presented as an exciting, a changing, vivid and festive international city. Safe and Secure are also one of our best qualities. People from business sector applauds Hong Kong for its stability and relative low chance of a drastic political change. Our systematic way of doing things, which is protected by laws and regulations keeps us advantageous.

In terms of negative results, Hong Kong is indeed a vivid city, yet its economic self-motivations are yet to be discovered. They see only the busy side of Hong Kong, however vagueness has clouded Hong Kong economic development. Hong Kong catches up with hotline policies, e.g. Fin-tech, it is however lack of content and concrete planning. Beijing's position and interference in Hong Kong is sometimes seen as concern. Although it is widely accepted that Beijing is part of Hong Kong's political landscape. Some of them sympathize Hong Kong's situation with Beijing Government.

*2. How do you perceive the W-HK relations? (Fin tech agreement signed by Carrie Lam, is it very often to have this kind of agreement? How would this kind of agreement enhance the soft power of Hong Kong? Any related policies?)*

W-HK relation is rather stable, so far there is no significant conflict occurred. There are main areas we have to deal with W: 1) Trade and Economics; and 2) One Country Two Systems.

In the aspect of Trade and Economics, Hong Kong is working closely with W for an exchange of information regarding Hong Kong taxation system. W has expressed its concern about Hong Kong's low tax policy. The exchange of information is conducted to ensure Hong Kong's low tax policy is not turning into a tax heaven for big enterprises and international wide flagships. The major "controversy" in this field goes down to Hong Kong's exportation to W. Goods that exported from Hong Kong to elsewhere are mainly imported from China, although as of today there is no trade dispute, Hong Kong as a transitional port for China's exportation is concerned to be a window dumping market, which leads to unfair market competition. HK-W has not yet signed a free-trade agreement, but using World Trade Organization's standard.

Regarding One Country Two Systems, the European Union occasionally expressed their concerns over Beijing's increasing interferences in Hong Kong's domestic affairs.

We are right now in negotiation with W to make an investment treaty between W and Hong Kong, before they did with China. I am quite optimistic in this issue, as China has its limitation and self-restriction.

Two major reasons behind why W-China Treaty unlikely to succeed:

1. W's investment treaty contains high ambition. The past investment treaties focused on granting / protecting the right of foreign investors, which highlighted they should be treated equally. As for now, W's treaties are further liberalized, to allow foreign investors to access W's market. Given China's adversary position on this (There are still protective rules that limit the percentage of foreign investors in company's shares). While W demands a reform schedule from partners in liberalizing its market. Such liberal standard has made China feel unacceptable.
2. W adopted bilateral consultation should any disputes occurred between parties. However recently W tends to delegate the power of consultation resolution and disputes to "a third party" e.g. arbitrary court. This is

something unacceptable to China, and not likely to happen in Communist party's economy.

However, Hong Kong's special economic position allows flexibilities. A "water-downed" version of such liberalization is possibly acceptable to Hong Kong. As we have already established a huge incoming foreign investment net, Hong Kong would establish a great platform for W to enter Asia and China. This is absolutely advantageous to Hong Kong, as we able to retain capitals and resources within ourselves, it also keeps Hong Kong in the loop of international investment.

3. *How would you perceive the resources of HK's soft power? From where? Economy, society, education, civil society, government policies etc. in order to raise the international profile of Hong Kong?*

Part of the resources of soft power is derived from institutions, historical development and Hong Kong's conventional practices. As of today, despite some social and political changes, we still enjoy a certain degree of freedom that is guaranteed by the current system. Apart from the values that are rooted in institutions, values and qualities like flexibility, reliability and professionalism are composed by the people and society as a whole. Yet the later as "soft power" are intangible or even ambiguous. Such qualities are prescribed in other factors, i.e. economic performances.

Civil society in this regard is relatively passive. "Values" that are widely appreciated and applied in civil society are mostly protected by institutions, but not driven, sustained and championed by themselves. In the past 20 years, public discussions are mainly on political reform, little has more enthusiasm on promoting its civil society, driving its soft power and values more than Hong Kong realizes. Hong Kong is still conservative in this perspective.

If values are stemmed from the institutions are undesirable and "unhealthy". As it is not originated from the bottom to the top, it naturally lacks of persistency to protect "important values" from the civil society.

The current government is adopting a softer approach when the society has value confrontation, yet, it redirects the discussion to something development-oriented / interest-oriented, e.g. an increase in economic growth would enrich

everyone's living condition, social harmony will be restored. However, the consensus within society is weak.

Part 4: Further feasible strategies to improve the external relations policy of Hong Kong

*1. Would you recommend new tactics / strategies to help Hong Kong to retain a high level of international visibility and significance?*

Yes, there must be something we could do, but the prerequisite is the HKSAR government must strike to reform and strengthen its connection to the Hong Kong youths. The current executive system is guaranteed in quality, however its composition and its structure is like an old machine and very outdated. Hong Kong is like a hundred-year-old brand, guaranteed in quality and credibility but lack of flexibility to adapt to the changing world. This is also one of the reasons why Hong Kong fails to present itself as a young and progressive international society. By adopting the old tag lines, east-meet-west, Hong Kong as a stepping stone to the Chinese market etc. which is already not enough. The correlations between Utilitarianism, opportunities and economic incentives drive the whole society. When one mention European cities like Paris, Barcelona, or even Dublin, an immediate image of vibrancy and symbols occurred outstandingly. Hong Kong is too much like other Asian major cities.

For instance, in the past ten years, Singaporean government worked hard on branding itself as vibrant, adventurous and professional. Hong Kong in comparison is still adopting the old-fashioned professionalism. When a city's characteristics are highly dependent on its economic performance, it is unsteady in the sense that it is always subject to changes in accordance to its economic performance and external influences. The internal strength is weak and hence, leading to a weak presentation.

Government must react to rebrand Hong Kong's image. However, the initiatives of reform cannot be determined by general civil servant, but ministers and the heads of departments. Unfortunately, ministers in current political structure are staffed with people from older generation, once again, disconnected to the public and youngsters in the society. Looking at Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and French President Emmanuel Macron, young and passionate political

leaders, they are able to deliver new perspectives to both the society and polity. It also demonstrates government's willingness to involve younger generation to in polity.

The current system of Hong Kong government failed to bring forth adventurous and ambitious young leaders. It remains rigid and lack of characters. The creation of Principal Officials Accountability System (POAS) intends to monitor ministers and major leaderships' performances and to prevent the HKSAR government falling towards bureaucratic practices. However it has turned out to be "stability maintenance". When I first joined the government, there was a department called "Efficiency Unit" which served to improve the administration of the government. Its function includes organizational audit, re-engineering etc. Its role is no longer significant. This reveals that our government's hardware is outdated and yet to be solved. In addition to our relations with the Central government, it further imposes limitations to reform the HKSAR government.

**Name of Interviewees: Ms. Deniece Law**

**Position and Affiliation: Hong Kong Local Film Director**

**Date of Interview: 27 November 2017**

**Place of Interview: Kowloon Bay, Hong Kong**

Part 1: General working experiences

*1. Can you briefly describe your work? What kinds of film did you produce?*

I started my career in the field of media and communication, as a journalist. I spent five to six years working at CableTV and Asia Television Limited. Then I worked for a church, doing translation work mainly, while pursuing my master degree in philosophy at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. After graduating from CUHK, I started to work as a freelancer in the field of research, production and translation. Adding up my time pursuing my master degree, I have 5-year experiences in translation. Started from three years before, I resumed back in regular working life - the studio. The studio is a collaborative effort shared with my husband, it offers services in different kinds of production work and documentary film production is our specialties.

*(Do you think documentary has its market in Hong Kong? How the audiences respond to it?)*

In recent years, documentary films received more recognition. In my mother's generation, they were not quite familiar with documentation type of films, rather they are more into movies staffed with well-known celebrities like Jackie Chan, Stephen Chow. Well of course, it depends on the topic of production, but the age patterns of the audiences of documentary firms are salient. Youngsters, hipsters and art enthusiasts mostly are the audiences of documentary films.

*2. Did you have any experiences in promoting Hong Kong films / film industry overseas? How was it? Do you think that Hong Kong films are attractive towards overseas audiences?*

Hong Kong films' market value in overseas markets has proven to increase in recent years. The market successes of Hong Kong films are very dependent on the target audience. Mostly Hong Kong films supporters are of the generation of 80s - 90s and well-educated.

Yes. I was involved in a movie: Hong Kong Trilogy (2015) (香港三部曲) [A story of Hong Kong told by three generations: "PRESCHOOLED" children, "PREOCCUPIED" young people, and "PREPOSTEROUS" senior citizens]. We successfully made it to the movie theatre. One of the story lines is actually with the background of The Umbrella movement (UM) in Admiralty. It projects to the audiences that although the story is fictionalized, the story background is reality-based. When the movie is showcased in The Golden Horse Film Festival, it generated a huge echo.

It is probably because of the similarities we share with Taiwanese society, cultural experiences and political struggles, i.e. Sunflower Movement. The film is more related to the Taiwanese as they can easily comprehend the situation in Hong Kong. In the movie, there is no direct explanation of the UM, rather it projects UM in a subtle way which is exactly the point that made this movie a success and deserve a place in cinema.

*(Do you think adding "Hong Kong values" into our films production (documentary) would make it attractive and appealing more to overseas audience?)*

Not necessarily, it depends on the topic mentioned. For example, Netflix in one of the newest drama programme - Teenager vs. Superpower, featuring Joshua Wong and his democratic movement has proven to be overly western-value dominated. The Hong Kong value and message attached may not be translatable directly into other cultural contexts, it depends on the cultural perspective of others.

*3. From your working experiences, how people from other countries / places perceive Hong Kong films?*

I can't say I am completely qualified to answer this question. In general, Hong Kong films reputation originated from 80s and 90s, and it is still the case that

the most representative film of Hong Kong in the eyes of foreigners comes from this generation. Even well-known and award-winning movies like Mad World (一念無明) cannot be compared to the productions like movies casted with Stephen Chow (周星馳) and Jackie Chan (成龍). It all seems like the film industry have not been renewed since 1990s. Repetitions, lack of creativity, market-driven are the characters of Hong Kong films.

*(In recent years, even there are award-winning movies which are produced in Hong Kong as well, you think the public still is not very enthusiastic towards local films?)*

Yes, indeed the public is not that enthusiastic about local films compared to the 90s production. The whole atmosphere has changed. Back in the days going to movie theatre is a way of enjoying the leisure time, but now we no longer need to go to the cinema for a movie, it's all available online. Yet, the box office is often the most crucial indicator for profits earned. Movie like Justice League (正義聯盟) has been scheduled on screen no less than 7-8 times a day, where it still makes a lot of profits.

*(Learning from Taiwan, getting all movies online?)*

I think it is possible. Have you heard of the movie OCTB (反黑)? It is possible sponsored by Mainland funding and put the films online. But profits are hard to be maximized, profits from online platform merely came from the number of views and commercial ads, I doubt it can compensate the cost of production.

*(If we used Mainland funding, there must be limitations for your production?)*

Yes, there will be, naturally. Then one will choose topics / field with less limitations. That explains my reason of not receiving Mainland funding. A government fund like "First Feature Film Initiative" (首部劇情片) is therefore widely popular right now. The fund of Hong Kong Trilogy was raised by public and all sources available, which is crazy, because its plot on the UM made it successfully gain public attention and empathy.

Limitation of creativity is the biggest concern of receiving Mainland fund. If it is not now to touch upon sensitive topics in film while we still enjoy freedom to create, then when? During the recent five years, freedom to create in film industry

has already been tightened. Last year, a Chinese-Korean film collaboration was forced to be terminated due to political reasons - A diplomatic deadlock between China and Korea, leading to a massive boycott of Korean products. Creativity is diminished because of political reason sound very ridiculous to me.

Yet, it is not an exclusive case of China, it happens in other places as well, but China tends to be less subtle in restricting cultural products. Films are used to be the propaganda for the political party.

*(Are you worried if Hong Kong is turning the same as mainland?)*

We don't really have a choice. When you produce something that is ideologically in conflict with the Mainland government, you can anticipate your future in mainland. I am pessimistic towards our social condition, but we must find a positive way of dealing with it.

## Part 2: Soft power, the film industry and government's efforts

1. *Have you heard of the notion of "soft power"? If so, what kinds of soft power (strengths or limitations) that you think Hong Kong films have?*

Yes, I have. I cannot recall it from where exactly. Detecting the "official" (diplomatic) tone in the term, I must have heard it from the government or officially. Key terms for soft power that first come to my mind are: cultural products, films and comics etc.

*(Do you think Hong Kong films are attractive under the perspective of soft power?)*

It's hard to say. How do you define soft power? Does it mean if you are relatively "better" than others?

Soft power to me is a relative term, very dependent on the recognitions from others, i.e. foreigners' eyes. One cannot say "What I am doing contributes to Hong Kong's soft power", it is something defined, identified, and described by others, from their response to the products.

*(The missing generation in HK film's production - what are the impacts on our film industry?)*

It affects the overall film industry tremendously. It is usual to see the generation gap in every industry. For Hong Kong film making, the 90s generation are still carrying very unclear role in order to continue the film legacy for Hong Kong. For example, up till today high-ranked positions are mainly occupied by famous stars from the former generation: Ng Yu Sum, Tsui Hark, Johnnie To Kei-fung etc. Of course they contributed a lot to the industry, what I am trying to say is, the above mentioned situation reveals a problem of missing generation of talents in film industry. For this missing generation, do they have the means and tools to be involved in the film industry? Where can they go? The new generation and their work are rarely acknowledged and promoted locally.

2. *Do you think you have enough space to promote Hong Kong films? By and large, do you think Hong Kong government has an effective policy to enhance or help Hong Kong film industry? If yes, how? If not, why not and how the policy could be improved?*

The role of government has never been active and supportive. Film making in Hong Kong has always been on its own, it wasn't until recent years the HKSAR government increase their financial supports for Hong Kong local filmmaking. In addition to the unsolvable copyrights issue, incomprehensive legal protection, the social environment and atmosphere wasn't built for creative industry such as filmmaking. If the VCD is available before the film is sent to cinema, this is such a big discouragement to Hong Kong film industry.

*(What can the government do to help?)*

Professional Training in creative service industry should be invested. The problem is the industry has never been regarded as the economic drive of Hong Kong and people will not value it as a prime development focus. It is not only the fault of government, but also people's mentality falls for only money-making industry contributing to city's survival. Such mentality is the obstacle for cultivating local arts and cultures.

"How are you going to earn money by producing films?" I am asked by this question a lot. One of my friend's first reaction when they heard I started up a studio

was “Oh, Studio! For the wedding photos?” My friend’s comment has revealed a major mentality: Earning money is the key.

### Part 3: Hong Kong film industry, co-productions and The Umbrella Movement

*1. It is apparently that Hong Kong film industry has been declined from its golden age (80s, 90s) to its winter, do you agree with that? If yes, any possible strategies in your mind could save it?*

Yes. Back in the days, local movie stars and famous directors all started from the basic positions of filmmaking (紅褲出身), it means that they were neither professionally qualified nor intentionally to pursue a career in film. Most of the time, these successful examples succeed by coincidence and opportunity. They climbed up the ladder step by step. In contrast to today’s talents, they are mostly professionally equipped or educated, lacking of platforms and means force them to showcase their productions through online platforms. But they cannot achieve a lot as the internet film competition is always keen. In the past, labor demand in film making industry exceeded the labor supply, the mobility in the filmmaking industry naturally attracted manpower and capital inputs.

The HKSAR government’s involvement in the industry has increased, funding and scholarship such as First Feature Film Initiative (首部劇情片) provides local filmmakers financial supports and rooms for imagination. Apart from the financial sponsorship, the availability of venues is also essential to film industry. Even if the government successfully cultivates a group of talents and professionals for creative industry, it will be meaningless if there is no platform for them to express and to practice their skills. This might lead to the loss of talents and the collapse of the whole industry. ViuTV, for instance, is a relatively small and non-traditional media to disseminate the works of some talents, but ViuTV is well-known for its mobility and flexibility, young filmmakers or producers who are looking for a platform to practice would still go for it. The most important element is the availability of opportunity for the talents to practice and demonstrate their works.

2. *Or if this is not the case, by comparing to other global cities or Asian cities (E.g. Tokyo, Taiwan, Korea etc.), what kinds of advantages or disadvantages do Hong Kong film industry have?*

Comparing with South Korea, Hong Kong film industry is fundamentally different from the it. In South Korea, the training provided for creative or entertainment services start in secondary school education. Besides, convention, rules and practices are well-established for the industry. The systematic establishments for the entertainment industry serve as some kinds of guarantee of quality, both the mechanism and the trained people enjoy international recognition.

*(Can Hong Kong learn from South Korea and create a systematic practice for creative industry?)*

Institutional establishment is always the easy part, but the social mentality should fit what is pushed through the institutions. Hong Kong lacks the social support for creative service industry to flourish. Tangible establishments like building schools, inviting movie stars to teach etc. are not sufficient to cultivate an advantageous environment for the growth of film industry. In addition to the trend of political priorities over everything, Hong Kong film industry is very hard to get success.

3. *Do you agree that it has become harder to promote Hong Kong films globally against the background of the rise of China, for instance, co-production films (合拍片)? Could you further elaborate the influences of co-production films? Or how do you see the co-production films)?*

To a large extend, the co-production films influence Hong Kong film development by a lot. First of all, it depends on how you see and value the diversity in film production. If you wish something other than cops and robbers, fire and guns, or movie like Wolf Warrior (戰狼) which showcases the value of the rising Big China ambition.

*(It also depends on the quality and expectation of audience...)*

It leads to the question that of course if you are funded by Mainland's capital and you have a lot of money to carry out big production. But for those who aren't,

co-production would be the way out, unless your proposed storyline is extraordinarily meaningful.

In co-production films, the storyline has to attract Mainland audiences. It leaves little room for creativity, as being a market-oriented film producer should go through self-censorship during filmmaking. The co-production films finally would be similar and eventually creates a cycle of ideological disaster (思想災害).

*(The source of funding, do they normally come from three main ways: the government, Mainland, or sponsorship from local parties /corporates?)*

Yes, the government's sponsorship comes from public funding. For corporates, the investors from all parts of the world like Malaysia, Japan and Mainland. Malaysia indeed is an emerging investor in Hong Kong film making, the movie *The White Girl* (白色女孩) is one of them. For this funding method, the film must be inclusive as to fulfill the different source of funding. For the Mainland corporates, there may be ten different investors join together to invest in one co-production film. It is always the case that the executive and production crew are Hong Kong people while the investors are Mainland Chinese.

Now it has become very normal that the funding comes directly from Mainland China. They are now the biggest source of funding in Hong Kong film industry. However, the Mainland investors are mostly in favor of only some certain types of films. In order to get the funding from them, when the local producers propose their storyline, they will prevent themselves from "stepping across the line". For example in corps-robbery movies, the corps must always stand for justice. Story types like ancient history and science fiction (unrelated to contemporary reality) are most popular in Chinese film market. Romance is another main pillar in Chinese film market.

Chinese market is huge by its population and Chinese are very willing to enter cinemas to watch movie. When you submit a proposal to Mainland investors for sponsorship, you may anticipate rejection or request for changing the storyline. It depends on to what extend you are willing to compromise in exchange for funding and what is the bottom line for this bargain. Sometimes it wasn't that bad, but for

those producers who are looking for Mainland investment, self-censorship process is normally done before the submission. A movie proposing for Mainland funding with a storyline along the 1989 June 4 Tiananmen movement is simply a waste of effort.

*(Do you think that The Umbrella Movement serve as a triggering point to local film industry? Any direct / positive influence?)*

Positive influence ... very unlikely. It has indeed inspired some local film makers in their productions, but it really depends on producer's motivation of using the UM as their "inspiration". Not sure if you heard of the movie Weeds on Fire (點五步), the closing of movie ends with a scene at Admiralty during the movement. I found using UM in this movie rather and deliberately pretentious.

Part 4: Hong Kong films in international markets,

1. *Would you recommend new tactics / strategies to help Hong Kong film to retain a high level of international visibility and significance?*

First of all, available platforms and means for films are noticeably insufficient. More platforms should be provided, for instance, TV channels, cinemas and all kinds of possible ones. And this is the responsibility of the HKSAR government. For television, broadcast media industry is restricted by the limited number of TV channels available. For the case of film industry, lacking of professional training and the incentives in the society of doing will lower Hong Kong overall competence in film industry as comparing to others.

*(Are Hong Kong films sold to other places (賣埠)?)*

Yes, there are some. But right now our films will be released online, i.e. Singapore Netflix. It is really hard to tell, it depends on the quality of production, which is not easily controlled by the government. Right now Hong Kong film industry stuck in the middle.

*(Does it mean that the biggest limitation come within the industry itself?)*

Yes, you may say so. It is the key to uplift the overall quality. In some sense, the government did its little part to help but it is really hard to say which part in

particular need more resources, given every pillar that contributes to creative industry are interconnected. Cultural products are also stemmed from the social awareness and legitimacy. How does the general public connect to local film production? How much does the general public value cultural industry? These questions are the underlying issue to perceive people's willingness to purchase tickets.

*(Should Hong Kong follow the steps of Taiwan in film making e.g. Social issues, causal, romance topics?)*

It is hard to compare Hong Kong to Taiwan, given the different social economic condition we each have. In Taiwan, the government is very helpful and supportive towards its film industry. This should be the greatest encouragement to filmmakers and producers and make things easier. Apart from the institutional factor, the cost of production in Taiwan is much more less than Hong Kong nearly by half. The property price and the land shortage of Hong Kong create deadlock to local film production. Recalling the scene from "29+1", merely the shot at the MTR station is hardly manageable and super costly. I bet "29+1" paid a lot or it got the sponsor by the corporate to have the shot.

*(How are the bookings done?)*

All those shooting locations that goes under government jurisdiction, there is a list on Office for Film, Newspaper and Article Administration (政府影事處) with all the booking details, charges and arrangement with the Hong Kong Police Force enlisted. However, it does not cover other locations like private estates, which always charges a lot. Office for Film, Newspaper and Article Administration only manages the places they concern, for those not on the list, you have to manage it by yourself. Regarding this matter, I deeply believe that Taiwan is a much convenient place to do so. There are less bureaucratic obstacles and land shortage in Taiwan, and quite a lot of beautiful scenery for shooting.

**Name of Interviewees: Mr. C**

**Date of Interview: 26<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

**Part 1: Personal experiences, market strategies and international outreach**

1. *How long have you been in this film industry?*

I have been in this industry since 1970, if you count TV broadcast as well.

2. *Did you have any experiences in promoting Hong Kong film / film industry overseas? How was it? Do you think that Hong Kong films are attractive towards overseas audiences?*

Yes, around the 80s I worked to promote Hong Kong-produced films overseas. Back then I worked as marketing strategist, which I mainly involved in promotion and outreach. To be more specific, I started to work for Taiwanese movies, *A City of Sadness* (悲情城市) directed by Hou Hsiao-Hsien. For the Mainland Chinese films, outstanding films raging from the 50s and 60s generation including *Farewell My Concubine* (霸王別姬), *Ju Dou* (菊豆), *Raise the Red Lantern* (大紅燈籠高高掛) were managed by me. *Chungking Express* (重慶森林), *Days of Being Wind* (阿飛正傳), *The Eagle Shooting Heroes* (東成西就) were the Hong Kong films that commonly promoted overseas. I joined D&B Film Co. Limited (德寶電影公司) in 1984 and worked in the field of local promotion.

3. *From your working experiences, how people from other countries / places perceive Hong Kong films?*

This question is too general, I would say Hong Kong Films receive different kinds of comments across generations. Back in the days, we use Film Festivals (影展) as the promotional strategy for overseas market exploration. All three major Chinese speaking regions (Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan) once reached their peak. The emergence of talents like Tsui Hark, Wong Ka Wai, Hou Hsiao-

Hsien etc. helped the west to discover films from the east, Chinese films in particular benefited the most.

No matter in production, commercialization and out-reaching development the West was the way ahead of us. Both film shows and festivals were dominated by the West. Although Chinese films had its influence, still they could not exceed the Hollywood ones. US-produced films were very extensive so as to attract the global market. While in Europe, the rise of artistic films which were supported by European film festivals could ensure their significance. The western producers saw Asians and Chinese as the third world and their discovery in Asian market was a pure curiosity. After that, I was lucky enough to be involved with Taiwanese movies promotion.

Press kit is definitely the most valuable and essential tool to present your work in those film festival. Press kit helps your audience to better understand what the film story is. International film critics and distributors have limited understandings towards the cultural background of Chinese-speaking regions. The press kit can provide an opportunity to present the background information of particular production, storyline, casting, bio of directors etc.

*(What was included in the press kit?)*

Press Kit is applicable to all kind of films. Press kit basically is a press book, which includes background information about the proposed production, the production crew and the rationales of film theme especially for those historic movies. Featured figures and texts captured from the film are also included. Bio of leading director(s), actor(s) and actress(es) are often the important perspective to understand the film. In which especially the cultural and historical background shall always be the stressing point of Chinese films, it ensures our audience possess sufficient understanding towards the background of storyline, this is in particularly useful to foreigners. For instance, the movie *A City of Sadness* presents a historical and political background of Taiwan that was not well-known universally, i.e. the February 28 Incident. Only the press kit could help to supplement the background of the event, more importantly to give judges and audiences a general sense of the historical significance of “*A City of Sadness*” to Taiwanese society.

To the Westerners, all Asians are the same. The press kit helps the audiences to differentiate the characters and to understand the structure of a Chinese family. Even if the audiences have not had the chance to read through the press kit before the film festival, at least that they can refer to the press kit to have further information. Apart from press kit and marketing strategies, effective translation is also very important to Chinese films' overseas promotion. A City of Sadness did a great job in this regard.

## **Part 2: Hong Kong Film industry**

1. *It is apparently that Hong Kong film industry has been declined from its golden age (80s, 90s) to its winter, do you agree with that? If yes, any possible strategies in your mind could save it?*

Well, 1980s was a turning point. In the past, entering the US film industry was just like a fantasy and the potential benefits from the western market were no more than 11-12% annually. No one perceived the necessity of entering the US market. Instead, it is the west who initiated their discovery on Eastern / Asian film development. In the 1980s, the generation started to nurture the film industry and radiated their ambitions towards the west. The support from overseas allows a greater room for creativity. Chinese film makers used this opportunity to criticize China and to reflect China's social issues through movies. Profits from this newly developed market were very promising. Director Hou from Taiwan has demonstrated how to produce a film at low cost while have not compromised on its quality.

The prior intention of exploring western market is for commercial purpose. Surprisingly, Chinese films were categorized as films with great cultural and art value, which received a lot of pride and attraction in the western film festival. A globalized market helps Hong Kong local film producers to explore audience, allocation and inspiration, which brought huge changes to local film industry.

Hong Kong has always been an agent city, we always perform the service of processing and assembling. The role of an agent has taught us to absorb the best of others, and kept us up to standard, which is essentially significant to our industry's development. I am also as an example, I am very aware of my role as

agent. From communication, coordination to distribution, these are the job functions as an agent. Movie with a soul, that's really matters. Those movies that are produced for a reason and the reason serves as a cultural significance will naturally find its course.

## *2. What do you think of Hong Kong local film industry as of 2018?*

The peak of local film production was around 250 movies per year, since 1980-90s the number decreased gradually. Actually when you think about it, 250 is an abnormal number, considering the imbalanced input of resources, lack of space, minimal capital investment and cheap labour in the city. Hong Kong people are too blind to see as the extreme condition is a norm to us. We therefore ask the question: "How come the annual production is declining?" In my perspective, decline is a retreat from the bubbled development, turning things to its normal level, but not a signal of weakness.

Hong Kong is still very phenomenal in film industry worldwide. As a city, Hong Kong is dominant the Chinese-speaking film industry and Hong Kong is up to a national cinema level. Hong Kong's ability to perform at national level as a city is what gives us the pride, this pride is invaluable and sufficient for Hong Kong people to foster a "national identity". Our ego derived from such an identity made it so difficult for a "true" handover. Before the 97 handover, we did not prepare for it. Of course the Central government also did not know how to prepare and what to anticipate, the underestimation of Hong Kong's postcolonial struggle have led to the social conflict we are today. 1989 Tiananmen Incident lightened up our hopes about to change China and the future of Hong Kong.

Around 60-70 annual production of Hong Kong films should not be a worry, yet two-third of out of these films are collaboration films (Mainland-funded). Our biggest barrier of looking ahead is that we never seem to find our identity.

Hong Kong is indeed an agent city, filmmaking as creative industry we can always jump out of the box, yet most of us are not aware of pursuing an alternative for our films. Hong Kong people never realized they are mere agents, nothing more or less, that explains why "One Country Two Systems" (一國兩制) and "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" (港人治港) could never become a reality.

Looking at today's Democratic Party, it is not till the new democratic generation stepped into politics that Hong Kong political progress got revived. However the generation gap between the conservative democrats and the proactive young generation could never be mended.

The 97 handover is dragging us behind, the elder generation wanted to ensure their influences in politics, they tend to remain conservative, pro-establishment and reject political changes, so they have become the most conservative opposition party. Hong Kong is place which holds very little regards towards the history of its own. The British government erased our history and tended to forge a new one: Hong Kong Citizen. The Central government of course is pretty much the same, they wish Hong Kong could forget the colonial past and embrace the One-China vision. In system like ours, we have no respect towards history, we live in the present moment and we make decision that brings benefits, very short sighted indeed.

The short-sighted problem explains the existing talents gap, the generation which benefits the most from the economic boost of Hong Kong in 70s-80s never thought of nurturing the next generation. All they care is profit maximization that benefits themselves at that moment. For Hong Kong, we need to take proactive steps to preserve conditions for the future. People who were born in the 80s enjoying the outcome of economic prosperity without experiencing poverty, naturally they are satisfied only with material and money. This generation never respected the 50s to 60s people.

Any states which pay little respect to their past, their history won't go far. Same as China, the Communist Party basically tends to destroy the historical facts to justify its existence. This is why I established Cantonese Cinema Studies Association, to study the past through Cantonese films. I am very passionate about cantonese movies. I revisited the civil society of Hong Kong in the 60s, I found out it is not only the emotional attachment but also the cultural value and artistic contents it carried. Cantonese movies are a real treasure for Hong Kong society. Cantonese movies somehow influenced movie industry worldwide. For example, Director John Woo ( Ng Yu-sum ) successfully inspired Hollywood with his unique style of shooting slow-motion in action movies. Director Wong Ka wai and

his *Chungking Express* introduced new ways of using stop motions and voice-over. These are “A” ranked productions at Hollywood level. Yet, we take it for granted.

*(In recent years, more directors received international recognitions / awards, why is that so?)*

First of all, today’s film festivals are so different from those in the past. Due to the increasing numbers of film festivals, the quality of film festival is not that high. Secondly, films show in cinemas is no longer the mainstream media and leisure to the present societies, the technology has taken away the prestige we used to have in filmmaking. It is no longer the quality we care about, but public attention, publicity and noise generated from our work will be more important. Not saying film festivals have lost significances in promotion, in fact the changing nature has brought more commercial elements to film festivals.

*(I want to talk about co-production film, does it bring disastrous outcome to Hong Kong film industry?)*

Somehow yes. Co-production film has discovered a new market but the cost to join this market waiving the quality films goodbye. Mainland Investors in co-production films often overly fantasize about Hong Kong-produced movies, self-repetition is always the strategy. Directors and producers achieve excessive economic reward by recycling film ideas from the past, e.g. *Journey to the West* (西遊記), the reused ideas are proven to have market popularity. When they (directors and producers) discovered it is such an easy way to make money, we just could not resist the economic temptation. The co-production films totally changed the mentality of Hong Kong film industry.

*(Along that path, will Hong Kong culture be sacrificed?)*

They would never see it this way. All they concern about is how much are left for “copy and paste”. How much longer they can reuse the cliché storyline like *Journey to the West* 西遊記? Derek Kwok (Kwok Tsz Kin) represents the new generation yet he committed to self-repetition very badly. This is a behavior of anti-progression, which I find very pathetic. Although Tsui Hark did not direct *Journey to the West* 西遊記 in the most disappointing way, still it is such a cliché. The only difference between Derek Kwok and Tsui Hark was he added a political irony to

the plot. Therefore the problem of film industry today is a creativity issue, leading to growth and development progress as a whole.

### Part 3: The role of government in promoting film industry

#### 3. *In your experience, what do you think of government's roles in Hong Kong film industry development?*

No role at all. Even the British Hong Kong government never cared about the film industry, they never consider films as an essential element of culture. Even today, film issues are under the administration of Home Affairs Department which is belonged to Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the officials are not either specialize in or familiar with the development and the potentials of creative industry. The officials treated us like beggars, I am not kidding. The time they ordered us to do something by saying "remember I paid you". I lashed out and scolded them. They are the boss giving us money, but it seems that they forgot the money is from Hong Kong taxpayers. Most ironic was, they used Hong Kong films for promoting Hong Kong to demonstrate Hong Kong's artistic strength overseas. Even if they invest money in Hong Kong films, they see themselves as investors but not promoters of Hong Kong film industry. The officials see us with suspicions which leave little room for any trusts and collaborations.

Communist China is really smart, they realized film is a powerful weapon for enlightenment and promoting propaganda. The first industry to destroy is film and creative industry. Taiwan also recognizes filmmaking but in a very positive way, they invest and cultivate talents, which is a key to maintain a respectable film industry. Hong Kong is the most pathetic one, the government does not even identify with the importance of films, which is worse than the Communist China. When Director Hou received an international award, the Taiwanese president immediately sent a congratulations telegram to Hou. Hong Kong government would not do that as it sees the value of filmmaking is merely commercial.

**Name of Interviewee: Mr. D**

**Date of Interview: 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2018**

As Mr. D shown his concern about the issue of confidentiality, the author decided not to transcribe his audio recording into document form and have taken his interest and concerns by considering the followings:

1. Mr. D will not be identified in this research project, including his name, his organization or any information related to him and his organization;
2. Knowledge gained as a result of the meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2018 will only be generalized and interpreted by importing other examples as the supporting information. In other words no information / examples / cases would be attributable to him or his organization.
3. The original records identifying Mr. D will be kept strictly-confidential during the research period. The author is the only person to have access to the recording and he will be also allowed to have a copy if you so prefer. The recording will be kept for the author's own research purposes till the end of the study.
4. After the research, i.e. after the date the author officially gets the PhD title, the author undertakes to delete the recording, under the witness of Dr. Chan Ka Lok Kenneth.

Mr. D and the author got the mutual agreement for the above considerations.

**Name of Interviewee: Ms. Au Mei Po**

**Position and Affiliation: Former director of Amnesty International Hong Kong**

**Date of Interview: 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

**Place of Interview: Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong**

Part 1: Personal experiences, civil society, government's perceptions and international status

*1. Can you briefly introduce yourself, your job (experiences)?*

I studied film and media in HKBU for my bachelor degree and I have worked in Hong Kong film industry for 2-3 years, then I studied women and development in Netherland. The program was related to women rights. After my study, I turned back to Hong Kong and tried to engage in some international works, so I joined Oxfam. Indeed, I do not like to work for international programs as I cannot see the impacts as they were all short-term. So I have chosen education because I like to do education programs. For instance, design some training programs for adults or students. I have joined a trade union when I was a student. I have some kinds of exposure about the labor union. Combining my communication skills which I learnt when I studied film making, let people know some people are underprivileged or more precisely, under-exposed is always my priority. I have joined a Thai organization and I have to work in Thailand for 3 years after leaving Oxfam. The organization deals with women labor. In 2004, I turned back to Hong Kong, one of my friends invited me to be the international coordinator of the anti-WTO rally. In-between I have been to Japan to do a research about “zero freelance for women” (零女散工) and this job was also about the exposure. The experience was good as I have chance to stay in Japan to study local grassroots women and teens. After the job in Japan, I have back Hong Kong to work in The Association of the Advancement for Feminism (新婦女協進會). Then I have joined Amnesty for 7 years and just quitted the job.

2. *How would you comment Hong Kong's civil society development? Especially post-1997 Hong Kong civil society should be divided into different layers.*

In recent years, we could see the young people participated more in social movements or social affairs than before, which is similar to what my mentors (i.e. senior) did in the past. However, we have different political situations in different generations. In the past, there was limited space for them to participate in politics and thus they have narrower mind to participate in politics. There were not much issues to investigate in the past, e.g. gender issues, environmental issues or animal issues, but they just based on the discussion of ideologies, women rights or labor rights only. We have to trace back to the background of the societal development. Nowadays, people can base on their interests to join different kinds of issues.

In the past, nationalism would dominate the direction of participating in social issues. National identity would be the only exit for those who were relatively deprived. So, when Hong Kong people want to embrace their national identity, i.e. Chinese identity, they would join the social movements. But now, we have a lot of identities not limited to national identity.

Just like today is June Forth, if most of us have been exposed to this event, this event / this issue still attract a lot of people to participate, no matter what's your political stance. Like this generation has experienced the Umbrella Movement, we have to investigate how they define and identify themselves in the social movement. They are active to participate in social movements while they would find the information for themselves as it is easy access to the information compare to my generation.

3. *From your work experiences, how would you comment the strength or extension of Hong Kong's civil society in the international network? Any concrete examples?*

However, Hong Kong is not strong compare to China in terms of civil society. Hong Kong has its cultural exchange for 100 years and Hong Kong should have the differences from China.

The Umbrella Movement (The UM): I think Hong Kong people did not think about how different Hong Kong from China, but the UM is not originated

from this. But Hong Kong people actually embrace freedom and participated in the UM (Normative rather than Political). It depends on how Hong Kong people think but the strength and the political stance is not too strong. But actually this could make Hong Kong people listen to other voices as their stances are not too strong, and make the society enclosed.

We know that we have to defend our universal values. So flexibility will attract the supports from people. I believe the faith is important, and the key is not the differences between China and Hong kong, but it is about how we would like Hong Kong society to be. I believed that Hong Kong people attach to those values but the actions may not the same, we have to tolerate, be patient and be positive.

*4. Do you have any experiences in China / with China? How will you comment?  
Any differences between Hong Kong and China?*

Yes. When I worked in Oxfam, though I was responsible for education, the organization was so small, plus the general situation of Asia was not strong enough to face the disasters like earthquake. I have to work after the disasters (but indeed I did not know how to do), but the handling procedures were nearly the same, all about the coordination work of the disaster programs. Before 2000, the Chinese government still did not possess the ability to handle the natural disasters, so I have the chances to participate in those programs and collaborated with some Chinese officials and Chinese scholars to handle the disasters. Depending on the rank of the Chinese officials, for sure that he / she did not pay attention to his / her works. Once there was an earthquake and I had to go to the earthquake site to observe the circumstance, the official said, “What else do you want to see? I can tell you...” in fact the people in some earthquake sites did not speak Mandarin but local dialects, indeed the official did not know what they were saying. The official had a very expensive mobile phone. This is absolutely different from Hong Kong. I did not see any civil servants like this in Hong Kong. They are not advanced. We have to monitor where our funding would go and we have to monitor and even control the funding in a strict way. For example, we have to compare 2 similar earthquake sites by comparing their funding amount and how they used.

For the scholars, they have a lot of experiences in researching those issues but they would not record it. If you ask them, they will tell you, but not in formal meeting. They said, “I cannot publish it but if you ask, I will tell you.” This is related to the limited freedom of press and freedom of speech. They will suffer if they publish it officially. This will limit the development of China. After 2000, the Chinese scholars have more chances to get in touch with other countries, and they can see the drawbacks of Chinese government / issues in China, but still they cannot publish it.

Later, I had the chance to get in touch with the Chinese scholars and labors in some workshops when I did trainings in China. As I have to cover a lot of topics, so we could develop some common languages between us. Our partners in China had published some articles about gender as the Chinese government will only treat this as women issues (女人野) and it’s about personal and politics. But started from 2015 / 2016, the Chinese government started to oppress the women who spoke about the issues of feminism in China, which means China has entered another era.

When I worked in Amnesty, some information “collectors” from China would like to speak to me. If they formally invited me to have a conversation, I feel fine if this is just for information exchange. But they like to invite me to have meal and I will reject. But this is their routine.

They asked me some opinions about some issues, for instance, The Administration of Activities of Overseas Non-Governmental Organizations out of the Territory of China, they would like to ask my opinion as Amnesty would have to deal with a lot of law issues. Or about the political situation of Hong Kong, they would like to ask me how I feel or get others’ information. This is my bottom line and I will not disclose any information about others. I would like to share my opinions on Chinese laws or Hong Kong policies. For instance, during the Umbrella Movement, the issue which Amnesty most concern was the freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, and this was hardcore statement about the Umbrella Movement.

*Follow-up: What is the aim of seeking your opinions? Based on the professional opinion about law or Hong Kong people working in an international organization?*

Both. Even PRC is an authoritarian regime, a lot of people, not limited to regions or departments, would like to know about Hong Kong. No matters they are from Central Stability Maintenance Department or Regional Stabilizing Department, they would like to have information. If they station overseas, they will use “reporter” as the identity to get information. Once, I have been approached by a reporter in Myanmar, “why can you meet the political bodies in Myanmar?” Indeed if he / she is a real reporter, he / she will not ask me this question.

Also, they want to know how an international organization comments / views on those issues, in order to prepare themselves. Even PRC is a strong regime, they have to know how to develop common languages with the international community, of course, they do not wholeheartedly feel that they have to do that, but still they will approach me to ask my opinion. Meanwhile, they would like to know how Hong Kong people feel / comment / view on those issues.

*5. Do you think that Hong Kong government / leadership see, recognize, understand the strength of civil society in Hong Kong? If yes, in what way? If no, how could you perceive that?*

Depends on which governmental departments, very few department values Hong Kong civil society. Some of the governmental departments cannot just ignore civil society, such as the ones handle labor, welfare or culture, as it cannot ignore the opinions of Hong Kong citizens. For those high-hand ones, such as related to politics and economic, they do not have the chance to deal with Hong Kong civil society.

When I worked in Oxfam, in earlier years, I have more chances to have direct interaction and communication with the government officials. After C.Y. Leung took the office (i.e. 2012), I have very little chance to communicate with / establish dialogue with the government officials. I could contact them for direct communication before but during C.Y. Leung’s era, they rejected to meet us. The usual practice of civil society would like to form an alliance (聯席) to meet the government officials and obviously, C.Y. Leung’s government did not offer us any chance. I just had one chance to meet Matthew Cheung (張建宗) during C.Y.

Leung's government. However, I have proposed the meeting for 1 year before I met Cheung.

Once the case (Erwiana) was getting worse, they still were not willing to meet us to solve the problem. They did not treat this as a serious issue. Even we have handed in a full report about the case, I have studied the rights of foreign domestic helpers for 20 years and a lot of organizations had also done a lot of research on this topic, the government did not even go through them. I have also engaged in international level, there is a working group for migrant workers in ASEAN and a human rights charter in ASEAN, for Hong Kong, we are not entitled to have vote / right in the meeting, but if found some application items we can use, we have to hand in report with our sovereign state (Past: UK, Now: China). For labor issues, Hong Kong also participates in International Labour Organization (ILO) and Hong Kong should know about how the international community discuss / debate / comment on the labor issues, concern or not is another matter, whether they pay attention / pay efforts or not is another matter. Even Hong Kong was not entitled as an individual participant in these international organization like UN or ILO, when Hong Kong has to institute labor policies which either follows the criteria / standard of international labor Conventions (ILCs) and recommendations or for some complicated policies, you cannot just follow those conventions as they are so broad and do not stipulate specifically for some specific issues. For other specific issues, Hong Kong follows the standards and guidelines set by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). For instance, the issue of migrant workers, this is the convention of Hong Kong to follow the guidelines of OECD as Hong Kong participated in OECD meetings. But, now, the HKSAR government does not eager to follow the guidelines of OECD to deal with any human rights issues of migrant workers in Hong Kong. The situation is the HKSAR government officially claims that Hong Kong attaches to international conventions / standard, but it, indeed, does not follow / handle / follow-up according to those standards / guidelines. However, international standard is something progressive. Except OECD, a lot of countries include China really concern about the issue of human trafficking, they will refer to international anti-trafficking protocol which they can follow the mechanism to handle the issue of human trafficking. However, the HKSAR government insisted and claimed that Hong

Kong does not have this kind of issue / this is not a serious problem in Hong Kong. But there are no data or reports about this issue. The HKSAR government does not join the international protocol so that we do not know the concepts, terms and definitions which are already different from the past definitions. There is a checklist to define trafficking. For instance, if you are invited to work in another place, the condition does not march with the ones written in the agreement, this may be one of the trafficking. The HKSAR government should update itself and not simply declares Hong Kong does not have this kind of issue. They do not want to admit that Hong Kong may have this kind of problem.

*(Follow-up: But there should be some related governmental departments to handle this issue...)*

Government departments want to shirk responsibility. Is it related to labor issue? Or related to immigration office? To some extent, the HKSAR government always claims that the government is professional and Hong Kong is an advanced international city, we still lose the track on this issue, we did not attach ourselves to those international standards. Those standards are not new, about 10 years ago, international community kept enriching the definition of human trafficking. They neither meet us to discuss nor update themselves. The government even cancelled the human rights forum, in the past held in every 3 months.

Even the communications are not very beneficial / rewardable, at least the civil society should have the chance to communicate / interact with the government. This showed that government has no intention to communicate and understand the civil society. How to say further improve the civil society in Hong Kong? To be the government of an international city, it fails and doesn't meet the standard.

Art: For Hong Kong, we have diverse art performances but we have limited art development. We cannot just emphasize the speed, but we have to nurture the atmosphere for different art development and appreciation toward art cultivation.

Film: Support from the government is good, but cannot depend on government to financially support all art development, this is not good. But the government can encourage the art development. For the talents in the media / art industry, if government provides supports like scholarships for the students, let them forget the financial burden and boost for their creativity and experiences the

process of creativity, they may not just treat this as a job but an art. This is one of the key engines to nurture the next generation to create. Film is a kind of art but at the same time is a commodity. If Hong Kong film industry is flourished, both art and commodity should have their markets. The tactic will not be limited to provide funding to have a talk or to produce 1 or 2 films, but providing supports to nurture Hong Kong talents would be a more important tactic for sustainable development.

TV: I agree that the HKSAR government has the much responsibility to the recession of Hong Kong TV market as it does not issue more TV licenses. When the TV industry is withering, students who study media have less chance to have practical trainings. The government simply wants to control the TV platform and strangle the creativity and the media industry. This is just a political strategy. If I want to express myself and I will be limited, this has been extended to human rights issue.

## Part 2: Civil society, The Umbrella Movement and soft power

### *1. How do you think towards The Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong? What is the impact of UM on the development of civil society?*

My comment is equal to my aspiration. Hong Kong is not the most oppressed place in the world, not the most chaotic place and even not the most hopeless place. This is not worth to argue as each generation should have their own views. Everyone would like to gain more space to express their own views on politics and so on in the future. The diverse political environment will continue as we do not know if our identity can be defended or not. But the society will change and the identity will change to something can be integrated with the opposition force (maybe). I will not say I feel either positive or negative. This depends on how we interpret the world. At the same time, we have to expose ourselves to other places in the world (International visions). I have stayed at Thailand and I perceived that the democratization of Thailand was once very positive, Thailand has universal suffrage but Hong Kong doesn't. But after 10 years, all disappeared. Other 2 examples are Malaysia and Singapore. Conclusion is we can learn from them, no matter they were successful or not. Hong Kong people are facing a strong authoritarian regime but this should not be the only analysis and interpretation. We

should expand our visions based on our history and the experiences of other places in the world / in Asia. When we have to establish a vision or comment on civil society's development, we have to self-equip and consolidate our faith, at least the civil society will not be demolished or weakened. I am not saying that it should be positive, but we should believe that people will stick to our faith.

I believe in human beings should have the wisdom to make a good choice to create well-being for the society, the key is: is there an environment for them to have the second thought? We need to have some space for us to remind ourselves that there may be alternatives / chances we are absolutely correct.

2. *How would you perceive the future development or prospect of civil society in Hong Kong? (or more specific, human rights issue, the development of NGOs etc.)*

Education is the tactic. It is not limited to school, but community, adult, or some specific topics in the community. When teenagers want to participate in social affairs and express themselves, I will say this is related to the Rights of the Child (兒童權利). When we want to push a policy, you have to meet a high standard and give a solid mandate for the implementation of policy as the policy should suit 7 million people in Hong Kong. As Hong Kong people do not have thorough understandings towards human rights, we have to consider the context of the society. We also have to borrow some good protocols / laws to fit Hong Kong society. We have to do it again and again and people will be convinced and this would help promoting the development of human rights issue. But education should take more time and it will develop and evolve by itself.

**Name of Interviewee: Mr. Stephen Vines**

**Position and Affiliation: Hong Kong-based journalist and editor of various international newspapers**

**Date of Interview: 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

**Place of Interview: Shatin, Hong Kong**

Part 1: General perception and the soft power of Hong Kong

*1. What kinds of attractiveness that you think Hong Kong has? (soft power that Hong Kong possesses)*

I worked in a newspaper as a journalist and I was travelling around the South-east Asia region but not much in Hong Kong. I became increasingly interested in Hong Kong itself and after I arrived in Hong Kong 2 years later, one of my friends was looking for people invest in business which sold kitchen equipment. I realized that Hong Kong people do many things simultaneously and that's interesting. Hong Kong is a place with more opportunities.

1989 was another significant factor, the Tiananmen protest. Before moving to Hong Kong, I have been covered a lot of works especially in Middle East, I have not seen a lot of people came out to the street so orderly, they were anger and determined but self-controlled. This cursed me that something special about Hong Kong and I should get to know more about Hong Kong. Eventually the newspaper (observantly, BBC and daily telegraph) sent me here and I have to make the decision to turning back to London or resign.

The ideas of being in Hong Kong attracted me here, the creative industry.

*2. In a more specific way, any limitations of Hong Kong?*

The whole purpose of Hong Kong has to be different from Mainland China. The less different from Mainland China, the less Hong Kong matter. The existing of Hong Kong like rule of law, freedom of speech, an open civil society etc. by the day is reducing and undermined and what's the point of Hong Kong to the rest of the world. Why people have their offices in Hong Kong because the differences but

not the same. The rule of law still hundred times better than in the Mainland so the differences are very significant. If continuing to undermined, the less relevance of Hong Kong to the internationality. If Hong Kong is going to fully integrated with China, it is an active suicide. Anyone who want to integrate fully into dictatorship. A lot of Hong Kong would say China is a big country and how can you fight against China. However, the system of Hong Kong is promised by the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law. The dictatorship is always on the wrong side of history and just one in the history had a peaceful transition: The Taiwan.

Hong Kong is an expensive place to operate and this could be a problem.

Another thing is the government quite hesitate to internationalize Hong Kong. If you want to be an international center, the key is to be international. You cannot be an international center but keep saying that foreign intervention, foreign is bad etc. You accept that Hong Kong is an international center and there is a price to pay for that or you say we just want to be a little part of China, but they always claimed that Hong Kong is an international center. In Foreign Correspondence Club, Carrie Lam was asked a question from English section of RTHK, she immediately said English section is irrelevant to Hong Kong. She is not exactly meant that but revealing her underlined attitude. For her, the only relevance to Hong Kong is the integration with Mainland.

3. *Do you think that Hong Kong leadership recognize, understand and aware of Hong Kong's soft power? If yes, in what way? If no, how can they improve?*

Hong Kong from colonial period to now has a very low grade government, if you are very high-flying officials in UK, you would not come to Hong Kong. Hong Kong is governed by quite competent but not visionary. Since 1997, 4 CEs were disasters and Carrie Lam just the slavery for London and Mainland China, their mindset is to wait for order not to create some visions. Leung Chun Ying was already in the communist camp and gained a high degree of trust from Beijing, he no need to keep proving how loyal he was, but he is small minded and has a strange personality. They are all order takers and do not creative enough.

Part 2: Civil society, The Umbrella Movement and soft power

*1. How would you perceive the development of civil society in Hong Kong?*

The past civil society of Hong Kong: before I came to Hong Kong, everyone told me people in Hong Kong just interested in making money, not involved in politics and no sense of community, but this is not true. 1989 protest in Hong Kong proved that Hong Kong people not only interested in politics but also the politics across the border. Hong Kong people also knew that they have big interest what was happening in China because Hong Kong has to be returned back to China. They were not stupid and understood the situation.

The current civil society of Hong Kong: People now are more politically aware now but unfortunately since 2012, people have become more depressed. Though they engaged in politics which like going to demonstration or giving money to political parties, they are all depressed. But I don't think this is forever as people would change a lot. Under Xi, Chinese government tended to give Hong Kong little autonomy and very determined to work through his people here and not listen to anyone else. Even in the earlier years of under Chinese rule, at least they would pay attention what Hong Kong people said. Now they have more policies to ignore the opposition.

Future civil society of Hong Kong: This is linked to the development of Mainland China, 2 things are crucial. One thing is the continuation of economic growth in China, second the continuation of dictatorship, the more valuable of centralized power in China. If something happen dramatically in Mainland, Hong Kong people will immediately react to that. But some of the best people in Hong Kong will leave, this is one of the worst thing to happen in Hong Kong. Some of them would consider to be activists, but to be activists you have to pay a very high price. Even the universities got shelter, the people supported democracy will not get promotion. More people to make sacrifice would be less. This is the exact tactics used by colonial governments.

*(How civil society can help internationalization of Hong Kong?)*

In my mind, the Hong Kong people quite internationalized, for instance, Hong Kong people would like to try new food from other places of the world, their mindset is that interesting and this is not the mindset of people in other countries. Another extraordinary thing is the establishment is socially-conservative, but Hong

Kong people are very open-minded, I am surprised by this. For example, the government says they cannot legalize same-sex marriage because Hong Kong people would not accept this. But most of the polls have been done reflecting that “Why not?”. The civil society of Hong Kong is actually open-minded international things. They probably speak another language fluently... these all make the civil society more open than the leadership. But the leadership seems to hold back the civil society.

Everybody is a leader in UM without exception and those people are barely existed in the public domain before. There are a pool of people in Hong Kong and there is a resilient strength among them. Hong Kong is an immigrant society, and those people are selective so they did not satisfied with current situation and go somewhere else, but the situation in these 10 years are the majority of people were born in Hong Kong. They are mostly come from the immigrant family and it is believed that there are something from their DNA which is special. When we look at all successful societies, which entirely depends on the influence of immigration group. I am very confident in Hong Kong people.

2. *Do you think that the Umbrella Movement promotes a sort of Hong Kong's soft power? Why and how?*

After the UM, a lot of people use the word “defeat” to describe this movement, but revealing the history is this is a part of the process of change, I don't think this is “defeated” as it mobilized a lot of people, the whole generation, of course, it did not achieve the universal suffrage. This is a process. For any social movements in the world, there were high and low point, but underneath, this was unstoppable and actually goes in one-direction.

When 1989 Tiananmen protest happened, someone in the BBC woke me up and asked me to gather reaction what happening in Beijing, I nervously rang people and everyone's phone was engaged. Finally I managed to find some people Martin Lee, he said “we are organizing a demonstration, I think hundred thousand people will come.” And I did not report it and I think this was ridiculous. I have underestimated Hong Kong people, something going on here. Hong Kong actually

is very patriotic towards China but not the Communist Party. There would be a lot of possibility in Hong Kong.

### Part 3: The balance between internationality and integration with China

*1. How would you comment on the effect of the rise of China on Hong Kong? Do you think that Hong Kong can help China for its global development?*

In the past, Deng thought that Hong Kong has its connection with the rest of the world and understood the international ways to do things, Hong Kong could be a great engine for China and for its global expansion. The attitude now is China doesn't need Hong Kong, China have huge populations, big companies in the global stages, and many people could speak foreign languages. China needs nobody and the dictatorship for life. There is no objection that Hong Kong becomes more integrated with China and Hong Kong is part of China and no point to discuss about it. The question is what exactly the relationship is: Is Hong Kong truly to be autonomous under China or not? The problem is dictatorship hates autonomy.

*2. Would you think that the more integration with Mainland China, Hong Kong would have more difficulties to maintain its international status / internationality? How would you perceive the balance between internationality and integration with China in Hong Kong?*

If "One Country Two Systems" can be maintained, would be yes, there would be a balance between internationalization and integration with China. The genius of "One Country Two Systems" maintains the high degree of integration and the high degree of autonomy. I read every day newspaper the high degree of autonomy is described as equal to independence. If this is the attitude there will be no high degree of autonomy. But I don't think this will be substantially like that as Hong Kong people will against this, see the anti-subversion law Article 23 protest. There will be much more indoctrination in schools. Hong Kong people are quite resilience to resist it. Also, how long will the communist dictatorship last? Most dictatorship don't last that long, history is against those people.

3. *Would you recommend new tactics / strategies to help Hong Kong to retain a high level of international visibility and significance?*

The best is to maintain the status quo would be the most valuable, e.g. the rule of law, the freedom of expression, which are good values. I would like more, but it is not easy if just protecting what we have. The resistance of Hong Kong people shows the importance to protect what we have. It is entirely possible for Hong Kong people and the past showed us that. Hong Kong people demonstrated to resist things which Mainland China wanted to do, e.g. Article 23 and Patriotic education program. Even China completely understands the undermining of rule of law will have a very high price to pay, so why the judiciary maintains its high autonomy to stay, this is very important.

For sure that the Chinese government uses money to attract Hong Kong people but not the majority of Hong Kong people benefited. When the immigrants came to Hong Kong, they wanted to have the minimal things like the roof, protection for the family, education etc. The expectation is gone up and Hong Kong people know that why they cannot buy the houses as the system is maintained towards the rich. No one still dream about to be Li Ka Shing but instead they focus on why the government did thing in this way.

**Appendix C: Public Opinion towards the Central Government, Hong Kong Government, “One Country, Two Systems” and Hong Kong’s Future (1997-2017)**

	<b>Net Trust in Central Government</b>	<b>Net Trust in Government of Hong Kong</b>	<b>Net Confidence in One Country Two Systems</b>	<b>Net Confident in Hong Kong’s future</b>
	(In Percentage)			
<b>July 1997</b>	1	39	46	68
<b>2002 CE Election</b>	31	27	28	19
<b>2003 Anti-Article 23 Legislation</b>	14	-9	19	14
<b>2005 CE Election</b>	20	43	37	53
<b>2007 CE Election</b>	45	55	60	68
<b>2010 Political reform proposal for 2012 CE and LegCo elections</b>	10	10	18	25
<b>2012 CE Election</b>	5	0	17	22
<b>2012 Anti-National</b>	-15	-1	2	12

	<b>Net Trust in Central Government</b>	<b>Net Trust in Government of Hong Kong</b>	<b>Net Confidence in One Country Two Systems</b>	<b>Net Confident in Hong Kong's future</b>
<b>“Brainwashing” Education Campaign</b>				
<b>2014 NPCSC 8.31 Decision</b>	-22	-7	-19	-4
<b>2016 LegCo Election</b>	-17	1	5	45
<b>2017 CE Election</b>	2.8	16	9	10

*Source:* Public Opinion Programme, The University of Hong Kong.

**Appendix D: Annual Expenditure and Staffing of Overseas Economic and Trade Offices (HKETOs), Hong Kong Trade and Development Council (HKTDC), Invest Hong Kong (Invest HK) and Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB)**

**1. Overseas Economic and Trade Offices (HKETOs)**

Annual Expenditure

Year	Annual Expenditure (HK\$)
2008-2009	HK\$ 278,198,000
2009-2010	HK\$ 282,587,000
2010-2011	HK\$ 299,114,000
2011-2012	HK\$ 302,112,000
2012-2013	HK\$ 306,355,000
2013-2014	HK\$ 314,183,000
2014-2015	HK\$ 326,019,000
2015-2016	HK\$ 314,386,000
2016-2017	HK\$ 337,878,000
2017-2018	HK\$ 370,943,000

Staffing

Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices overseas	No of Staff (As at June 2019)
Beijing	27
Guangdong	25
Shanghai	36
Chengdu	20
Wuhan	21
Taiwan*	9
Bangkok	5
Jakarta	10
Singapore	6
Sydney	5
Tokyo	4
Brussels	20
London	11
Geneva	8
Berlin	6
New York	9
San Francisco	9
Washington	7
Toronto	6
<b>Total:</b>	<b>244</b>

\* The office set up in Taiwan was Hong Kong Economic, Trade and Cultural Office (Taiwan)

## 2. Hong Kong Trade and Development Council (HKTDC)

### Annual Expenditure [Exhibition, promotional activities and trade-related activities ]

Year	Expenditure (HK\$) on exhibition, promotional activities and trade-related activities
2008-2009	HK\$ 1,222,482,000
2009-2010	HK\$ 1,362,226,000
2010-2011	HK\$ 1,466,978,000
2011-2012	HK\$ 1,562,641,000
2012-2013	HK\$ 1,520,827,000
2013-2014	HK\$ 1,792,437,000
2014-2015	HK\$ 1,740,370,000
2015-2016	HK\$ 1,720,371,000
2016-2017	HK\$ 1,685,411,000
2017-2018	HK\$ 1,427,288,000

## 3. Invest Hong Kong

### Annual Expenditure (HK\$)

Year	Expenditure (HK\$)
2008-2009	HK\$ 108,023,000
2009-2010	HK\$ 111,339,000
2010-2011	HK\$ 108,771,000
2011-2012	HK\$ 112,055,000
2012-2013	HK\$ 113,675,000
2013-2014	HK\$ 116,135,000
2014-2015	HK\$ 115,948,000
2015-2016	HK\$ 115,681,000
2016-2017	HK\$ 125,539,000
2017-2018	HK\$ 134,652,000

### Staffing

Hong Kong	Overseas
123	89

## 4. Hong Kong Tourism Board

### Annual Expenditure (HK\$)

Year	Expenditure (HK\$)
2008-2009	HK\$ 613,594,978
2009-2010	HK\$ 621,994,047
2010-2011	HK\$ 617,843,563
2011-2012	HK\$ 627,639,701
2012-2013	HK\$ 674,459,300
2013-2014	HK\$ 687,017,467
2014-2015	HK\$ 725,220,243
2015-2016	HK\$ 820,934,885
2016-2017	HK\$ 948,718,568
2017-2018	HK\$ 1,058,699,051

**Appendix E: International or Regional Economic Ranking of Hong Kong (2014-2017)**

	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>Global Competitiveness Index by World Economic Forum (among 148 places)</b>	7 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>
	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Ease of Doing Business Index by The World Bank</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Index of Economic Freedom by The Heritage Foundation (among 186 places)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>
	<b>March 2015</b>	<b>September 2015</b>	<b>March 2017</b>
<b>Global Financial Centers Index from The Long Finance (among 83 places)</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Economic competitiveness amongst Chinese Cities from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (among 294 cities in China)</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>

*Source:* Author's own compilation.

**Appendix F: The HKSAR's participation in International Intergovernmental Organizations Limited to States (As at 8 May 2018)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year of First Participation</b>	<b>Responsible Bureau/ Department</b>
<b>1. ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' Process</b>	2005	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
<b>2. Asian Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (ASOSAI)</b>	1988	Audit Commission
<b>3. Asian-Pacific Postal Union (APPU)</b>	1985	Hongkong Post
<b>4. Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT)<sup>Note 1</sup></b>	1979	Office of the Communications Authority
<b>5. Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex)</b>	1998	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
<b>6. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations (ESCAP)<sup>Note 2</sup></b>	1947	Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
<b>7. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)</b>	1956	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
<b>8. General Conference on Weights and Measures (CGPM)<sup>Note 3</sup></b>	2000	Information Technology Bureau and Information and Technology Commission
<b>9. Group of Twenty (G-20)</b>	1999	Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Name	Year of First Participation	Responsible Bureau/ Department
10. Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and Pacific (HONLEA, Asia and Pacific) <sup>Note 4</sup>	1974	Customs and Excise Department and Hong Kong Police Force
11. Implementation Review Group of United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)	2012	Independent Commission Against Corruption
12. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	Early 1960s	Security Bureau
13. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)	Late 1940s	Civil Aviation Department
14. International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) <sup>Note 5</sup>	Early 1970s	Hong Kong Police Force
15. International Hydrographic Organization (IHO)	1992	Marine Department
16. International Labour Organization (ILO)	1963	Labour Department
17. International Maritime Organization (IMO) <sup>Note 6</sup>	1967	Marine Department
18. International Monetary Fund (IMF)	Prior to 1997	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
19. International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI)	1989	Audit Commission
20. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)	1997	Office of the Communications Authority

Name	Year of First Participation	Responsible Bureau/ Department
21. International Telecommunications Satellite Organisation (ITSO)	1972	Office of the Communications Authority
22. Kimberley Process (KP)	2003	Trade and Industry Department
23. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)-Trade Committee	1994	Trade and Industry Department
24. Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)	2007	Trade and Industry Department
25. Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)	2010s	Department of Justice
26. Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia	2007	Marine Department
27. The Hague Conference on Private International Law	1997	Department of Justice
28. The International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) <sup>Note 7</sup>	1982	Customs and Excise Department
29. The World Bank Group (WB)	Prior to 1997	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
30. United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)	2000s	Department of Justice
31. United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (UNCND)	1965 or before	Security Bureau Narcotics Division
32. United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW)	2001	Labour and Welfare Bureau

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year of First Participation</b>	<b>Responsible Bureau/ Department</b>
<b>33. United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC)</b>	1997	Census and Statistics Department
<b>34. Universal Postal Union (UPU)</b>	1877	Hongkong Post
<b>35. World Health Organization (WHO)</b>	2000	Department of Health
<b>36. World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Risk Analysis</b>	2010	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
<b>37. World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)</b>	1988	Intellectual Property Department
<b>38. World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)</b>	1995	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
<b>39. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)<sup>Note 8</sup></b>	1999	Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

*Source:* Constitution and Mainland Bureau, the Government of the HKSAR, 2018a.

**Notes:**

- 1 HKSAR participates as an Associate Member in APT.
- 2 HKSAR participates as an Associate Member in ESCAP.
- 3 HKSAR participates as an Associate Member in CGPM.
- 4 HKSAR participates as an Associate Member in HONLEA, Asia and Pacific.
- 5 HKSAR participates as INTERPOL Hong Kong China, Sub-Bureau of National Central Bureau China. °
- 6 HKSAR participates as an Associate Member in IMO.

- 7 HKSAR participates as a Corresponding Member in OIML.
- 8 HKSAR participates as an Associate Member in UNWTO.

**Appendix G: HKSAR's participation in International Intergovernmental Organizations Not Limited to States (As at 8 May 2018)**

Name	Year of HKG / HKSARG Joining	Hong Kong's Membership Category	Responsible Bureau/ Department
<b>1. Advisory Centre on WTO Law</b>	1999	Member	Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and Trade and Industry Department
<b>2. Anti-Corruption and Transparency Network ("ACT-NET")</b>	2014	Member	Independent Commission Against Corruption
<b>3. ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO)</b>	2011	Full member	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
<b>4. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)</b>	1991	Member	Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and Trade and Industry Department
<b>5. Asia Pacific Heads of Maritime Safety Agencies Forum</b>	1996	Full Member	Marine Department
<b>6. ADB/OECD Asia-Pacific Law Enforcement</b>	2015	Member	Independent Commission Against Corruption

Name	Year of HKG / HKSARG Joining	Hong Kong's Membership Category	Responsible Bureau/ Department
<b>Practitioners Network ("Asia- Pacific LEN")</b>			
<b>7. Asia Pacific Legal Metrology Forum (APLMF)</b>	1994	Member	Customs and Excise Department
<b>8. Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG)</b>	1997	Member	Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau
<b>9. Asian and Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators (APCCA)</b>	1980	Member	Correctional Services Department
<b>10. Asian Development Bank (ADB)</b>	1969	Full Member	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
<b>11. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)</b>	2017	Full Member	Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau
<b>12. Asian Harmonisation Working Party (AHWP)</b>	2000	Member	Department of Health
<b>13. Asian Network for Prevention of Illegal Transboundary</b>	2004	Member City	Environmental Protection Department

Name	Year of HKG / HKSARG Joining	Hong Kong's Membership Category	Responsible Bureau/ Department
<b>Movement of Hazardous Wastes</b>			
<b>14. Bank for International Settlements (BIS)</b>	1996	Full Member	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
<b>15. C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group</b>	2007	Member City	Environment Bureau and Environmental Protection Department
<b>16. C40 Steering Committee</b>	2011	Member City	Environment Bureau and Environmental Protection Department
<b>17. Corporate Registers Forum</b>	2003	Member	Companies Registry
<b>18. Cyber Crime Technology Information Network System (CTINS)</b>	2001	Full Member	Hong Kong Police Force
<b>19. Economic Crime Agencies Network (ECAN)</b>	2013	Member	Independent Commission Against Corruption
<b>20. Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units</b>	1996	Full Member	Hong Kong Police Force
<b>21. Frontex (European Agency for the Management of Operational</b>	2013	Non-state participant	Immigration Department

Name	Year of HKG / HKSARG Joining	Hong Kong's Membership Category	Responsible Bureau/ Department
<b>Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union) Automated Border Control Working Group</b>			
<b>22. Executives' Meeting of East Asia-Pacific Central Banks (EMEAP)</b>	1996	Full Member	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
<b>23. Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF)</b>	1990	Member	Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau
<b>24. Financial Stability Board (FSB) (Formerly Financial Stability Forum)</b>	1999	Full Member	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
<b>25. G8 24x7 High Tech Crime Sub Group</b>	N/A	Full Member	Hong Kong Police Force
<b>26. Governmental Advisory Committee of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (GAC of ICANN)</b>	1999	Member	Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Name	Year of HKG / HKSARG Joining	Hong Kong's Membership Category	Responsible Bureau/ Department
<b>27. International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS)</b>	1994	Full Member	Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
<b>28. International Forum of Insurance Guarantee Schemes (IFIGS)</b>	2013	Associate Member	Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
<b>29. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Public Key Directory (PKD)</b>	2010	Non-state participant	Immigration Department
<b>30. International Maintenance Review Board Policy Board (IMRBPB)</b>	2001	Member	Civil Aviation Department
<b>31. International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds Committee</b>	1997	Member	Marine Department
<b>32. International Regulatory Cooperation for Herbal Medicines (IRCH)</b>	2007	Information Focal Point and member of delegation of the PRC	Department of Health
<b>33. International Satellite System for</b>	1988	Ground Segment Operator	Marine Department

Name	Year of HKG / HKSARG Joining	Hong Kong's Membership Category	Responsible Bureau/ Department
<b>Search and Rescue (Cospas-Sarsat)</b>			
<b>34. Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Asia - Pacific Region (Tokyo MOU)</b>	1994	Full Member	Marine Department
<b>35. Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific (NACA))</b>	1988	Full Member	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
<b>36. Northeast Asia Food Data Systems (NEASIAFOODS)</b>	2002	Full Member	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
<b>37. Organisation for Economic Co- operation and Development (OECD) - Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS)</b>	2016	Associate Member	Inland Revenue Department
<b>38. Organisation for Economic Co- operation and Development (OECD) Global Forum on Tax</b>	2006	Member	Inland Revenue Department

Name	Year of HKG / HKSARG Joining	Hong Kong's Membership Category	Responsible Bureau/ Department
<b>Administration (FTA)</b>			
<b>39. Organisation for Economic Co- operation and Development (OECD) Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes</b>	2009	Member	Inland Revenue Department
<b>40. Pharmaceutical Inspection Co- operation Scheme 國際醫藥品稽查協約 組織</b>	2016	Member	Department of Health
<b>41. Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific (UNGGIM-AP)</b>	1994	Member	Lands Department
<b>42. South East Asia, New Zealand, Australia (SEANZA)</b>	1995	Member	Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Name	Year of HKG / HKSARG Joining	Hong Kong's Membership Category	Responsible Bureau/ Department
<b>43. Study Group on Asian Tax Administration and Research (SGATAR)</b>	2000	Member	Inland Revenue Department
<b>44. The International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI)</b>	2006	Institutional Member	Department of Health
<b>45. The South-East Asian Central Banks (SEACEN) Centre</b>	2014	Member	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
<b>46. Typhoon Committee (under the auspices of UNESCAP and WMO)</b>	1968	Member	Hong Kong Observatory
<b>47. United Nations (Regional) Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC - AP)</b>	1982	Participating Member	Lands Department
<b>48. United Nations Environment Programme - Infoterra: the Global Environmental Information</b>	1995	National Focal Point	Environment Bureau and Environmental Protection Department

Name	Year of HKG / HKSARG Joining	Hong Kong's Membership Category	Responsible Bureau/ Department
<b>Exchange Network (INFOTERRA)</b>			
<b>49. Western Pacific Regional Forum for the Harmonization of Herbal Medicines (FHH)</b>	2002	Full Member	Department of Health
<b>50. World Customs Organization (WCO)</b>	1987	Full Member	Customs and Excise Department
<b>51. World E- governments Organisation of Cities and Local Governments</b>	2010	Full Member	Office of the Government Chief Information Officer
<b>52. World Meteorological Organization (WMO)</b>	1948	Member (Territories)	Hong Kong Observatory
<b>53. World Trade Organization (WTO)</b>	1995	Full Member	Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and Trade and Industry Department
<b>54. World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre (WHOCC) for Traditional medicine</b>	2012	N/A	Department of Health

*Source:* Constitution and Mainland Bureau, the Government of the HKSAR, 2018b.

**Legend:**

HKG - Hong Kong Government (before 1 July 1997)

HKSARG - Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (since 1 July 1997)

## Appendix H: 39 Massive Collective Actions from 2003 to 2014 in the HKSAR

	Date	Issue	Nature	Number of Participants
1	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2003	Anti-National Security Bill (Article 23)	Protest	Organizer: 500,000 Police: 350,000
2	9 <sup>th</sup> Jul 2003	Anti-National Security Bill (Article 23)	Rally	Organizer: 50,000 Police: 30,000
3	13 <sup>th</sup> Jul 2003	Pursuing Democracy	Rally	Organizer: 20,000 Police: 9,000
4	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2004	To improve people's livelihood	Protest	Organizer: 100,000 Police: 37,000
5	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2004	To protest against law interpretation and pursue democracy	Protest	Organizer: 20,000 Police: 10,000
6	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2004	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 82,000 Police: 48,000
7	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2004	To call on the HKSAR government to have universal suffrage	Protest	Organizer: 530,000 Police: 200,000
8	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2005	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 45,000 Police: 22,000
9	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2005	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 21,000 Police: 11,000

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
<b>10</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2005	To call on the HKSAR government to have universal suffrage for the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council elections	Protest	Organizer: 250,000 Police: 63,000
<b>11</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2006	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 44,000 Police: 19,000
<b>12</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2006	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 58,000 Police: 28,000
<b>13</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2007	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 55,000 Police: 27,000
<b>14</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2007	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 68,000 Police: 20,000
<b>15</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2008	To call on the HKSAR government to have universal suffrage for the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council elections	Protest	Organizer: 22,000 Police: 6,800
<b>16</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2008	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 48,000 Police: 18,000
<b>17</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2008	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 47,000

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
				Police: 15,500
<b>18</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2009	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 150,000 Police: 62,800
<b>19</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2009	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 76,000 Police: 26,000
<b>20</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2010	To call on the HKSAR government to have universal suffrage	Protest	Organizer: 30,000 Police: 9,000
<b>21</b>	Jan 2010	Anti-Express Rail Link	Rally and Confrontation	Organizer: 130,000 Police: 3,800
<b>22</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2010	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 150,000 Police: 113,000
<b>23</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2010	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 52,000 Police: 20,000
<b>24</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2011	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 150,000 Police: 77,000
<b>25</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2011	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 218,000 Police: 54,000
<b>26</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr 2012	Protest against the intervention of the Liaison Office of the Central People's	Protest	Organizer: 15,000 Police: 5,300

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
		Government in the HKSAR		
<b>27</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2012	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 180,000 Police: 85,000
<b>28</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2012	To request to have investigation of the death of Li Wangyang	Protest	Organizer: 25,000 Police: 5,400
<b>29</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2012	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 400,000 Police: 63,000
<b>30</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> Jul 2012	Anti-Brainwashing: Anti-National Education Curriculum	Protest	Organizer: 90,000 Police: 36,000
<b>31</b>	Sept 2012	Anti-National Education Curriculum: Rally and Hunger Strike	Hunger Strike	Organizer: 120,000 Police: 36,000
<b>32</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2013	To request C. Y. Leung to step down	Protest	Organizer: 130,000 Police: 26,000
<b>33</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2013	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 150,000 Police: 54,000
<b>34</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2013	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 430,000 Police: 66,000
<b>35</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2013	To protest the government unwilling to explain not reissue	Protest	Organizer: 120,000 Police: 36,000

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
		Free-to-air Television License		
<b>36</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2013	To protest the government unwilling to explain not reissue Free-to-air Television License	Rally	Organizer: 100,000 Police: 11,900
<b>37</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2014	To request to have full implementation of universal suffrage	Protest	Organizer: 30,000 Police: 11,000
<b>38</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2014	Memorials for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989	Rally	Organizer: 180,000 Police: 99,800
<b>39</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul 2014	7.1 Protest	Protest	Organizer: 510,000 Police: 98,000

*Source:* Choi, 2015, p. 98-100

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

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