

One Country, Two Systems: Power and Resistance in Hong Kong

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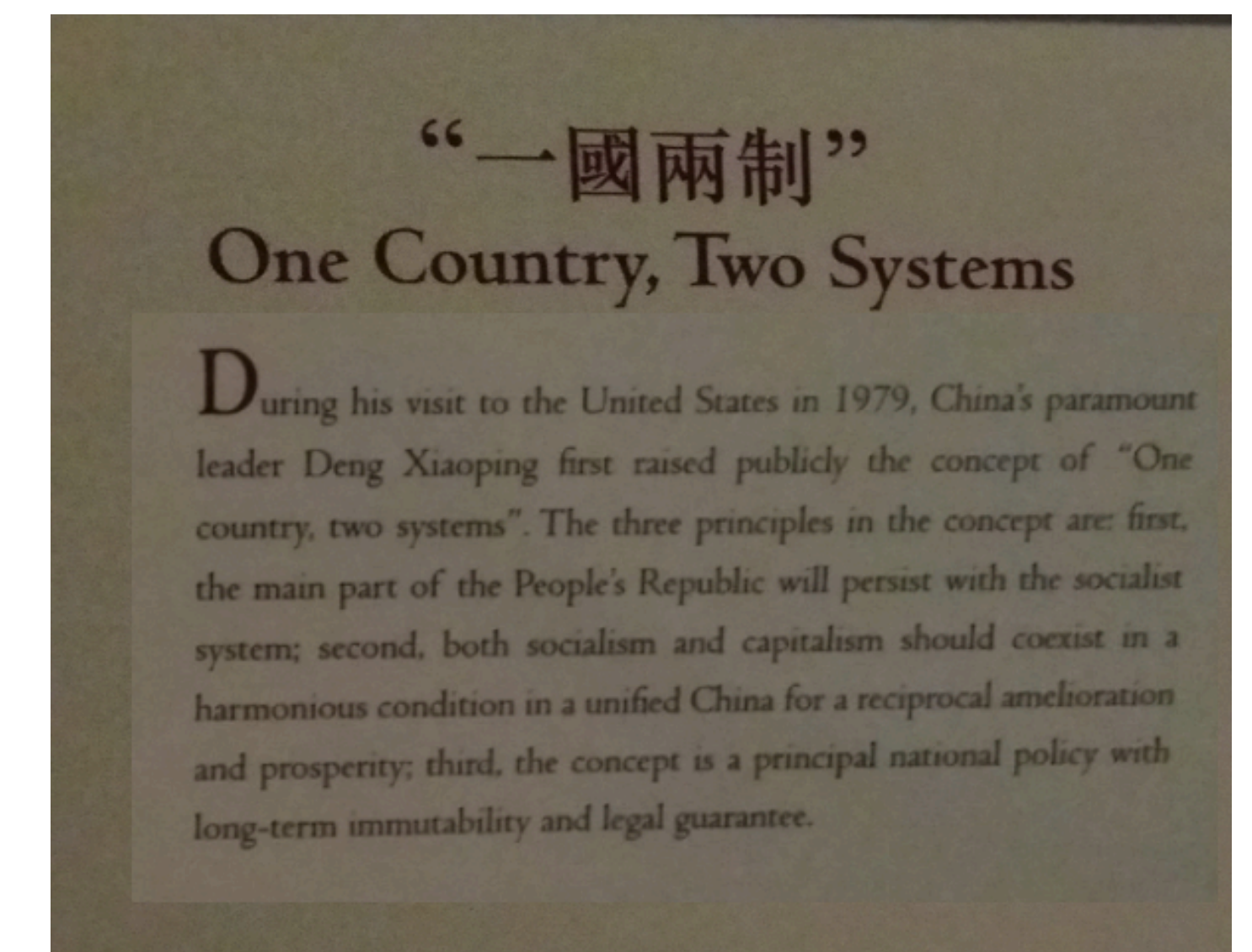


Image from the Hong Kong Museum of History.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong is located in Asia, with a population of approximately 7.4 million people. The primary language spoken is Cantonese, with residents also speaking English, Mandarin, various Chinese dialects, and more. The local currency is the Hong Kong Dollar. Hong Kong's government is the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), which is affiliated with, but operates autonomously from the People's Republic of China (PRC).

20th Anniversary

In 1997, Hong Kong's status as a British colony transitioned to being an autonomous territory of the People's Republic of China. In 2017, this is the 20th Anniversary.

Picture on the right has text stating, "Together, Progress, Opportunity."



Learning Goals

My global independent study was an opportunity to learn more about

- The perception of youth activism and pro-democracy efforts
- The influence of both the HKSAR and PRC governments in contributing to residents' perception of "one country, two systems"

One Country, Two Systems

Upon Hong Kong's return to the People's Republic of China, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and People's Republic of China agreed to operate according to the **Basic Law**. The Basic Law ensures that the HKSAR has the ability to operate autonomously from the PRC, without having to operate according to the PRC's policies for 50 years. Although the HKSAR has political, economic, and social autonomy from the PRC, some resistance to the PRC include its intervention and influence in HKSAR's affairs and functioning.

The Umbrella Movement

Youth activists led the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong in 2014. The Umbrella Movement's name is derived from activist's use of umbrellas against pepper spray from police officers. The Umbrella Movement consisted of peaceful protests and occupation to advocate for increased democratic functions, such as universal suffrage within Hong Kong, without the intervention of the PRC. There were four large-scale occupations during this movement, with some lasting approximately 75 days.

Implications of the Umbrella Movement

Implications to consider in the aftermath of the Umbrella Movement are the continued pro-democracy efforts by young adults and stakeholders. Some leaders and participants of the Umbrella Movement are experiencing incarceration and/or court trial hearings. Leaders and stakeholders of the movement have continued advocacy, some of which the efforts are:

- For the release of political prisoners
- Against unjust law enforcement practices (false arrests, incarceration as a result of resistance, police violence)
- For pro-democracy efforts across the world (ex: Catalonia)
- For the right to protest and resist

Skills Utilized and Lessons Learned

In engaging with systems and infrastructure, such as media (advertisements), and art/history (museums), analyzing the presence of what is present, and how it is portrayed is important.

- The display of HKSAR's 20th Anniversary graphics was common, evident in television advertisements, banners in public areas, and posters on infrastructure

In engaging with a space where I was a visitor, practicing cultural humility in being a learner and listener was important.

- In creating this poster, I hope to convey the learnings from my time in Hong Kong, and attempt to convey information without misrepresentation of the movement

Recommendations

The leaders of the Umbrella Movement have garnered support globally, but it must be noted that:

- The methods of the Umbrella Movement, such as peaceful protest are valid, and should not be used to criticize, or compare to alternative means of resistance engaged by activists globally
- Resistance is global, and connected



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