

# The Changing Political Culture of Hong Kong's Voters\*

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*This paper aims at tracing and analyzing the continuities and discontinuities of Hong Kong voters' changing political culture during the transition from a British colony to a Special Administrative Region (SAR). The 1991 and 1995 surveys illustrate that the political orientation of the voters has been developing toward a more participatory albeit alienated political culture. This inchoate pluralist political culture tends to be incongruent with the existing and future political systems in Hong Kong. This alienation stems from the voters' aspirations for true democracy, the lack of confidence in Britain and China to genuinely look after Hong Kong's interests, and confusion over the conflicting claims of authority in Hong Kong between London and Beijing. The 1991 and 1995 studies of Hong Kong's political culture suggest that its political system will gradually develop toward a more open and democratic government in order to alleviate democratic challenge as well as the crises of legitimacy and confidence.*

**Keywords:** political culture; alienation; incongruence; democratic challenge; legitimacy and confidence crises

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## Background

This paper aims at tracing and analyzing the continuities and discontinuities of Hong Kong voters' political culture during the transition from a British colony to a Special Administrative Region (SAR) under Chinese sovereignty in 1997. Identification of the characteristics and the trends of the voters' changing political culture will help in shedding light on the direction toward which the SAR political system

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should move. Through the study of Hong Kong's changing political culture, insights can be drawn to help understand the dynamic relationship between political culture and development in transitional Hong Kong.

A discussion of the political culture of the Chinese should begin with the Confucian cultural paradigm as a point of reference. Confucianism, as an ideology which has encompassed a broad spectrum of political and social values, has influenced the Chinese for centuries. Its effect on the political orientations of the people in Hong Kong should not be disregarded, as the greater portion of Hong Kong residents emigrated from mainland China and are heirs to the traditional Confucian culture. Confucianism promulgates a hierarchical order of status and role with a formalized code of behavior. Under the Confucian order, a government composed of the king and his officials is supreme and absolute, commanding obedience and respect from the citizenry. In the words of Andrew Nathan, "Confucians did not see the moral order as limiting the powers of the ruler. Instead, they saw it as calling for the fulfillment of the ruler's and the people's innate promptings as social beings. . . ."<sup>1</sup> This suggests that the ruler is the guardian of the common people, whose interests and welfare would depend on the wisdom and beneficence of the ruler. The people are supposed to be passive beneficiaries, being loyal to their paternalistic superiors. As noted by Lucian Pye, "paternalism is not something to be deplored, but a political ideal upheld by both officials and people."<sup>2</sup> Thus, because of the Confucian influence in the political realm, the behavioral tendencies of the Chinese citizenry tend to be politically passive, submissive, dependent, apathetic, and unaware of individual rights.

Studies showed that the political culture of the Hong Kong Chinese in the 1960s and 1970s was largely a continuation of the traditional Confucian culture. Using Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's framework of political culture, Ambrose King conducted a survey in 1971 on the political orientations of the citizens in Kwun Tong.<sup>3</sup> The study found that (1) the citizens' orientation tended

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<sup>1</sup>Andrew J. Nathan, *Chinese Democracy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 114.

<sup>2</sup>Lucian W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 27-28.

<sup>3</sup>Ambrose King, "The Political Culture of Kwun Tong: A Chinese Community in Hong Kong," *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* 5, no. 1-2 (1977): 26-54.

primarily toward traditional familistic organization, with a lack of knowledge of or concern about government and politics; (2) the sense of civic duty was very low, as the citizens were either ignorant of or had no orientation toward the functions of interest articulation and aggregation; and (3) the political efficacy of the citizens was extremely low, with a strong feeling of powerlessness and helplessness. King concluded that the Hong Kong Chinese held strong traditional and paternal orientations toward government and politics, exhibiting a predominant, parochial type of political culture. Sharing the claim that such an apathetic attitude toward politics was partly a result of traditional Confucian cultural values, Joseph Hoadley added that the phenomenon could also be discussed in the sociopolitical context in which the Hong Kong Chinese existed. It was suggested that the "anti-political" attitude was partly a reaction to the struggle for power between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Kuomintang (KMT, Nationalist Party of China) in the first half of the twentieth century as well as the political campaigns of the Communist regime in the mainland during the three decades after 1949.<sup>4</sup> The negative notions of the term "politics" such as violence, personal feuds, immorality, government harassment, and corruption became deep-rooted in people's minds. As the people of Hong Kong did not want to experience similar devastating political disturbances, they were reluctant to turn Hong Kong into a place of turbulent political struggle. Thus, the sayings that "Hong Kong is a life boat" and "nothing should be done to rock the boat" were common among the Hong Kong Chinese.

However, there were signs in the 1980s that Hong Kong's people had begun to accept and adopt various methods like demonstrations, strikes, and petitions as valid ways of articulating their demands to the government. A study conducted by Anthony Cheung and Kin-shuen Louie revealed that the number of social conflicts with territory-wide scope increased from twenty-seven cases in the period 1975-80 to ninety cases in the period 1981-86.<sup>5</sup> In the 1970s, the number of cases involving violent confrontation remained small, with an average of one case each year. Most of the participants in all different types

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<sup>4</sup>Joseph Hoadley, "Hong Kong is the Life Boat: Notes on Political Culture and Socialization," *Journal of Oriental Studies* 8 (1970): 206-18.

<sup>5</sup>Anthony Cheung and Kin-shuen Louie, "Social Conflicts in Hong Kong: Trends and Implications," *Occasional Paper*, no. 3 (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, April 1991).

of conflicts were loose groups of individuals, implying that they had a minimal effect on the population. In contrast, the period 1981-86 observed a notable increase in the use of organized petitions, rallies, and violent confrontations by the public as modes of action to pressure the government.

Academics also became aware of some changes in Hong Kong's political culture. A study of residents of Kwun Tong, Tuen Mun, Tai Hang Tung, and Sai Ying Pun (four densely populated districts in Hong Kong) by Siu-kai Lau and Hsin-chi Kuan in 1985 revealed that the respondents remained basically politically inactive but were increasingly aware of the relevance of the government to their livelihood.<sup>6</sup> The study concluded that an early modern and immature form of participatory political culture was developing, and there were clear indications of the "institutionalization of a set of participatory norms" among the residents. A further study by the same researchers in 1988 confirmed that "the Hong Kong Chinese are somehow able, in their values, to lessen subscription to the ideas of political omnipotence, political omniscience, and political omnipresence."<sup>7</sup> It was further observed that "the Hong Kong Chinese have become more aware of the multitude of means available to get access to the government, particularly those influence tactics that contain some amount of unconventionality and confrontation."<sup>8</sup>

Parallel to the transformation of the political culture of the Hong Kong Chinese is the development of representative government in Hong Kong. The development could be divided into three progressive phases. The first phase was the introduction of indirect elections to the Hong Kong Legislative Council (Legco) in 1985. The colonial legislature was initially opened with some degree of representation, allowing a small number of seats to be indirectly elected from among the business and professional sectors in various functional constituencies. The second phase was the introduction of direct elections to the Legco based on universal suffrage in 1991. About one-third of the seats were opened to direct election in nine geographical con-

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<sup>6</sup>Siu-kai Lau and Hsin-chi Kuan, "The Changing Political Culture of the Hong Kong Chinese," in *Hong Kong in Transition*, ed. Joseph Cheng (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1986), 50.

<sup>7</sup>Siu-kai Lau and Hsin-chi Kuan, *The Ethos of Hong Kong Chinese* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1988), 115-16.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 116.

stituencies. The third phase was the total abolition of appointed seats in the Legco and the expansion of the bases of the functional constituencies to enable the whole working population to vote. However, the establishment of a fully elected and representative Legco in 1995 has been strongly rejected by China, which has decided that the pre-1997 legislature will be dismantled and a provisional SAR legislature will be established by closed rather than open election after 1997. The setback to democracy will certainly affect the political orientations of the citizens, as studies show that Hong Kong's people have felt uncertain about the future and were found to have an increased sense of political powerlessness because of the 1997 issue.<sup>9</sup>

However, earlier studies did not discuss the fundamental issue of the impact of Hong Kong's changing political culture on the operations of the evolving political system in the run-up to 1997. Some questions remain to be answered: Is Hong Kong's emerging participatory political culture congruent with its changing political system during the transition to 1997? Is the political culture changing too quickly or too slowly in relation to the development of the political system? These questions raise the important issue of whether or not the political attitudes of the population are compatible with the existing and future political institutions.

If both the political culture and institutions start off as congruent, and then change in the same direction and at the same pace, they are likely to remain congruent with each other and the population is likely to accept and support the political system. If the political culture is becoming more participatory but the political system remains bureaucratic and centralized, the population is more likely to reject the political institutions. Should the political institutions become more open and participatory, yet the people remain unwilling to participate or perhaps even remain indifferent to the changes, then political development will stagnate. In the latter two cases, incongruence between the political culture and institutions leads the citizens to reject the political institutions or the development processes. If society and the system successfully adjust to each other, citizens are likely to remain supportive of the political system. If there is no such adjustment, citizens are likely to become apathetic about or alienated from the political processes.

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<sup>9</sup>Siu-kai Lau et al., *Indicators of Social Development* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1991).

This paper will attempt to analyze the implications of Hong Kong's changing political culture for the development of its political system during the transition to Chinese rule in 1997. Particular emphasis will be placed on evaluating the degree of allegiance, alienation, or apathy of the voters. While previous studies on the political culture of the Hong Kong Chinese were focused on citizens in various local districts, the target of this study is the voters in Legco elections, who directly shape the Legco's composition and the distribution of political power. This in turn affects the executive-legislative relationship, the political strength of political parties, and Chinese policies toward Hong Kong's democratization process. Thus a study of voters' political culture will be a significant attempt to explore the dynamic relationship between political culture and development in Hong Kong during the transition. The study is based on the following conceptual framework of political culture.

### A Conceptual Framework of Political Culture

The origin of the concept of political culture can perhaps be traced back to Aristotle's "state of mind" which encouraged political stability or revolution and Edmund Burke's "cake of custom" which affected the workings of political institutions. Dennis Kavanagh notes that definitions of political culture can be classified into three categories: (1) psychological (in which culture is seen as a set of orientations to political objects), (2) comprehensive (in which the culture includes both attitudes and behavior), and (3) objective (where the culture connotes the authoritative standards that define the range of acceptable behavior for actors).<sup>10</sup> Almond and Verba's classic discussion of political culture perhaps embraces these three aspects. According to Almond and Verba, the study of a society's political culture involves the analysis of the pattern of "political orientations" of individual citizens toward various "political objects."<sup>11</sup> Political orientations include the dimensions of cognition, affection, and evaluation. Political objects include (1) objects in the general system (like

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<sup>10</sup>Dennis Kavanagh, *Political Science and Political Behavior* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1983), 50.

<sup>11</sup>Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963).

**Figure 1**  
**A Summary of the Concept of Political Culture**

Political Orientations	Political Objects and Their Components
Cognitive	System as a General Object (framework and principles of government) Input Objects (legislature, political parties, pressure groups, etc.)
Affective	Output Objects (government policies and executive agencies)
Evaluative	Self Object (sense of political obligation and competence)

**Source:** Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), 14-16.

the framework of the government and the principles of political operations), (2) input objects (such as legislatures, pressure groups, and political parties), (3) output objects (like government policies and executive agencies), and (4) the political self as an object (which is reflected in the citizens' sense of political obligation and competence). The relationship between the dimensions of political orientations and the political objects is summarized in figure 1.

According to Almond and Verba, there are generally three main types of political culture: parochial, subject, and participant. In a parochial culture, citizens lack a general knowledge, feeling, or sense of judgment about the political system. Thus they do not expect anything from the political system and do not demand any changes in the existing arrangements. In a subject culture, citizens are aware of and have strong feelings and evaluations, either negative or positive, concerning the general political system, but they remain indifferent to the input processes. Consequently, they do not perceive the self as an active participant. In a participant culture, citizens have competent knowledge of their political system and are oriented toward an active role for the self in the political process, though their feelings and judgments about the political system may vary from acceptance to rejection.

The type of political culture may or may not be congruent with the political institutions, as the citizens may be oriented toward either accepting, rejecting, or being indifferent to the political system. When the affective and evaluative orientations tend to be favorable and positive, the political culture is said to be congruent with the political system. In other words, the citizens generally support existing

**Figure 2**  
**Relationship Between Political Culture and System**

	Allegiance	Apathy	Alienation
Cognitive Orientation	+	+	+
Affective Orientation	+	0	-
Evaluative Orientation	+	0	-

**Notes:** (+) means high degree of awareness, or positive feeling or evaluation toward political objects; (-) means high degree of negative feelings or evaluation; and (0) means indifference.

**Source:** Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture*, 22.

political institutions. When a significant group in a society exhibits negative affective and evaluative orientations toward the political system, they may reject or become alienated from government and politics. In this situation, the political culture is said to be incongruent with the political system. Congruence between the type of political culture and the political structure may also be weak when the population appears to be indifferent to the political institutions. In this case, the population neither accepts nor rejects the political system because it does not have strong feelings and assessments regarding government and politics. The relationship between political culture and systems is summarized in figure 2.

Almond and Verba's framework and its practical application to the study of five countries' political culture lends a reference to examine Hong Kong voters' political culture. Questions were adapted and modified to suit Hong Kong's particular context and political circumstances with the use of the following research design.

### Research Design

Two mailed questionnaire surveys were conducted in 1991 and 1995 respectively on Hong Kong voters' political culture based on random sampling. Access to information on registered voters was given by the Registration and Electoral Office of the Hong Kong government. The first survey was conducted in July 1991, two months prior to the maiden direct election of the Legco based on universal suffrage. It was the first time the general public was given the chance to have a say in the lawmaking body. The respondents were selected from 1,863,794 registered voters in the 9 geographical constituencies.



Within that survey pool, 1,096 completed questionnaires were collected. The second survey was conducted in July 1995, which was the year the Legco became a fully elected legislature and a genuine representative body sharing the power of governing with the appointed executive. The respondents were randomly chosen from 2,565,121 registered voters in 20 geographical constituencies. From that, 1,102 completed questionnaires were received. The data obtained from the two surveys was also compared to see the changing trends in the voters' political culture.

Apart from the information obtained from the mailed questionnaires, thirty in-depth personal interviews were arranged prior to each of the 1991 and 1995 quantitative surveys. The interviewees were also voters randomly selected in different geographical constituencies. These interviews provided supplementary and qualitative information as well as generated useful questions later included in the questionnaire survey. In designing the questionnaire, questions were developed mainly in accordance with Almond and Verba's conceptual framework of political culture. Nevertheless, questions were modified in order to fit Hong Kong's particular context, and new questions were inserted to measure the effect of the "China factor" on shaping voters' political orientations. The questionnaire, composed of sixty-six questions, was validated through pilot tests in order to ensure that the questions were comprehensible and clear.

In both surveys, the respondents came from a wide spectrum of socioeconomic strata, with the majority (58.6 percent) of the respondents ranging between 18-40 years of age, and more than 70 percent of the respondents having received a secondary level of education or above. Some 40 percent of the respondents belonged to low-income families (monthly household income less than HK\$10,000) and about 30 percent of the respondents belonged to the lower-middle income families (monthly household income between HK\$10,000 and 19,999). About two-thirds (61.7 percent) of the respondents were married, and 58.8 percent of the respondents were male. The characteristics of the respondents were generally similar to the characteristics of the whole population described in the *Hong Kong 1991 Population Census Summary Results*.

## **The Political Culture of the Voters: The Findings**

### *General Observations*

The findings of the two surveys indicate that the political culture

of the voters was moving consistently toward a participatory culture during the period 1991-95. The voters still exhibited certain subject patterns in their political orientations, as reflected in their continued sense that they lacked political efficacy, initiative, and participation. Nevertheless, the studies observed that significant participatory features were being strengthened and maturing. These are illustrated by the increasing voter consciousness and recognition of the importance and functions of input channels. For instance, voters in 1995 exhibited a greater level of cognition toward activities of political parties and the Legco than those in 1991. The 1995 voters also showed a higher sense of political obligation with an increased level of demand for individual political rights. Moreover, the level of political orientation toward the general system and output objects remained consistently high among voters in both 1991 and 1995.

### *Cognitive Orientation*

The voters demonstrated a fairly high level of consciousness regarding the overall structures and operations of the government. For instance, 57.1 percent and 23.3 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey respectively replied that they had "some knowledge" or "knew about" the structure of the government. Respondents in the latter category were also higher compared to 17.8 percent in the 1991 survey. The voters also exhibited a fairly high level of concern for public affairs and government policies: 56.1 percent and 33.9 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey respectively paid "some attention" and "much attention" to public affairs. Similarly, 52.8 percent and 37.1 percent of the respondents in the 1991 survey respectively paid "some attention" and "much attention" to public affairs. More than 80 percent of the respondents in both surveys could cite controversial issues of the day, such as the compulsory pension scheme and Vietnamese refugees. The voters were also aware of the major laws passed in the legislature: for example, 54.5 percent and 28.9 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey respectively paid "some attention" and "much attention." Similarly, 50.1 percent and 35.4 percent of the respondents in the 1991 survey respectively paid "some attention" and "much attention" to major laws passed in the legislature. More respondents (60.8 percent) in the 1995 survey could match three or more correct pairs of government official names and their respective positions, compared to 49.8 percent in the 1991 survey. The respondents in both surveys exhibited a high degree of awareness of their political rights, such as the right to demonstrate (94 percent

and 92 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys replied that they “knew” the right), the right to criticize the government (82.5 percent and 84.8 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys), the right to suggest policy change (77.7 percent and 60.7 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys), and the right to censure government officials for maladministration (83.4 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey replied that they “knew” the right).

In contrast, voters paid relatively less attention to input institutions and processes. Nevertheless, a trend of increasing awareness was observed from 1991 to 1995: 20.6 percent and 13.6 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys said they “knew” the structures of the Legco, and 19.8 percent and 17.6 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys “understood” the operations of the legislature. Only 13.8 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey paid “much attention” to the activities of the Legco. One-third (33.2 percent in the 1995 survey; 29.7 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents recognized that the activities of the Legco had a “great effect” on their daily lives. A minority (22.1 percent in the 1995 survey; 17.8 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents paid “much attention” to election campaigns. Similarly, only 10.2 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey paid “much attention” to political parties in Hong Kong; the figure was even lower in the 1991 survey, with just 5.0 percent. The lack of attention to input channels can be explained by the slow and gradual process of developing a representative government in the post-1985 period. Direct elections to the Legco were only introduced in 1991 and political parties such as the Democratic Party (DP), the Liberal Party, and Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong (DAB) were just emerging. Therefore, the voters were undergoing the early stages of getting themselves familiarized with the new input system in Hong Kong.

In the in-depth interviews, the interviewees acknowledged that they lacked general knowledge about the nature and functions of the Legco and various political parties in Hong Kong. The interviewees were not fully aware of what the legislature and political parties were doing, let alone how these input channels could help articulate and aggregate the public's interests. They also expressed that the legislature and political parties were not a major concern in their daily lives. However, all the interviewees in the 1995 study said that they knew more about the Legco and political parties compared to four years ago.

In conclusion, the voters' pattern of cognitive orientation is a mixture of the subject and participant characteristics. The voters have acquired general knowledge about the government, major policy issues, and their political rights, but are relatively less concerned with input channels in the political system. Nevertheless, the two surveys indicate that the voters are increasingly aware of the input process and objects.

### *Affective Orientation*

The voters generally displayed positive feelings toward Hong Kong society as a whole, and especially with its economic performance throughout the period 1991-95. In the 1995 survey, 37.3 percent and 14.8 percent of the respondents respectively felt "quite proud" and "very proud" of being a Hong Kong citizen; in the 1991 survey, 36.0 percent and 19.7 percent of the respondents respectively felt "quite proud" and "very proud." The voters were particularly proud of the economic system, with 48.0 percent and 16.8 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey respectively feeling "quite proud" and "very proud" about Hong Kong's capitalist system. The 1991 study recorded similar results: 51.7 percent and 19.4 percent of the respondents respectively felt "quite proud" and "very proud."

However, some negative feelings toward the social welfare system and the government's input system were observed, indicating signs of alienation. For instance, almost half (44.5 percent in the 1995 survey; 49.5 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents in the two surveys replied that they were "not proud" of Hong Kong's social policy. A significant proportion of respondents in both surveys (77.4 percent in the 1995 survey; 77.9 percent in the 1991 survey) "agreed" that a small number of people or groups had too much influence over the way the Hong Kong government was run and that the interests of the public were ignored. In addition, 33.1 percent and 32.1 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey respectively felt that government officials paid "little attention to" and "simply ignored" citizens' concerns about government policies, while in the 1991 survey 21.8 percent and 31.7 percent of the respondents respectively felt "little attention" and "simply ignored." This indicates that the voters' negative feelings toward the input process increased during the period 1991-95.

The growing consciousness among respondents regarding the Hong Kong government's weaknesses has been paralleled by a growing sense of political obligation, showing that voters have leaned toward that which is characteristic of a participant citizen. For instance, 30.0 percent and 29.3 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey

respectively thought that citizens ought to be “actively involved in public affairs at all times” and “involved when one’s immediate benefits are concerned.” More respondents (29.3 percent) in the 1995 study accepted that they ought to be involved in public affairs when their immediate benefits are concerned, compared to the number (23.4 percent) of respondents in the 1991 survey. An absolute majority (74.4 percent) of respondents in the 1995 survey thought that “every working citizen of Hong Kong over 18 years of age should have the right to vote in the functional constituency election of the Legco.” Almost all (90.6 percent) of the respondents in the 1991 survey thought that “every citizen of Hong Kong over 18 should have the right to vote in the Legco direct elections.” Two-thirds of the respondents (64.9 percent) in the 1995 survey and above half (54.4 percent) of the respondents in the 1991 survey said they would exercise their voting rights in the Legco election. The remaining respondents in both surveys thought that whether or not they went to vote would depend on who the candidates were. More than 71 percent and 80 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys thought that “Hong Kong citizens over 18 should have the right to elect the SAR Chief Executive on a one-man, one-vote basis.” In both surveys, an absolute majority (91.9 percent in the 1995 study; 89.1 percent in the 1991 study) of the respondents thought that “citizens should have the right to criticize the Hong Kong government.” A large proportion of the respondents (69.1 percent in the 1995 survey; 67.6 percent in the 1991 survey) also felt “free” to criticize the policies of the Hong Kong government. In addition, a large majority (72.2 percent in the 1995 survey; 74.3 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents felt “free” to discuss government policies with anyone.

Paradoxically, such a sense of political obligation has not been translated into concrete political activities. Only 4.9 percent and 5.5 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 studies “regularly” talked about government policies with anyone in Hong Kong. A small minority of 10.7 percent and 13.2 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 studies were “actively involved” in Hong Kong’s public affairs. Similarly, only 2.2 percent and 2.8 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 studies had “regularly” taken part in the activities organized by political organizations. Two-thirds of the respondents (61.1 percent in the 1995 study; 61.7 percent in the 1991 study) had “never” participated in any activities organized by political groups. Only 11.4 percent and 17.7 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991

surveys thought that they would “actively” involve themselves in political party activities. About 17 percent and 16 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys thought that they would be involved in party activities only when his/her immediate benefits were concerned. The election turnout rates in the Legco direct elections perhaps best illustrate the conservative nature of voters’ political participation. The turnout rates in the 1995 and 1991 elections were just respectively 35 percent and 39 percent.

In-depth interviews conducted in 1991 and 1995 elaborated that although interviewees held a strong sense of political obligation and a strong image of the participant citizen, they did not feel confident in exercising their political rights and obligations, feeling that the government was not wholeheartedly encouraging public participation and that political participation would require more time. Most of the interviewees were of the opinion that the influence that they could exercise on government leaders was limited, hence rendering political participation not worthwhile. Consequently, the voters were experiencing a psychological struggle between actualizing this image of the participant citizen and remaining passive in political affairs.

In summary, the affective orientation of the voters demonstrated a mixture of both subject and participant elements. An image of the participant citizen has been developing among the voters, as reflected by the presence of a strong sense of political obligation. However, this image has not been fully translated into actual political behavior. The voters have remained relatively inactive in political participation. Signs of alienation expressed in negative feelings toward the governmental system and social policies were also found, despite the voters’ favorable feelings toward the performance of the economic system.

### *Evaluative Orientation*

The voters tended to be fairly positive about overall government performance: 85.9 percent and 81.6 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys commented on the government’s performance as being either “good” or “fair.” However, this general statement should not overshadow the dissatisfaction of the voters toward other specific aspects of the government. Only one-third (37.7 percent in the 1995 survey; 29.8 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents commented that the performance of the government after the 1984 Joint Declaration was “the same or better than before.” Less than half (45.9 percent in the 1995 survey; 46.9 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents were “satisfied” with the existing

economic policies of the government. The proportion of respondents (38.5 percent in the 1995 survey; 45.3 percent in the 1991 survey) satisfied with existing social policies was even less. An absolute majority (73.7 percent in the 1995 survey; 74.6 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents thought some changes to the existing governmental system were needed.

Only a minority of the respondents (31.7 percent in the 1995 survey; 26.1 percent in the 1991 survey) found the government responsive to the wishes of ordinary citizens. Two-thirds (65.5 percent in the 1995 survey; 60.9 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents described the existing governmental system as "liberal in the social and economic senses but not democratic in the political sense." In particular, a majority of the respondents (87.8 percent in the 1995 survey; 89.5 percent in the 1991 survey) commented that "the Legco was not a powerful lawmaking body." Only one-third (35.1 percent in the 1995 survey; 27.8 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents were "satisfied" with the lawmaking functions of the legislature. A majority (63.9 percent in the 1995 survey; 73.2 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents thought the Legco could not "effectively supervise" the executive. More than two-thirds (65.5 percent in the 1995 survey; 77.1 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents were dissatisfied with the Legco's supervisory power.

When the data from the 1995 and 1991 surveys is compared, it is interesting to note that respondents in the 1995 survey were more satisfied with the performance of the Legco than the respondents in the 1991 survey. For instance, a cross-sectional comparison shows that 70.4 percent of those respondents in the 1991 survey who thought that every citizen of Hong Kong over 18 should have the right to vote in the Legco elections were not satisfied with the legislature's lawmaking functions. The percentage dropped to 60.2 in the 1995 survey. This phenomenon must be understood in the context of political reforms undertaken after 1991. The introduction of directly elected members to the Legco since 1991 has increased the degree of representation of the legislature. The domination of the Legco by political parties has also strengthened the independence of the legislature. Consequently, the Legco has changed from a submissive to a more critical and sometimes adversarial lawmaking body.<sup>12</sup> The data indicates that voters

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<sup>12</sup>Jermain Lam, "From a Submissive to an Adversarial Legislature: The Changing Role

in 1995 supported such changes and the emergence of a stronger legislature. However, the data also shows that voters are still dissatisfied with the Legco's ineffective legislative and supervisory powers.

The dissatisfaction of the voters toward input channels has coexisted with a sense of political impotence and powerlessness. For instance, two-thirds (66 percent in the 1995 survey; 60.0 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents were of the opinion that it would be "unlikely" to change an unjust policy even if the citizens made an effort to change it. Thus it was not surprising to note that only one-third (35.3 percent in the 1995 survey; 31.5 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents said they would do something to change an unjust policy. More than two-thirds (66.9 percent in the 1995 survey; 71.8 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents admitted that they had taken "no action although they had been dissatisfied with some government policies." A majority of the voters had reservations about their influence on the government, as only one-fifth (20.6 percent in the 1995 survey; 20.9 percent in the 1991 survey) of the respondents thought average citizens could more effectively influence the government's decisionmaking process even after the introduction of direct elections to the Legco.

In the in-depth interviews conducted in 1991 and 1995, interviewees strongly expressed that citizens had a limited role to play in the decisionmaking process. Both individual citizens and even their elected representatives in the Legco, the interviewees thought, could do nothing effective to ask the government to follow their opinion. The Legco was perceived as just a forum of debates rather than as a genuine power center. Thus the input organs (including the Legco and political parties) and the political self were negatively evaluated by the interviewees.

In summary, the voters have positive evaluations of the government's general performance. However, the voters' negative evaluations of particular economic and social policies, the powers of the Legco, and the political roles of general citizens are significant in that they are signs of alienation among voters who have aspirations for democratic change toward a more responsive and responsible government.

Based on the data of the 1991 and 1995 surveys, the political

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of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong," *Asian Profile* 22, no. 1 (February 1994): 21-32.



culture of the voters can be summarized as subject-participant with some signs of alienation. Far from being politically ignorant, the voters have been increasingly conscious and aware of the role of government, public policies, and their own political role in the system. Evidence also shows that they have not been politically indifferent as they have expressed diverse but clear views toward the political system. The two surveys show that the voters consistently expressed dissatisfaction with the limited role played by the Legco and the limited influence exercised by the public on the government. The citizens' sense of political obligation and their recognition of political rights is growing, yet these expectations are not fully congruent with the existing political arrangement. Ultimately, the political culture of the voters is moving toward a more participatory but alienated culture.

### **Implications for the Politics of Transition**

As the voters shape the composition of the Legco and the distribution of political power in the government, their political orientations will have significant implications for Hong Kong politics and government. The emergence of a subject-participant culture and the existence of some alienated feelings among the voters pose certain challenges and crises for the administration to deal with during the political transition. These include the democratic challenge, a confidence crisis, and a legitimacy crisis.

#### *The Democratic Challenge*

The findings of the study suggest that the aspiration for a more democratic government in Hong Kong is shared by the voters who expect to see some changes in the political system. The data also suggests that the voters are more satisfied with the post-1991 than the pre-1991 governmental system. For instance, 53.1 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey thought that the 1995 Legco could represent the interests of the Hong Kong people. In contrast, less respondents in the 1991 survey (46.0 percent) thought so. Also, more respondents in the 1995 survey (42.7 percent) than those in the 1991 survey (32.4 percent) were satisfied with the representative functions of the Legco. After the introduction of direct elections to the Legco in 1991 and the subsequent expansion of the electoral base of functional constituencies, with the total abolition of appointed membership in the legislature in 1995, the voters have become satisfied with the

performance of the Legco. For instance, nearly half (49.6 percent) of the respondents in the 1995 survey thought that "all members of the Legco should be directly elected from geographical constituencies"; 18.5 percent of the respondents thought that the Legco should be a mixture of members returned from geographical and functional constituencies. Only a minority (16.6 percent) of the respondents supported the retention of appointed members in the legislature. This indicates that the voters support the development and establishment of a more representative government.

The results of the 1991 and 1995 elections prove that the voters have aspired for democracy. The candidates who strongly supported democracy won landslide victories in the geographical constituencies of the Legco elections. In the 1991 maiden direct election, seventeen out of eighteen seats were occupied by the democrats, mostly from political parties in the democratic faction like the United Democrats of Hong Kong (UDHK), the Meeting Point (MP), and the Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood (ADPL). Similarly, in the 1995 geographical constituency elections for the Legco, the democrats seized another landslide victory by taking seventeen directly elected seats out of twenty, while the remaining three were captured by pro-China and conservative candidates. In terms of the number of votes, the democratic faction led by the DP (amalgamation of the UDHK and MP in 1994) attracted 739,412 votes, or two-thirds (63.7 percent) of the total number of votes in the geographical constituencies. The pro-China faction, led by the DAB, could only attract 299,996 votes, or one-third (32.9 percent) of the total. The conservative business faction led by the Liberal Party received 15,216 votes, representing 1.7 percent of the total. These figures show that an absolute majority (two-thirds) of general voters supported the democrats, who advocated a faster pace of democratization. Veteran democrats like Martin Lee, Szeto Wah, and Emily Lau were continuously elected as the most popular legislators in public opinion surveys.<sup>13</sup> The balance of power in the Legco has thus been tipping toward the democratic faction.

This phenomenon has created a formidable democratic challenge to the administration and the future sovereign master of China. The

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<sup>13</sup>Robert Chung, "Public Opinion," in *The Other Hong Kong Report*, ed. Donald McMillen and Si-wai Man (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1994), 103-24. See also *Kuai Bao* (Express News) (Hong Kong), August 15, 1995, 6; and *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), January 24, 1996, 4.

administration is now under severe pressure from elected politicians in the Legco. Government officials are expected to provide detailed answers and satisfactory responses not only in the legislature but also to the public. The growing public quest for accountability, responsibility, and responsiveness has started to transform the governing position of the administration and the power relationship among the administration, the legislature, and the general public. The colonial bureaucracy is now no longer the only power holder in the political system. As the administration does not have any seats in the Legco, the passage of government bills depends entirely on the will and cooperation of the elected legislators. Although the Legco still suffers from some constitutional constraints, it has forced the administration to seriously consider the views of the legislators. The outspoken legislators can thus place the administration in a defensive and embarrassing position by exposing the weaknesses and maladministrative practices of the government. Through the shaping of the composition of the Legco and the influence of individual legislators, the general public has begun to challenge the supremacy of the administration in the political system.

The democratic challenge will also be applied to China after it resumes sovereignty over Hong Kong. The voters' support of the democrats and their support of democratic reforms initiated by Governor Chris Patten has concerned the Chinese government. Chinese officials have strongly objected to democratic reforms that have broadened the electoral base of the functional constituencies as well as direct elections according to the single-seat, single-vote majority system. Beijing has been determined to scrap the pre-1997 three-tier representative bodies (Legco, Municipal Councils, and District Boards) currently dominated by the democrats. A conservative provisional SAR legislature fully composed of pro-China members will be established in 1997, with its members selected by a Chinese-appointed Election Committee rather than Hong Kong voters. The first SAR Legco will also most probably be based on a conservative model. Officials in Beijing have clearly reiterated that Hong Kong's democracy is "one that advances step by step in an orderly way, proceeds from reality, and is conducive to maintaining the long-term stability, peace, and prosperity."<sup>14</sup> According to Beijing, democratization in Hong

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<sup>14</sup>*South China Morning Post*, November 9, 1992, 1.

Kong has to be tightly controlled to maintain an executive-led system. The democratic reforms after 1991 have thus been condemned by Beijing as damaging stability and prosperity. Beijing officials have also refused to acknowledge the 1995 Legco election results, commenting that "the election was dominated by chaos and unfair arrangements."<sup>15</sup> The Chinese government's stance is completely opposite to the wishes of the voters who voted for the hard-line democrats consistently in the 1991 and 1995 Legco elections, the 1994 District Board elections, and the 1995 Municipal Council elections. Thus the voters' aspirations for democracy in the political transition pose a direct challenge to Beijing's political will.

### *Confidence Crisis*

The contradictory interests among the British government, the Chinese leaders, and the voters have created a confidence crisis in Hong Kong. Although the three actors concerned share the same salient goals of maintaining stability and prosperity for Hong Kong before and after 1997, they do not have equatable solutions to the various problems and issues. For instance, the British and Chinese governments have incongruent opinions on matters related to the transfer of Hong Kong's sovereignty: democratic reforms, the bill of rights, establishment of the provisional SAR Legco, the operation of the SAR Legco before 1997, the editorial autonomy of the Radio and Television of Hong Kong (RTHK), and the handover ceremony. The tense relationship between the British-Hong Kong government and the Chinese government has also been reflected by the continuous refusal of Lu Ping (head of Beijing's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office) to meet Governor Patten on various occasions in both Hong Kong and Beijing. Governor Patten has been censured by Chinese leaders, and is seen by Beijing as "confrontational," "uncooperative," and "authoritarian."<sup>16</sup> In return, Governor Patten has described the Chinese warnings as "empty threats" and "destructive to the confidence of the people of Hong Kong."<sup>17</sup> The volley of accusations between the present and the future sovereign masters has discomfited voters as to whether either government will care for the interests of Hong Kong's people during the political transition.

<sup>15</sup>*Wen Wei Po* (Hong Kong), September 19, 1995, 3.

<sup>16</sup>*South China Morning Post*, April 19, 1995, 1; *Kuai Bao*, November 30, 1995, 1.

<sup>17</sup>*Kuai Bao*, November 23, 1995, 5; *South China Morning Post*, April 20, 1996, 1.

According to the 1991 and 1995 surveys, the voters' distrust of the British and Chinese governments has been significant. In regard to the question "Do you think the British policies would ever seriously endanger the interests of the Hong Kong people from 1991 to 1997?" 39.1 percent and 36.5 percent of the respondents in the 1991 survey respectively responded that "this has happened" and "this probably would happen." More respondents (44.2 percent) in the 1995 survey thought that "this has happened," while 32.6 percent of the respondents thought "this would happen." In regard to the question "whether Chinese policies would ever seriously endanger the interests of the Hong Kong people," 22.8 percent and 38.7 percent of the respondents in the 1991 survey respectively replied that "this has happened" and "this probably would happen." Similar proportions were recorded in the 1995 survey: 23.4 percent and 34.1 percent of the respondents respectively said "this has happened" and "this probably would happen." Thus there is a preponderance of anti-British and anti-Chinese sentiment among the voters.

The voters have been concerned over whether the two sovereign masters will sell out the interests of Hong Kong's people. For instance, the British policy of granting the right of abode in Britain to just 50,000 Hong Kong families has alienated the Hong Kong people. Protests were mounted by the general public against this so-called "discriminatory policy" of giving British passports to the elite while ignoring the rest of the general public, and the move was interpreted as the total sacrifice of the British moral commitment to Hong Kong's people. The 1995 Sino-British agreement on the establishment of the SAR Court of Final Appeal (CFA) with a ratio of local and foreign judges at 4 to 1 has also aroused controversy over whether the SAR government's autonomy will be preempted and undermined as a result of this agreement. The 1984 Joint Declaration stipulated that "foreign judges can be invited to serve in the SAR Final Court of Appeal according to needs and circumstances."<sup>18</sup> Thus it was argued that the 1995 CFA agreement violated the 1984 Joint Declaration and limited the CFA's autonomy. This was again regarded as a compromise, if not a sacrifice, of the interests of Hong Kong's people by the British. The government's agreement to hold monthly meetings with Chinese officials over major policies relating to the 1997-98 budget to reach

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<sup>18</sup>"Sino-British Joint Declaration" (1984), 13.

consensus before the drafting work proceeds has been seen as another British concession, and added to the confidence crisis.

The Chinese government is equally distrusted by the people of Hong Kong, and various incidents have shaken the people's confidence in China. For instance, the Chinese government's decision to abolish the Bill of Rights in Hong Kong after 1997 and the imprisonment of the famous Chinese dissident Ngai Jing-seng has had a negative impact on the Hong Kong people's trust in the legal system and the provision of liberty and freedom after 1997. An opinion poll conducted by the University of Hong Kong in January 1996 found that 47.8 percent of the respondents had lost confidence in the Chinese government as a result of the above incidents.<sup>19</sup> Another opinion poll found that 50.6 percent of the respondents had lost confidence in the realization of "one country, two systems" in Hong Kong, as a result of the People's Liberation Army's military exercises near Taiwan in March 1996.<sup>20</sup> These incidents have consequently aroused worries that the Chinese government will suppress rather than respect the wishes and interests of Hong Kong's citizens.

The 1991 and 1995 surveys confirm that the voters have lacked confidence in the future after the sovereignty transfer, particularly on the maintenance of political rights and liberty. Only 16.4 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey felt that they would be "free" to discuss government policies with anyone after 1997 if they stayed in Hong Kong. This is a sharp contrast to the proportion (72.2 percent) who felt "free" to discuss government policies in Hong Kong before 1997. Similarly, only 12.4 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey felt that they would be "free" to criticize the SAR government after 1997 if they stayed in Hong Kong. This is again a sharp contrast to the proportion (69.1 percent) who currently felt "free" to criticize the Hong Kong government. Similar results were recorded in the 1991 survey; a cross-sectional comparison further revealed that 72.6 percent of those respondents who thought that Chinese policies would seriously endanger the interests of Hong Kong's people did not feel that they would be free to criticize the SAR government after 1997. The percentage increased to 83.8 in the 1995 survey. This data shows that the sense of impending political impotence regarding the

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<sup>19</sup>*South China Morning Post*, January 13, 1996, 4.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

future has been consistently strong among voters. A prolonged lack of confidence would certainly undermine trust and allegiance to the Chinese authorities, and this phenomenon has emerged in voters' perceptions of their future sovereign master. About 72 percent and 82 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys replied that they were "not proud" of China's governmental institutions. Only 7.9 percent and 3.9 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys were "proud" of China's political system. As for China's social policies, 79.9 percent and 80.7 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys responded that they were "not proud" of them, while only 4.6 percent and 4.1 percent were "proud" of them. In regard to China's economic policies, 74.1 percent and 85.0 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys were "not proud" of them, while only 7.1 percent and 4.5 percent were "proud" of them. This data implies that the voters have had negative perceptions of China, and hence lack confidence in China's ability to make rational policies on Hong Kong after 1997. There is also the worry that China will impose unfavorable and unpopular policies on Hong Kong, neglecting the people's interests.

### *Legitimacy Crisis*

The lack of confidence in the British and Chinese governments will certainly decrease the voters' support of the present and future governments of Hong Kong. In the past, the legitimacy of Hong Kong's government was based on several grounds: (1) a good record of performance and proven capacity in delivering public goods; (2) bureaucratic paternalism; (3) consultation and consensus; and (4) the political apathy of the general citizenry.<sup>21</sup> The 1991 and 1995 surveys of voters' political culture revealed that the legitimacy of the present Hong Kong government can no longer rest on the above base. First, the voters think that the performance of the government after the Sino-British Joint Declaration has not been as good as before. Second, bureaucratic paternalism is now being challenged by the democratic values of accountability and responsibility held by the voters. Third, the practice of consultation is now considered to be narrowly based, as the voters perceive that only a small number of people dominate

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<sup>21</sup>Ian Scott, *Political Change and the Crisis of Legitimacy in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1989), 328-30.

the decisionmaking process; genuine consensus between the government and the voters is difficult to reach as a result of diverse public interests. Fourth, the voters have developed a subject-participant culture and are no longer apathetic. Thus the base of legitimacy of the Hong Kong government has been seriously undermined.

The Chinese attempts to deliberately embarrass and openly oppose the Hong Kong government have further accentuated the erosion of the colonial government's legitimacy. For instance, the Chinese government has been determined to abolish the pre-1997 Legco designed by Governor Patten. Beijing officials have also declared that "contracts, leases, and agreements signed and ratified by the Hong Kong-British government which are not approved by the Chinese side will be invalid after 1997."<sup>22</sup> The message that Beijing wants to send is that the people of Hong Kong should follow China's decisions rather than those of Britain, and that China will be the ultimate sovereign master to which the people of Hong Kong should give loyalty. China has also been successful in gaining power in the decisionmaking process over a range of policies to be implemented in Hong Kong before 1997, such as the Port and Airport Development Strategy as well as the 1997 budget. The occasional negative comments from Beijing officials over Hong Kong's government policies and decisions, such as social welfare and editorial autonomy of the RTHK, have also seriously discredited the Hong Kong government. The saying that China has become the "shadow government" of Hong Kong, while the Hong Kong government has become a "lame duck government," is popular in the British colony.

However, the future Chinese-controlled SAR government is not expected to gain a high degree of legitimacy among Hong Kong's people. According to the findings of the 1991 and 1995 surveys, the voters have not had high expectations for the future SAR government. The voters feel that they will be less free to criticize the SAR government and discuss government policies after 1997. The thinking that "the general public will not be able to more effectively influence the SAR government's decisionmaking process after the establishment of the provisional Legco in 1997" is also extremely strong among voters. The voters are also skeptical of the commitment of the pro-China DAB and Liberal Party to protect Hong Kong people's interests. For

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<sup>22</sup>*China Daily* (Beijing), November 13, 1992, 4.



instance, when the respondents in the 1995 survey were asked "If one of the political parties takes control of the SAR government, which political party would most likely endanger the interests of the Hong Kong community?" most respondents chose the pro-China DAB and the conservative Liberal Party.

Opinion polls have revealed that the Chinese decisionmaking bodies and the pro-China activists responsible for the transitional matters of Hong Kong lack legitimacy and credibility. For example, about 80 percent of the respondents in an opinion poll conducted by Hong Kong Policy Observers (HKPO) in January 1995 indicated that they did not recognize the Chinese-appointed Preliminary Working Committee (PWC).<sup>23</sup> In another opinion poll conducted by HKPO in December 1995, 90 percent of the respondents opposed the PWC's proposal to abolish the Bill of Rights after 1997.<sup>24</sup> A significant proportion of respondents (40 percent) in an opinion poll conducted by the Chinese University of Hong Kong thought that the degree of representation in the Chinese-appointed Preparatory Committee was low.<sup>25</sup> Another opinion poll indicated that about 70 percent of the respondents thought the Preparatory Committee should include DP members.<sup>26</sup> A University of Hong Kong opinion poll conducted in February 1996 also showed that the DP was the most popular political party in Hong Kong.<sup>27</sup> As such, the exclusion of DP members from the Preparatory Committee is certainly undermining the credibility of the Committee's decisions. An opinion survey conducted by the Chinese University of Hong Kong in January 1996 revealed that only 15.4 percent of the respondents thought the SAR Chief Executive selected by the Preparatory Committee would be accepted by the people of Hong Kong.<sup>28</sup> Another opinion poll conducted in April 1996 indicated that over 60 percent of the respondents opposed the Preparatory Committee's establishment of the SAR provisional legislature.<sup>29</sup> In short, the 1991 and 1995 surveys together with these opinion polls illustrate one important point: the future SAR govern-

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<sup>23</sup>*Kuai Bao*, January 9, 1995, 3.

<sup>24</sup>*Kuai Bao*, December 4, 1995, 5.

<sup>25</sup>*Pingguo ribao* (Apple Daily News) (Hong Kong), January 1, 1996, 6.

<sup>26</sup>*Ming Pao* (Hong Kong), February 10, 1996, 4.

<sup>27</sup>*Pingguo ribao*, February 17, 1996, 5.

<sup>28</sup>*Pingguo ribao*, January 5, 1996, 5.

<sup>29</sup>*South China Morning Post*, April 23, 1996, 4.

ment, as planned by the Chinese government, will carry a low degree of legitimacy in the eyes of Hong Kong's people.

### **Alienation and Incongruence During the Political Transition**

The 1991 and 1995 surveys of voters' political culture illustrate that the attitudes of the voters have not closely matched the existing and future political institutions. Voters' political orientations are developing toward a participant political culture, with aspirations for a more democratic and accountable political system. However, Hong Kong's existing political system, although more open than the pre-1985 one, cannot fully satisfy voters' democratic aspirations. Voters are dissatisfied with the Legco's limited supervisory and legislative powers; the government's lack of responsiveness to the economic and social needs of the general public, as well as its refusal to seriously listen to its views; citizens' inability to effectively influence government decisions; and finally, the lack of democracy in the existing government.

The degree of incongruence between voters' political culture and the future political system after 1997 will likely be even higher. Voters have worried that they will enjoy less political freedom and liberty to discuss and criticize government policies after the sovereignty transfer, and that they will be less able to influence government policies after the establishment of the SAR provisional Legco. Voters also believe that the general public will have less influence in the decisionmaking processes of the SAR government after 1997. Consequently, voters will be more alienated by the future political system than the present one. Furthermore, the low degree of allegiance among the voters to the future sovereign master is cause for concern. Only 33.4 percent and 30.4 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys were "proud" of being Chinese nationals. In contrast, 52.1 percent and 55.7 percent of the respondents in the respective 1995 and 1991 surveys were "proud" of being Hong Kong citizens.

Alienation and incongruence between political culture and institutions certainly are not good signs for a stable and effective government. Indeed, alienation and incongruence are associated with internal instability and ineffective governance, and have often been the cause of civil disorder in transitional societies. It is in these transitional societies undergoing upheaval through modernization that

these problems are likely to foment civil insurrection.<sup>30</sup> As traditionally stable needs (social needs, economic expectations, political aspirations) change, it is natural that people will be worried, confused, and alienated. Adaptation to a new environment and government adjustment of its policies to meet new demands are essential in arriving at a new world of modern stability. If the people and the government fail to adapt to each other during this delicate time, alienation will grow and finally burst into violence. The 1979 Iranian revolution, the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, the fall of Marcos in the Philippines, the frequent unrest in Mexico, and the violent student movements in South Korea are all related to the incongruence between political orientations and institutions.

As Hong Kong is undergoing both economic and political transitions, the establishment of an appropriate political system matching the people's changing orientations will be vital to the realization of the salient goals of prosperity and stability as specified in the Sino-British Joint Declaration. The results and the analysis of the 1991 and 1995 surveys suggest that Hong Kong's political system should gradually develop toward a more open and democratic government. Once democratic aspirations have surfaced within the people's consciousness and begun to flourish, an authoritarian government cannot turn the clock back through negligence or suppression. As only 61.2 percent of the respondents in the 1995 survey indicated that they would stay in Hong Kong after 1997, this dynamic relationship between the changing political culture and development should be seriously considered by the present and future governments in order to avoid instability, chaos, and violence.

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<sup>30</sup>Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968), 32-71.

**Appendix 1**  
**Number of Voters, Samples, and Respondents in the 1991 Survey**

Constituency	No. of Voters	No. of Samples <sup>a</sup>	No. of Responses
New Territories (E)	194,822	499	105
New Territories (S)	241,022	644	104
New Territories (W)	186,101	498	85
New Territories (N)	117,635	314	56
Kowloon East	211,521	572	96
Kowloon Central	282,584	757	149
Kowloon West	209,480	560	92
Island East	241,764	678	117
Island West	178,865	478	92
Unclassified <sup>b</sup>			200
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,863,794</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>1,096</b>

<sup>a</sup>The method of calculating the sample for appendixes 1 and 2 based on a sampling error of + 3 percent is adapted from tables in Henry P. Hill, John L. Roth, and Herbert Arkin, *Sampling in Auditing* (New York: The Ronald Press, 1962).

<sup>b</sup>Respondents who did not indicate constituencies to which they belonged.

**Appendix 2**  
**Number of Voters, Samples, and Responses in the 1995 Survey**

Constituency	No. of Voters	No. of Samples	No. of Responses
Island Central	119,700	234	65
Island East	144,472	282	70
Island South	146,240	285	49
Island West	142,924	279	50
Kowloon Central	105,728	206	48
Kowloon Northeast	133,429	260	53
Kowloon East	129,649	253	45
Kowloon Southeast	134,460	262	56
Kowloon South	105,339	205	37
Kowloon Southwest	99,762	195	41
Kowloon West	145,095	283	49
New Territories (C)	116,462	227	48
New Territories (NW)	113,768	222	33
New Territories (N)	98,749	193	42
New Territories (NE)	112,200	219	36
New Territories (SE)	147,200	287	69
New Territories (E)	164,837	321	62
New Territories (S)	136,939	267	48
New Territories (SW)	131,249	256	46
New Territories (W)	136,919	267	67
Unclassified			88
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,565,121</b>	<b>5,003</b>	<b>1,102</b>