CENTRO STUDI PER I POPOLI EXTRA-EUROPEI "CESARE BONACOSSA" - UNIVERSITÀ DI PAVIA

ASIA MAIOR

Vol. XXX / 2019

Asia in 2019: Escalating international tensions and authoritarian involution

Edited by
Michelguglielmo Torri
Nicola Mocci
Filippo Boni

viella

CENTRO STUDI PER I POPOLI EXTRA-EUROPEI "CESARE BONACOSSA" - UNIVERSITÀ DI PAVIA

ASIA MAIOR

The Journal of the Italian think tank on Asia founded by Giorgio Borsa in 1989
Vol. XXX / 2019

Asia in 2019: Escalating international tensions and authoritarian involution

Edited by
Michelguglielmo Torri
Nicola Mocci
Filippo Boni

viella

Asia Maior. The Journal of the Italian Think Tank on Asia founded by Giorgio Borsa in 1989.

ISBN 978-88-3313-490-1 (Paper) ISBN 978-88-3313-491-8 (Online)
ISSN 2385-2526 (Paper) ISSN 2612-6680 (Online)
Annual journal - Vol. XXX, 2019

This journal is published jointly by the think tank Asia Maior (Associazione Asia Maior) & the CSPE - Centro Studi per i Popoli extra-europei «Cesare Bonacossa», University of Pavia

Asia Maior. The Journal of the Italian Think Tank on Asia founded by Giorgio Borsa in 1989 is an open-access journal, whose issues and single articles can be freely downloaded from the think tank webpage: www.asiamaior.org.
The reference year is the one on which the analyses of the volume are focused. Each *Asia Maior* volume is always published in the year following the one indicated on the cover

Paper version	Italy	€ 50.00	Abroad	€ 65.00
Subscription	abbonamenti@viella.it		www.viella.it	

Before being published in Asia Maior, all articles, whether commissioned or unsolicited, after being first evaluated by the Journal's editors, are then submitted to a double-blind peer review involving up to three anonymous referees. Coherently with the double-blind peer review process, Asia Maior does not make public the name of the reviewers. However, the reviewers' names – and, if need be, the whole correspondence between the journal's editors and the reviewer/s – can be disclosed to interested institutions, upon a formal request made directly to the Editor in Chief of the journal.

Articles meant for publication should be sent to Michelguglielmo Torri (mg.torri@gmail.com), Nicola Mocci (nmocci@uniss.it) and Filippo Boni (filippo.boni@open.ac.uk); book reviews should be sent to Oliviero Frattolillo (oliviero.frattolillo@uniroma3.it) and Francesca Congiu (fcongiu@unica.it).

viella
libreria editrice
via delle Alpi, 32
I-00198 ROMA
tel. 06 84 17 758
fax 06 85 35 39 60
www.viella.it

Contents

When this Asia Maior *issue was finalized and the Covid-19 pandemic raged throughout the world, Kian Zaccara, Greta Maiorano and Giulio Santi, all children of* Asia Maior *authors (Luciano Zaccara, Diego Maiorano and Silvia Menegazzi), were born. We (the* Asia Maior *editors) have seen that as a manifestation of Life, reasserting itself in front of Thanatos. It is for this reason that we dedicate this issue to Kian, Greta and Giulio, with the fond hope that they will live in a better world than the one devastated by the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Hong Kong 2019: Anatomy of a social mobilisation through the lenses of identity and values

Angela Tritto *and* *Alkan Abdulkadir*

Institute of Emerging Market Studies
The Hong Kong University
of Science and Technology
tritto@ust.hk

Independent scholar
a.alkan@my.cityu.edu.hk

Our contribution analyses the Anti-Extradition Bill protests in Hong Kong, which constitute the largest mobilisation of people in the Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China so far since the handover in 1997. We examine the dimensions and stakeholders of this protest, arguing that its roots reside in the shift of values and identity of the next generation of Hong Kong people. In our analysis, we use first-hand experiences, informal interviews, and secondary materials to illustrate the underlying triggers of this mobilisation, which come from a combination of political, economic, and social factors. We situate this analysis in the context of China's increasing global reach through foreign policy and outward investments, for which Hong Kong constitutes a key node.

1. Introduction

Like the flower that represents it, the Bauhinia blakeana or Hong Kong orchid, modern Hong Kong is a hybrid species, born out of two different ones, but different from both. This sterile plant can never reproduce, yet somehow Hong Kong is trying to give birth to something new. Caught between «the modern clash of civilisations» as Professor Kishore Mahbubani put it during one of his talks in the city on 4 September 2019 – the same day that the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, Carrie Lam, announced the final withdrawal of the controversial extradition bill – Hong Kong becomes one of its battlegrounds. As a Special Administrative Region that enjoys a certain degree of autonomy from China, Hong Kong has also been treated separately from Beijing by the United States and the broader international community.[1] This preferential status makes Hong Kong an important bridge between China and the West. Hence, when the proposed Extradition Bill threatened the precarious balance between China's sovereignty over Hong Kong and Hong Kong's autonomy, this caused considerable preoccupation not only in the city, but in the world at large. As Denise Ho Wan-See, a prominent speaker of the movement put it: «Hong Kong protesters are ac-

1. The Sino-British Declaration of 1984 established Hong Kong as a Special Administrative Region of China regulated by its own Basic Law. The United States–Hong Kong Policy Act 1992 allows the US to treat Hong Kong as a separate entity from China.

ISSN 2385-2526

tually in a global fight for universal values. […] This is a fight against suppression and censorship, which are also spreading to more and more old democracies. Therefore, we should all stand with Hong Kong.»[2]

This is why, using water as a metaphor, just as the movement did,[3] we sketch the multiple layers of what is described as the city's «worst crisis since the handover.»[4] The aim of this article is to analyse the roots of the 2019 Hong Kong Anti-Extradition Bill movement. We argue that the most important driver in spreading the related protest across society was the shift in identity and core values of the younger generation. We also discuss the background of this mobilisation, made up of several elements: the culture of protests in the city; the lessons learned from them; the existing economic and political grievances. However, these elements are secondary to a main one, represented by the question of values, whose importance is also evident in the polls of protesters, consistently showing economic factors as less important than ideas.[5]

The first part examines what is *above water*: the history – even tradition – of protests in Hong Kong and outlines the main pressure points in the city, which are triggering a major identity crisis. These pressures are evident in institutions and regulations, in the economy, and in language and education. While this article tries to highlight the continuity of the 2019 protests with those of the past, seeing both the former and the latter in the context of the above listed pressure points, it also highlights the unicity of the 2019 protests. It does so by underlining the events that contributed to the escalation of violence, to a strong feeling of distrust of most people in Hong Kong towards the Hong Kong Police Force, and to a renewed impetus of the fight for Hong Kong's democracy.

The second part analyses the shift in identity and core values of the younger generation of Hong Kong people, which is what we understand as the movements' underwater current. While people from all ages and all strands of life participated in the movement, its fulcrum was composed by people aged between 20 and 30, who lived most of their lives in a «Chinese» Hong Kong SAR, in fear of what the formal handover to mainland

2. 'International Women's Day: Meet 11 of Asia's trailblazers', *Nikkei*, 4 March 2020.

3. «Be like water», as in the quote by famous martial arts movie star Bruce Lee, has become one of the slogans of the 2019 Anti-Extradition Bill movement. It points to the tactic of being a seemingly leaderless and formless movement that fluidly moves between places. Bruce Lee's quote is a reference to Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. See, e.g., Sun Tzu's statement: «Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works out his victory in relation to the foe whom he is facing.», chapter 6, 31.

4. Farah Master & James Pomfret, 'Hong Kong facing worst crisis since handover: senior China official', *Reuters*, 7 August 2019.

5. Jamil Anderlini. 'Hong Kong's «water revolution» spins out of control', *The Financial Times*, 2 September 2019.

China in 2047 would mean for their lives. This second part analyses this paradox, but also discusses the generational and status gap of the people at the core of this fight for democracy, examining how they differ from the older generation.

The third and final part looks at the *water surface* by unpacking the individual and collective values of the core group of protesters, and how these values affect the organization and dynamics of the mobilization. It provides examples from first-hand experience that illustrate the organization of the movement and its decision mechanism, and what these mean for a generation that seeks to break the hitherto prevailing cycle of passivity, taking control not only of their individual lives, but of their city's future.

2. Above water – social movements in the Asian hive of capitalism: China's grasp on Hong Kong's identity

The 2019 Anti-Extradition Bill protests of 2019 are the latest and largest of a long series of mobilisations in the Hong Kong SAR. While they share some commonalities with their predecessors, they are very distinct from most of them. This section explains why, providing a short background of protests in Hong Kong, as well as some key facts about the 2019 protests.

In 2015, the Information and Services Department of the Hong Kong Government reported that between 1997, the year of the return of the SAR to Chinese sovereignty, and 2013, over 50,000 assemblies of various sizes and motivations had taken place in Hong Kong. It comes as no surprise that a growing number of scholars and commentators have started to call Hong Kong as «the city of protests».[6] How did this culture of protests become part of Hong Kong's tradition? As explained by two local scholars,

> protest gradually became a means of airing grievances by various groups, especially the underprivileged. This action at first seems ironic. But the fact is that the propensity to protest has existed for some time, and the underprivileged have been resentful of being neglected.[7]

6. Daniel Garrett, '*Counter-hegemonic Resistance in China's Hong Kong Visualizing Protest in the City*', London: Springer, 2015, p. 1.

7. Joseph Man Chan & Lee Chin-Chuan, 'The journalistic paradigm on civil protests: A case study of Hong Kong', in Andrew Arno & Wimal Dissanayake (eds.), *The news media in national and international conflict*, Boulder: Westview, 1984, pp. 183-202. In their examination of Hong Kong protests, scholars have often referred to the «underprivileged» without giving a precise definition of the term. The past protests in Hong Kong were initiated mostly by people belonging to the lower classes of society, such as factory workers, who were seeking better welfare. In this article, we make use of the term «underprivileged» as synonymous of «lower classes».

The feeling of resentment and neglect comes no doubt from economic and political factors that characterise Hong Kong quintessentially capitalist system, where the *laissez-faire* attitude of the government ultimately surrendered the welfare of its people. In the past, this resentment often constituted a primary trigger, as in the case of the leftist protests of 1967, where the conflict originated from labour disputes.[8] We argue that while this sentiment is indeed evident in some segments of the 2019 movement, it is only an additional supplementary factor. Over the years, speculations over land became so rampant that Hong Kong has maintained the record of least affordable housing market for almost a decade.[9] The Gini coefficient rose from 0.533 in 2006 to 0.539 in 2016 as a testimony to the widening inequality.[10] In 2018, 1.3 out of 7.5 million people (one in three people aged over 65) lived in poverty in Hong Kong, while the wealthiest tycoons still enjoyed amongst the lowest profits tax rates worldwide.[11] Despite having a large fiscal surplus of over HK$ 1.1 trillion (US$ 1.2 billion), the SAR Government lagged behind other OECD countries' expenditure in healthcare and social welfare. In fact, some scholars have argued that the post-handover period saw a crisis in governance «due to the inability of the political institutions in providing a coherent leadership, a good governing political machine, and also in incorporating and aggregating social and political interests from society.»[12] The development of political parties also lost momentum, leaving the least privileged largely under-represented. Meanwhile, the emergence of pressure groups such as tradr unions and professionals, religious and other civil society organisations, which grew fond of spearheading the cause of the underprivileged, as well as their own also contributed to the promotion of mobilisations.[13]

This internal affairs picture is further complexified by the pressure of China's global expansion and hegemonic ambitions, in which Hong Kong plays a special role. Since the launch of the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, Hong Kong has become a key node for outward investments from Chinese companies, which enjoy the city's largest offshore market for the Renminbi (RMB) and free flow of capital and goods. Accordingly, the volume of trade and investments passing through Hong Kong has considerably increased. At the same time, the attitude of the central government towards the SAR

8. Gary Ka-wai Cheung, *Hong Kong's Watershed: The 1967 Riots*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009, vol. 1.

9. Sandy Li, 'Hong Kong most expensive housing market in the world for the sixth year in a row: survey classifies our homes as «least affordable» ever', *SCMP*, 25 January 2016.

10. Oxfam, *Hong Kong Inequality Report*, 2018.

11. *Ibid*.

12. Ngok Ma, '*Political Development in Hong Kong*', Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007, p. 2.

13. Joseph Man Chan, & Chin-Chuan Lee, 'The journalistic paradigm on civil protests: A case study of Hong Kong'.

signalled a shift. While some argued the People Republic of China «has largely abided by the strictures of the 'one country, two systems' approach», there is also evidence of increasing stress triggered by the «compelled cultural, economic, and political integration with China».[14]

For Hong Kongers, two main concerns seem to be reoccurring: the push to use Mandarin as the Preferred Medium of Instruction (PMIC), which started in 2008 and has hitherto remained a sensitive topic, and the potential revival of the National Security Bill of 2003.[15] They see the first as the ultimate loss of their cultural identity as a possible implication of China's contentious language policies, aimed at promoting its nationalistic goals.[16] They fear the second as a potential threat to Hong Kong's freedom of expression and its historical status as a safe haven for activists and dissidents.[17] Most importantly, as pointed out by former Hong Kong Legislative Council President Jasper Tsang, a particular document released by China in 2014, the white paper «One Country, Two System»., marked Beijing's shift in defining the city's autonomy. The document stated: «The high degree of autonomy of the HKSAR is not full autonomy, nor a decentralized power. It is the power to run local affairs as authorized by the central leadership. The high degree of autonomy of HKSAR is subject to the level of the central leadership's authorization.»[18]

The implications of the white paper, along with the dissatisfaction caused by the failed consultations to bring about a more democratic system to nominate the members of the Legislative Council and the Chief Executive constituted the major triggers of the Occupy Central and Umbrella Movement of 2014.[19]

14. Daniel Garrett. '*Counter-hegemonic Resistance in China's Hong Kong Visualizing Protest in the City*'.

15. The bill aimed to amend the Crimes Ordinance, the Official Secrets Ordinance and the Societies Ordinance to put into effect the Article 23 of Hong Kong's Basic Law. The Article states: «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 the Region, and to prohibit political organizations or bodies of the Region from establishing ties with foreign political organizations or bodies.» The quotation is from https://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclawtext/chapter_2.html.

16. Minglang Zhou & Hongkai Sun (eds), *Language policy in the People's Republic of China: Theory and practice since 1949*, Vol. 4, Boston: Springer Science & Business Media, 2006.

17. These concerns are clearly expressed by the Hong Kong movie «Ten Years», released in 2015 and immediately banned in China.

18. Karen Cheung, 'Ex-LegCo head: 2014 white paper was turning point of Beijing exercising «overall jurisdiction» in Hong Kong', *Hong Kong Free Press*, 20 November 2017.

19. Johannes Chan. 'Hong Kong's umbrella movement', *Round Table*, 2014, 103 (6), pp. 571-580.

Occupy Central – where «Central» refers to the area in Hong Kong that is the core of the financial district – was a product of academic circles, at least in its infant stage, as it was launched at the end of 2012 by Law Professor Benny Tai of the University of Hong Kong. In 2014, he movement, which aimed at promoting a more democratic set-up in Hong Kong by making use of civil disobedience techniques, morphed into the Umbrella Movement – sometimed referred to as the «Umbrella Revolution». The occupations were initially characterized by a massive student participation, and later supported by other elements of the population. In December 2014, however, the organisers of the movement, confronted by the danger of massive police repression, decided to suspend mass demonstrations, continuing their struggle through community work and education instead.[20]

The 2019 Anti-Extradition protests share similar roots with the Occupy Central/Umbrella movement, and yet are also quite distinct in certain respects. Whereas the Occupy Central/Umbrella Movement was a product of academic circles, at least in its infant stage, the pro-democracy groups that initiated the 2019 protests had a strong backup by the economic circles in the city. In addition, the Occupy Central/Umbrella Movement was a civil disobedience movement that, despite the disruption caused, was largely non-violent. On the contrary, in 2019, while most people gathered in peaceful marches, the protests also involved many violent confrontations between police and protesters, several acts of vandalism towards government offices and pro-establishment businesses, as well as suicides, deaths, injuries, and aggressions, although admittedly isolated ones. The intensification of violence distinguished the 2019 protests from the previous ones. As pointed out by several scholars, previous protests had always upheld the underlying premise of not disrupting the social fabric of the city, and were often employed as an effective tool by underprivileged groups to «make their feelings known (to the government) and contribute towards problem solving.»[21] The 2019 protests diverted from this somehow tacit agreement between people and government. In fact, they showed that quite the opposite was true.

After the failure of the Umbrella Movement in 2014, banners along Harcourt Road, a key hotspot for the occupation, announced: «We will be back». Since then, key events in the city contributed to an increasing dissatisfaction and concern over its governance and ability of the political institutions to safeguard basic rights. Leaders of the Umbrella Movement were jailed; candidates from Demosistō – one of the main pro-democracy organizations that included student leaders of the movement – were banned from

20. Benny Yiu-ting Tai, Kin-man Chan & Yiu-ming Chu, 'Occupy Central Trio's Letter to the Hong Kong People', *Occupy Central with Love and Peace*, 2 December 2014 (http://oclp.hk/index.php?route=occupy/eng_detail&eng_id=61).

21. Joseph Man Chan & Chin-Chuan Lee, 'The journalistic paradigm on civil protests: A case study of Hong Kong'.

running in district council elections. Nathan Law, the youngest-ever elected Legislative Council member at age 23, was ousted from it together with other five lawmakers for improper oath taking, and later jailed. In 2015, the disappearance of five Hong Kong booksellers connected to Mighty Current,[22] which eventually turned up in the custody of mainland Chinese authorities, sparked outrage amongst people. A year later, news reported Chinese billionaire Xiao Jianhua's abduction from the Four Seasons hotel in Hong Kong's Central district and his deportation to mainland China, reinforcing serious concerns over «mainland agents acting outside of their jurisdiction».[23] The event, as well as the «unprecedented act of retribution»[24] of denying the renewal of work visa to Victor Mullet,[25] led to serious concerns over Hong Kong's human rights safeguard by various international concern groups.[26] These, among other similar events, constitute the background of the 2019 protests that «whipped up paranoia»[27] as well as distrust on the part of Hong Kong's residents towards their government. In the next section, we argue, the dissatisfaction came not only from the underprivileged, but also from different social groups including the intellectual and economic elites.

2.1. From spark to wildfire: how the anti-extradition bill turned into a quest for democracy

The 2019 Anti-Extradition Bill protests started with the decision of the Hong Kong government, influenced by China's anti-corruption campaign to promote extradition treaties with countries and territories across the world,[28] to review the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordi-

22. Mighty Current is a Hong Kong-based large publishing house best known for its salacious publication featuring prominent Chinese political figures.

23. Raymond Yeung, Choi Chi-yuk, Christy Leung, Clifford Lo & Phila Siu, 'Missing Chinese billionaire Xiao Jianhua «last seen at Hong Kong's Four Seasons Hotel» before entering mainland', *SCMP*, 31 January 2017.

24. Quote by Former Hong Kong Chief Secretary Anson Chan Fang On-sang in Alvin Lum & Kimmy Chung, 'Reason for Financial Times journalist Victor Mallet's Hong Kong visa denial to stay secret after Legco motion calling for explanation fails', *SCMP*, 1 November 2018.

25. Victor Mullet was a well-known Hong Kong-based Financial Times correspondent, who hosted a talk at the Foreign Correspondent Club by Andy Chan Ho-tin, a supporter of Hong Kong's independence whose political party was later banned

26. See Freedom in the World 2019, Hong Kong report available at: https://freedomhouse.org/country/hong-kong/freedom-world/2020; Sarah Zheng, 'Human rights in Hong Kong in rapid decline, global non-profit group claims in report', *SCMP*, 11 January 2017; Amnesty International, 'Beijing's «red line» in Hong Kong'.

27. Ling Man Tsang, 'If Hong Kong fugitives bill is whipping up paranoia, can the people be blamed?', *SCMP*, *Letters*, 2 June 2019.

28. Michael Laha, 'Taking the Anti-Corruption Campaign Abroad: China's Quest for Extradition Treaties', *Centre for Advanced China Research*, 14 March 2019.

nance (Cap 525) and the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance (Cap 503). After an unusually short consultation period, the controversial «Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019» was born.

With the initial proposal for the treaty, the Hong Kong government sought to «tackle existing loopholes in Hong Kong's legislation» by allowing extraditions for a total of 46 crimes recognised by both the SAR and China.[29] This proposal was put forward in response to a murder case whereby the offender from Hong Kong committed the crime in Taiwan and, due to the existing loopholes, could not be extradited.

Assemblies organised by Demosistō and the Civil Human Rights Front (CHRF) started in March and April 2019 to raise concerns over the Bill. What is unusual is that the anti-Bill action by Demosistō and the CHRF was accompanied by expressions of concern of traditionally pro-establishment leaders and prominent figures in Hong Kong. One example is Priscilla Leung Mei-fun, a vice-chairwoman of the Business and Professionals Alliance (BPA), who suggested amending the Bill by exempting people suspected of white-collar crimes. Others include former Government's Chief Secretary Henry Tang Ying Yen; Chairman of the Trade Development Council Peter Lam Kin Ngok; Executive Council member Jeffrey Lam Kin Fung; and representatives of the American Chamber of Commerce.[30]

The Demosistō and CHRF action coupled by the expressions of concern of traditionally pro-establishment personalities obviously amounted to «clear messages from diverse sections of society that there were serious concerns regarding the Bill».[31] The consultations led to amendments in the initial proposal by reducing the extraditable crimes from 46 to 37. The 9 withdrawn offenses were mostly white-collar crimes. The new amendment also raised the threshold for its applicability from three to seven years in prison and to crimes that could not be political in nature or punishable by death.[32] Nonetheless, there were still worries that the Bill could be used to extradite activists, dissidents, and political opponents to mainland China, raising concerns over their fair treatment.

When, once again, the government did not heed to the demands of hundreds of thousands of people[33] that marched peacefully from Victoria

29. Legislative Council Brief, File Reference: SBCR 1/2716/19. 'Fugitive offenders and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters legislation (amendment) bill 2019' (https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr18-19/english/bills/brief/b201903291_brf.pdf).

30. Martin Purbrick, 'A report of the 2019 Hong Kong protests', *Asian Affairs*, 2019, 50 (4), pp. 465-487.

31. *Ibid*.

32. Mary Hui, 'Everything you need to know about Hong Kong's extradition law', *Quartz* 11 June 2019.

33. There is a discrepancy between numbers as reported by the Police authority, claiming that the march peaked at 240,000 people, and its organisers, the CHRF, which claimed over a million people attended.

Park to the Central Government Offices on 9 June,[34] this triggered a much stronger backlash. The subsequent gathering in front of the Legislative Council on 12 June, the proposed day of the second reading of the Bill, managed to block legislators from entering the building and effectively postponed the reading. The day of June 12 marked a key escalation in the protests, as a core group of protesters, convinced of the failure of peaceful tactics and resenting the government's inaction, started to contemplate using force. Eventually, confrontations with the Police Force started and turned extremely violent, leaving 70 people injured. That day, and again on July 1, protesters managed to forcefully enter and vandalize the Legislative Council building.

Picture 1. Protester sits on chair after breaking in the Legislative Council, Admiralty, Hong Kong, 1 July 2019.
Source: Alkan Abdulkadir.

34. 'Carrie Lam defiant, insists extradition bill will go ahead', *The Standard*, 10 June 2019.

A later report by Amnesty International outlined 14 instances of excessive use of force by the Hong Kong Police on 12 June, which «violated international human rights law and standards».[35] These included the unlawful use of batons and rubber bullets, improper use of tear gas and pepper spray often directed at the entire protest crowd as opposed to the smaller violent crowd, the lack of visible Police identification, and restrictions on journalists and medical aid providers. Moreover, the subsequent statement by the Commissioner of Police labelling the protest as a «riot» – an offence that carries a maximum penalty on conviction of ten years imprisonment – caused a general uproar. The following Sunday (16 June), over two million gathered again in the streets of Hong Kong, despite Chief Executive Carrie Lam announced, the day before, that the Bill would be indefinitely delayed. The demonstrators started to ask what later, after some revisions, became known as the «Five Demands». The original demands included: 1) complete withdrawal of the Bill; 2) Carrie Lam's resignation; 3) release of all those arrested in connection with the protest; 4) an independent investigation into the police actions on 12 June; 5) retraction of the characterization of the protest as a riot.[36] Point 2 later turned into the request for universal suffrage.

Amongst the series of marches, confrontations, and protests that followed, there was an event that contributed to plunging the distrust of people towards the Hong Kong Police Force to the lowest levels: the Yuen Long incident. On 21 July, during a series of mobilisations across different districts in Hong Kong, a group of just over a hundred people dressed in white shirts and armed with steel rods and canes, believed to be members of triad groups, chased and beat up protesters as well as ordinary citizens, journalists, and lawmakers. Despite thousands of calls for help to the 999 emergency line, the police only arrived after the mob had left. The live scenes, broadcasted by popular media outlets, «were perceived by Hong Kong citizens and the international community as a proof of the collusion between the police and local triad gangs to strike back against the anti-extradition bill movement.»[37]

The resulting sentiment of distrust reverberated across different parts of Hong Kong's society, ultimately causing strong societal divisions as well as a series of incidents involving either police and citizens, or citizens with opposing views. At its peak, the 2019 anti-Bill movement recorded around two million people, meaning that one in three citizens in Hong Kong partook in the manifestation. In addition to this group, there were also many

35. 'How not to Police a Protest: Unlawful use of Force by Hong Kong Police', *Amnesty International*, June 2019; Martin Purbrick, 'A report of the 2019 Hong Kong protests'.

36. 'Hong Kong extradition law: A timeline of events that led to the current mass protests', *Young Post - SCMP*, 12 June 2019.

37. Kaxton Siu, 'Governing Hong Kong like any other Chinese City', *Made in China journal*, Issue 3, 2019.

people who, while not being physically in the streets, also backed this cause. The large support was also evident in the results of the latest district council elections. Hong Kong has a multi-party system where political parties are grouped in either a pro-democracy or a pro-establishment (or pro-Beijing) camp. For the first time in the history of Hong Kong, the pro-democracy camp won 17 out of 18 districts with a record turnout of 2.94 million voters representing 71.2 percent of registered electors.[38] While pro-establishment voters widened their demographical component since the 2000s, the protests clearly triggered a change in the electorate, especially across districts in the New Territories and in the Southern District of Hong Kong Island, where extremely young pro-democracy leaders beat the incumbents.[39] That being said, opposing sentiments and political views were undoubtedly present in the remaining part of the population. More than once people that were part of the anti-Bill movement, either during protests or outside, were engaged in heated discussions with people who would not sympathise with their cause for a variety of reasons: from political, to economic, from idealistic to matters of simple inconvenience of transportation, since most residents were affected by the blocking of roads, tunnels connecting the Hong Kong districts, or even its airport. The next section outlines the root cause of these differences: the different identity, values and, hence, priorities, between generations and social groups.

3. Why now? Underwater currents in the mobilization of Hong Kong's generation Y and Z

The results of a survey conducted by four of Hong Kong's leading universities speak clearly: most protesters in Hong Kong are young – between 20 and 30 years of age, educated to university level, coming from different political orientations including moderate democrats, localists centrists or people who identified themselves as having no political affiliations. Moreover, most participants identified themselves as middle class, followed by lower class.[40] This shows that the underlying dynamics of the protests include demographical change, along with a change of values, identity, and expectations towards the government by the younger generation of Hong Kong.

38. Jeffie Lam, Lok-kei Sum & Kang Chung Ng, 'Hong Kong elections: pro-democracy camp wins 17 out of 18 districts while city leader says she will reflect on the result', *The South China Morning Post*, 25 November 2019.

39. K.K. Rebecca Lai & Jin Wu, 'Hong Kong Election Results Mapped', *The New York Times*, 24 November 2019.

40. Francis L. F. Lee, Gary Tang, Samson Yuen & Edmund W. Cheng, 'Onsite Survey Findings in Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Protests', *Centre for Communication and Public Opinion Survey*, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, August 2019.

As Chang and Lee[41] forecasted, «the drastic change in Hong Kong's demographic structure that occurred in the past decade has a significant implication for political culture. For the first time, the first-generation of Hong Kongers – locally born, educated, and below 30 – comprise 60 percent of the population.» According to Chang and Lee, this generation differs from the previous in several important aspects. First, although they value and understand Chinese culture, they feel obliged to participate in public affairs as a matter of caring about the future of Hong Kong as their home. This means also defending its special status and autonomy. Second, they are less fearful of participating in protests, and are more inclined to place society's interest above self or familial interest. The reasons for this can be found in the gradual erosion of parental authority, the diminishing social control exercised by the family units, but also the primarily liberal education, supported by a set of freedoms – of speech, internet, assembly – which ultimately shaped them and awakened a new sense of social consciousness. Additional reasons may also be a combination of economic and political pressures.

Many have argued that this generation feels less hopeful about its future than the previous one. A recent survey by Hong Kong universities found that Hong Kongers felt the most unhappy in almost a decade, and that this sentiment was stronger in younger people.[42] The high cost of housing, starting salaries for university graduates that are almost 10% lower than 25 years ago, limited social mobility are well-known economic factors.[43] These, mixed with the feeling of defeat after the 2014 Umbrella movement and the perceived erosion of the city's civil liberties and lack of political reforms all contributed to the sense of «now or never», and of «having nothing to lose» that empowered the 2019 movement. Graffiti writing across the streets of Mong Kok, one of the major shopping areas in Hong Kong, read: «7K for a house like a cell and you really think we out here scared of jail», with supporters of the movement describing this fight for their city's freedom and democracy as a «life or death situation».[44]

In contrast, the generation of their parents, mostly Chinese immigrants or refugees, still holds a rather traditional view of government – people relations, summarised by Hoadley[45] in seven points. These are: 1) the government–people relationship is analogous to that between parent and child, hence it does not contemplate direct participation but rather the con-

41. Joseph Man Chan & Chin-Chuan Lee, 'The journalistic paradigm on civil protests: A case study of Hong Kong'.

42. Singh Harminder, 'Hongkongers frowning deeper as happiness index shows decline', *SCMP*, 23 November 2019.

43. Rein Shaun, 'Social mobility the key to addressing Hong Kong discontent', *The Nikkei*, 16 July 2019.

44. Marius Zaharia & Anne Marie Roantree, '«Now or never»: Hong Kong protesters say they have nothing to lose', *Reuters*, 28 August 2019.

45. J. Stephen Hoadley, 'Political participation of Hong Kong Chinese: patterns and trends', *Asian Survey*, Vol. 13, no. 6, 1973, pp. 604-616.

formity of the people to the directions of the government; 2) the understanding that their status as Hong Kong citizens is transient, and the connection to the motherland is still important; 3) the tendency, in particular by some that may have had a difficult past, to see «China as the sea and Hong Kong as the life boat». Hence, the conviction that it would be unwise to stir trouble in the place that lent them a lifeline; 4) the feeling that their relatively modest needs and desires were fulfilled by the government; 5) the local elites' rather conservative views, which make them unwilling to alter an institutional framework that has allowed them to prosper; 6) the perception that the general low participation of people in the city's politics made reforms unlikely. Hence, it would be more meaningful to channel energies into their careers and economic pursuits; 7) the fact that the oligarchy at the apex of Hong Kong's society was unwilling to share their powers and privileges.

Amongst the above, point 2 and point 5 deserve further elaboration. Point 2 exemplifies the gap in perceived self-identity between the older and the younger generations. A survey conducted by the Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute (HKPORI) on the feeling of identity in the city exemplifies this point by showing that the percentage of young people identifying themselves as Chinese has dropped to a 20-year low.[46] A question that asked people to identify themselves as Hong Kongers, Chinese, or a mixed identity found that across all sampled people, 37% identified as Hong Kongers, 21% as Chinese, whilst 40.2% identified as «Hong Kongers in China» or «Chinese in Hong Kong». However, amongst respondents aged between 18 and 29, 65% identified as Hong Kongers and only 3.1% identified as Chinese, showing a staggering difference between the younger and older generations.

Point 5 represents instead the view of the factions of Hong Kong's society opposing the protests. A prominent opinion amongst Hong Kong conservatives and business leaders living in or out of the SAR is that they feel their generation put considerable effort in building the modern, successful, wealthy model of Hong Kong. They feel this new, «idealistic» young generation is endangering the equilibrium they created, and could severe the ties with Beijing that, for most conservatives and business leaders, are also of vital economic importance.

These inextricable connections between what now constitute some of the largest and most powerful corporations in Hong Kong and mainland Chinese stakeholders has in turn generated a series of lay-offs, threats, and retaliations that have crowded tabloid headlines. Two examples are the cases of Cathay Pacific and the Maxim Group.

Cathay Pacific, Hong Kong's flagship airline, is a company whose largest shareholders are Swire Group, a large conglomerate that owns 45% of it and has important parts of its business depending on the Chinese mar-

46. Kris Cheng, 'HKU poll: Only 3.1% of young Hongkongers identify as Chinese, marking 20 year low', *Hong Kong Free Press*, 21 June 2017; HKPORI, 'People's Ethnic Identity', *Survey Results*.

ket, and Air China, which owns 22.65%.[47] Around three quarters of Cathay Pacific's flights use China's airspace. Hence, when on 9 August the Civil Aviation Authority of China (CAAC) called for the suspension of staff who supported or participated in the demonstrations, rejecting entire crew lists without explanation,[48] and summoned British billionaire Merlin Swire to Beijing, asking for management changes, a series of repercussions ensued.[49] Four days later came the shock resignation of Cathay Pacific Group's CEO Rupert Hogg and his deputy, Paul Loo Kar-pui. News circulated that Hogg allegedly decided to resign rather than identify employees linked to protests.[50] According to the Hong Kong Cabin Crew Federation, 30 rank-and-file staff, including eight pilots and 18 flight attendants, have been fired or resigned under pressure.[51] New layoffs followed claims of sabotage of oxygen tanks in the flights, which added to the severe drop in booking and the rise of cancellations for the airline flights.[52] As of December 2019, members of the senior management of Cathay kept resigning.[53]

The case of Maxim Group, which triggered a large-scale boycott of all its outlets, started from a declaration by Annie Wu, the daughter of the firm's founder. During her appearance on 11 September at the United Nations Human Rights Council as representative of the Hong Kong Federation of Women, Wu stated that the «small group of radical protesters», which made use of «systematic and calculated violent acts», did not represent all Hong Kongers and, in fact, caused a nuisance to ordinary citizens' lives and tore families apart. Together with billionaire businesswoman Pansy Ho, Wu defended the use of tear gas and rubber bullets by Hong Kong police, claiming this was a necessary crowd control tactic, adopted elsewhere in the world.[54] Later, students of the Chinese Foundation Secondary School in

47. Grace Shao, '«Cathay's unusual position» makes it «vulnerable to pressure» from Beijing, analyst says', *CNBC*, 19 August 2019.

48. Jamie Freed, 'As protests rack Hong Kong, China watchdog has Cathay staff «walking on eggshells»', *Reuters*, 3 October 2019.

49. Danny Lee, 'Hong Kong protests have caused severe turbulence at Cathay Pacific but has airline done enough to appease Beijing after heads rolled at top?', *SCMP*, 18 August 2019.

50. Billie Thompson, 'Former Cathay Pacific CEO is hailed a hero after rumours suggested he handed over a list with just his name on it when asked by Beijing to identify staff who backed Hong Kong protests', *Daily Mail*, 20 August 2019.

51. Jamie Freed, 'As protests rack Hong Kong, China watchdog has Cathay staff «walking on eggshells»'.

52. Danny Lee, 'Two fired over oxygen bottle sabotage aboard Cathay Pacific planes, amid fallout from Hong Kong anti-government protests', *SCMP*, 24 September 2019.

53. Danny Lee, 'Cathay Pacific staff leaving in new round of employee exits at airline hit by Hong Kong protests', *SCMP*, 18 December 2019.

54. Holmes Chan, 'Hong Kong uni students boycott Maxim's caterer after founder's daughter blasts pro-democracy protesters at UN', *Hong Kong Free Press*, 25 September 2019.

Hong Kong accused Wu of taking advantage of her role of former supervisor and member of the school's sponsoring body to threaten the expulsion and lay-off of students and staff who partook in the protest-organised strikes.[55] In November, Annie Wu declared, during an interview with Global Times: «I have given up hope [on these youngsters] and will not waste my time talking to them, as they have no idea what they are doing and what they should do [...]. Their brains have been occupied by other ideas and that is irrevocable.» A response by Chan, a student at the University of Hong Kong was emblematic of the status and generational divide, but also of a change in attitude towards authority. He said: «I don't think she has done much for youngsters. […] She has been enjoying the protection of her elder generation, and the support of Hong Kongers who have spent much on her brand, in climbing up to that social status.»[56] Declarations of the Maxim Group that Ms. Wu «does not hold any position at the company» did not serve to stop the series of boycotts and vandalism of outlets linked to the Group during the year under review.

Similar episodes have also targeted mainland Chinese-linked businesses, especially retail and food and beverage outlets especially around the area of Kowloon. During the year under review, several outlets exhibited flags and icons symbolizing their allegiance to the movement, and a mobile application was created to help people choose them. The restaurants in the city were categorised as *yellow* if they support the movement or *blue* if otherwise.[57] The use of digital tools in the cause of the movement is part of its unique features, discussed in the following section.

4. On the surface, «Be like water»: How values and identity shaped the strategy, ethos, and organization of the protest

On the *surface of water*, when this new generation gathers in the streets, they are actively seeking to build and assume a new form of identity, which gives them much more say and a much bigger role in the politics of the city. They defy the prescribed social pattern of their existence, which puts them under various forms of pressure. In the streets, what matters is the spirit one puts forward rather than social status. This may also explain the popularity of the 2019 movement amongst the youth. The characteristics of this identity building process can be classified into four aspects.

55. Kimmy Chung, 'Daughter of Maxim's founder hits out again at Hong Kong protesters, saying she has lost hope in the next two generations', *SCMP*, 4 November 2019.

56. *Ibid*.

57. Fiona Sun, 'Not the Michelin guide: Hong Kong restaurants branded «yellow» if they support protests, «blue» if they don't', *SCMP*, 2 November 2019.

The first and perhaps most intriguing characteristic of this process is its highly adaptive nature, or the clarion call of «be water»,[58] which also brings about an ever-continuing transformation in its other characteristics. As noted above, the 2019 movement can be considered as the prosecution of previous protest movements; however, the modalities of the 2019 movement have greatly evolved when compared to those adhered to in the previous movements. To give a few examples, the decision-making process used to be much more centralized during the early stages of the Umbrella Movement in 2014, after which many of its leaders were arrested and pressured.[59] On the contrary, in 2019, protesters learned how to make decisions in a de-centralised yet collective manner by using technological means, voting on online platforms such as LIHKG or chat groups such as Telegram.[60] Another example of the adaptive nature of the movement is its move from peaceful means towards violent methods, due to the perceived inefficiency of former peaceful protests.

Picture 2. Peaceful march on 18 August 2019, Wan Chai MTR station.
Source: Angela Tritto.

58. The protesters adopted Bruce Lee's philosophy to be «formless and shapeless, like water».

59. Tiffany May, 'Hong Kong Umbrella Movement Leaders Are Sentenced to Prison', *New York Times*, 23 April 2019.

60. A Reddit-like forum.

Kay, one of the frontline protesters in 2014, told one of the authors that «if a protester threw a petrol bomb in 2014, which is part of the routine in protests nowadays, the protesters would think that that person should be arrested and jailed. We used to be criticised for being violent because we were blocking streets with crowd control barriers. However, today we are replaced by the next generation of hard-core front-liners who think our tactics were inefficient and not violent enough.» Joshua Wong, who has been amongst key influencers of the movement, also highlighted this point in a piece for Times magazine. He refers to United States former President J.F. Kennedy's famous quote: «those who make peaceful revolution impossible, will make violent revolution inevitable.»[61] That being said, a survey carried out by the HKPORI found that most of the respondents agreed that «the maximum impact could only be achieved when peaceful assembly and confrontational actions work together» and «the use of radical tactics by protesters is understandable when the government fails to listen».[62]

The second characteristic of the evolution of the 2019 movement is its culture of unity under democratic decision-making. This culture is consistent with what the demonstrators fight for. In other words, they are fighting for democracy by enacting a textbook example of participative democracy via digital tools. Whenever a situation emerges where protesters feel the need to make a decision, they pick up their mobile phones and start voting on how to react to the situation, creating a virtual democratic system. In most cases, protesters acted in accordance to what the majority voted for, despite their disagreement. Professor Francis Lee calls this methodology the «open-source protest model»[63] where decisions are made in an egalitarian manner. When they surrounded the Legislative Council on 1 July 2019, the protesters voted on Telegram groups whether to enter the building and whether to leave when the police were on their way to disperse them. On that day, when the majority voted for «let's leave now», there were still a few protesters who were determined to remain inside the Legislative Council. However, they were forcefully pulled out by their fellow protesters who were chanting «if we stay, we stay together; if we leave, we leave together.»

Other examples of functioning of the open source protest model are the way protesters start discussions on online platforms to decide the purpose, time, and venue of their gatherings and the way they diffuse posters that include relevant information about the protests. The latter are dissemi-

61. Joshua Wong, 'What freedom is worth' *Time Magazine*, 24 June 2019.

62. Francis L. F. Lee, Gary Tang, Samson Yuen & Edmund W. Cheng, 'Onsite Survey Findings in Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Bill Protests'.

63. Francis Lee, '(第十八講) 李立峯：無大台 – 理解抗爭新世代' (Open-source protest: Understanding a new generation of resistance), video in Cantonese, 29 June 2019.

nated on online platforms as well as through AirDrop requests in public places to quickly transfer the information between Apple devices.[64]

The third characteristic of the movement's evolution is the conscious reconstruction of its identity. The movement's identity is constantly being shaped in accordance with the experience of the movement, with protesters taking initiatives as if constituting a single and homogeneous entity. There seems to be a tacit understanding that anybody and everybody can represent the movement. In other words, the movement takes responsibility for the actions of its participants as a single unity. After some protesters at the airport assaulted two Chinese men on 14 August 2019, the majority of protesters tried to stop them and voted to release a public apology about what happened. On the next day, several protesters held banners at the arrival hall of the airport that read: «Dear Tourists, We're deeply sorry about what happened yesterday. We were desperate and we made imperfect decisions. Please accept our apology».[65] This is a manifestation of how protesters often choose to take responsibility for and at the same time own the actions of other protesters as their own, even if they disagree with them. Instead of denouncing or excluding them, they acknowledge the mistakes of a minority and apologise as a majority, which represents the level of active reconstruction of the identity of the movement.

The fourth characteristic of the 2019 movement is the continuously widening range of its tactics, through a *trial and error process*, which is a function of the collective philosophy of the movement. The creative tactics and forms through which protesters manifest and promote the values and philosophy of the movement include a mix of peaceful, poetic and violent demonstrations. As a means to resist the *status quo*, the most frequently used forms of demonstration are civil disobedience, spatial occupation, non-cooperative movements and human chains. Since 2012, protestors have been occupying various public and symbolic spaces which are of political and economic significance. According to Daniel Garrett of the City University of Hong Kong, this subversive visual co-option of key cultural, economic, social, and political venues of the city is an attempt to actively shape the contested past, current, and future narratives of the city. It also aims at rejecting the ruling regime's efforts to visualize Hong Kong simply as an economic, not political, metropolis on the periphery of China.[66] During the rush hours in the mornings, protesters block the flow of public transportation by means of non-cooperative actions such as preventing the doors of MTR (Mass Transit Railway, the major public transport network serving Hong Kong)

64. Mary Hui, 'Hong Kong's protesters put AirDrop to ingenious use to breach China's Firewall', *Quartz*, 8 July 2019.

65. Jeffie Lam *et al*., 'Hong Kong protesters apologise for disruption at airport, plan to suspend demonstrations', *SCMP*, 14 August 2019.

66. Daniel Garrett. '*Counter-hegemonic Resistance in China's Hong Kong Visualizing Protest in the City*', preface.

from closing. Having been inspired by and celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Baltic Way,[67] the protestors joined hands to build a human chain of 50 kilometres on both sides of the Victoria Harbour.[68] Moreover, as a means to convey and promote the philosophy of the movement, the protesters have often created new catchy slogans and symbols, as well as various forms of arts, displaying them in contested public spaces through visual and audial representations. *Lennon Walls* are one of the collective visual artworks of the movement, where people write slogans, epigrams, lyrics, and poems on colourful post-its and stick them on public walls in *contested public spaces* demanding freedom and democracy.

Picture 3. Lennon wall on the way to Choi Hung MTR station, 8 July 2019. Source: Angela Tritto.

Other forms of demonstrations focus on attracting attention both at home and abroad. These include petition campaigns, seminars and public discussions, online activism, advertising on media outlets, and citizen press conferences, among others. In addition to aforementioned forms, protesters

67. In 1989, around 2 million people protested the Soviet rule by forming a human chain, also known as the Baltic Way, across Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.

68. Michelle Wong. 'Demonstrators offer sparkling visions of unity as an estimated 210,000 people form 60km of human chains to encircle city in «Hong Kong Way»', *SCMP*, 23 August 2019.

employ numerous methods and tactics to protect, reconstruct, and promote the identity of the movement. These methods include doxing (the Internet-based practice of researching and broadcasting private or identifying information), graffiti and vandalism, violence, songs of freedom, laser shows, displaying the movement's flag in various landmarks around the world, and so on and so forth.

Picture 4. Three different posters found in tunnel near Choi Hung estate, with three key messages. Poster on the left «We are one» (in Chinese, 香港人, 一条心) that translates into «Hong Kong people, one single heart». Poster in the center to promote a «Global anti-totalitarianism march» (in Chinese, 全球反極權大遊行) on 29 September. Posters on the right are left by protesters to inform people about good practices to prevent the spreading of the Corona virus, as the movement turned increasingly critical towards the government, taken in February 2020. Source: Angela Tritto.

In light of the aforementioned four characteristics, what protestors are fighting for is in line with their methods of demonstrations. The democratic and egalitarian ways deployed by the protesters in taking their decisions reflect what they have been seeking to achieve in the electoral system of Hong Kong, i.e. universal suffrage. The level of inclusivity and, to a great extent, lack of marginalisation, which have hitherto characterised the movement, are representations of the pluralism the protesters desire to see in Hong Kong. In addition, the conscious reconstruction of the identity of the movement as well as its highly adaptive nature are manifestations of the change that protestors want to accomplish in the city. When they own the mistakes of the fellow protestors and apologise on behalf of them, they convey the message that the government and the police force should be accountable for their wrongdoings. In short, the movement leads by example.

However, while Hong Kong's youth have indeed shown an unprecedented innovativeness in the governance of their grassroots movement, their action has taken a toll on what is generally considered as a safe and politically stable city. According to the Information and Services Department

of the Hong Kong Government, between 9 June and 21 November 2019, the police arrested more than 5,800 persons in major public order events (POEs), and 923 of them had been charged.[69] Over the same period, «more than 2,600 people were injured in large-scale POEs and sought treatment at public hospitals. More than 470 of them were police officers».[70] Some argue that the number may be higher as most protesters avoid seeking treatment for protest-related injuries in public hospitals as they are afraid of being reported and thereby facing legal consequences. In addition, two protesters have died, and the setting on fire of a man, gun shooting,[71] and stabbing incidents, one targeting Pro-Beijing lawmaker Junius Ho, have shocked the city as well as the international community. Since June, the city has been in a limbo, growing increasingly hopeless about the ability of the government to provide a solution.

5. Conclusion

Throughout this article we examined the underlying dynamics of the protests. Above water, we see the political and economic pressures on society. Below water, we see the different way in which the old and new generation respond to these increasing pressures and interferences. We also see a change in identity and values, which are translated into how the protests unfold. Even if temporarily tamed, these pressures will keep bubbling under the fast-paced and hectic life of the city, until a truly viable compromise is found.

The evolution of identity building and increasing level of bonding within the movement was a mechanism that was triggered and reinforced as the tactics deployed by the police became more severe. The heavy-handed crowd control response by the police, along with the support for the protesters revealed by local elections, motivated the movement to continue in its organisation of mass rallies in a more assertive way. As scholars, journalists, and experts organised forums, discussion, and talks to mediate and resolve the situation, government responses maintained an elusive character.

69. 'LCQ3: Complaints against police officers', *Press Releases*, Information and Services Department, 27 November 2019.

70. *Ibid*.

71. On 11 November, a man was set on fire by protesters after a heated discussion. Hours before, a police officer shot three live rounds in the city center, harming a young protester. See Jessie Yeung & Julia Hollingsworth. 'Man set alight hours after Hong Kong protester shot by police as clashes erupt citywide', *CNN*, 11 November 2019.