



Edited by Ngok Ma and Edmund W. Cheng

# The Umbrella Movement

## Civil Resistance and Contentious Space in Hong Kong

Amsterdam  
University  
Press



## The Umbrella Movement



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# Acknowledgements

The coming together of this edited volume, perhaps just like the Umbrella Movement itself, was a combination of long-term trends and spontaneous events. For those of us who had been closely watching the political development of Hong Kong since 1997, there was an air of inevitability to the massive outbreak of resistance in 2014. Hong Kong has been trapped in the status of a hybrid regime and embroiled in an extended democracy struggle for so many years. The futility of the democracy movement led to its radicalization and the polarization of political opinions in Hong Kong, which was in turn met with an autocratic turn from the Chinese government. There was an upswing of mobilization in street-level protests since 2003, which accelerated in 2009 and beyond and included more transgressive forms of resistance. The discussion and deliberation about a possible Occupy Central movement since early 2013 enhanced the tension and sense of urgency. The announcement of the August 31 resolution on the 2017 Chief Executive election by Beijing, which fell short of the expectations of most of the pro-democracy masses in Hong Kong, was bound to invite massive protests, probably in the form of a street occupation. Yet no one could have foreseen the student class boycott, the surprise occupation of the Civic Square, the firing of tear gas, the outpouring of anger, that ensued in the massive, spontaneous resistance that touched the world. After the September 28 outbreak, the chess game of the 79-day occupation continued to create many uncertainties for both participants and observers.

While the nature of the appraisal and publication game in Hong Kong does not incentivize research and academic writing on Hong Kong politics, there are quite a few scholars who are deeply concerned about the social and political developments of Hong Kong. In recent years researchers on Hong Kong politics and social movements could not but focus on the burgeoning movement industry and the stuttering and radicalizing democracy movement. To these researchers, including but not limited to the contributors of this volume, the global connection and peculiarity of Hong Kong's political activism is a promising research agenda. Yet, few (if any) of us could have predicted the scale and scope of the Umbrella Movement and created detailed research plans beforehand. The commonly held estimation was that there might be an occupation, but that it would last only a few days before the hundreds or even thousands of protestors would be removed by the police.

When the Umbrella Movement broke out between 26 and 28 September 2014, many of us watched the developments with concern and anxiety,



without really making plans for “researching” the event. After a couple of weeks, it seemed likely that the occupation would last longer than expected, but nobody was certain about how long it would last. Most of the locally based scholars in this volume devised their own research methods, without real coordination for studying the movement—without even knowing what others were doing in this unprecedented historic event. The research mostly consisted of on-site field studies. The idea of putting together the related research started when the two editors ran into each other in October 2014 in the Admiralty occupation site. With the knowledge that there were a number of scholars conducting fieldwork studies about the occupation, we contemplated the possibility of putting these works together. We then scheduled a small-scale workshop and invited people who had done first-hand fieldwork during the occupation to present their findings. Most of the research papers in this edited volume originated in this workshop held at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in June 2015. To enrich the comparative and historical perspectives, we later invited scholars who have been working on social and political movements in other parts of Greater China to also contribute to the volume.

Since 2014, a few monographs and edited volumes on the Umbrella Movement have been published. We still believe that we have not learned enough or written enough about this historic event whose significance reaches far beyond Hong Kong. A rich and multi-faceted movement that lasted for so long and in which so many people participated deserves much more attention and academic analysis to assess its causes, processes, and impacts.

The publication of this edited volume relies much on the tolerance and hard work of Dr. Paul van der Velde and Mary Lynn van Dijk at the International Institute of Asian Studies, Jaap Wagenaar and Dr. Saskia Gieling at the Amsterdam University Press, and the Global Asia Series editor, Professor Tak-Wing Ngo, who offered much help at various stages of the editing and publication work. We also like to thank the two anonymous reviewers who gave valuable advice, which greatly improved the content of our essays. Thanks are also due to Ms. Ernie Tan, who designed the front cover for us, and to research assistants, Wai-yin Chan, Fiona Lok, and Natalie Ngai, who provided editing and administrative help at different stages of the preparation and editing of the manuscript.

Last but not least, thanks are due to the countless courageous, selfless, peace-loving, and creative people who had participated in the 2014 Umbrella Movement, without which of course this volume would not exist. The Umbrella Movement may not have brought about any institutional change, but as shown in the chapters in this volume, it had profound effects

on Hong Kong's political development and the people involved. It also provided inspiration to many people who participated in and witnessed the event, both in and outside Hong Kong.

Events change history. Doug McAdam's *Freedom Summer*, for example, details how the experience of a monumental movement left indelible marks on the life histories of those who went to Mississippi in 1964, marks that affected subsequent social movements and the course of American politics and society. Fifty years later, in a different part of the world, we can be sure that "Hong Kong is not the same" after the Umbrella Movement of 2014. Those who experienced the Umbrella Movement were inspired and impacted in diverse ways, which would change the political life of many people in Hong Kong hereafter.



# Introduction

## Civil Resistance and Contentious Space in Hong Kong

*Ngok Ma and Edmund W. Cheng*

### Abstract

Analysis of the 2014 Umbrella Movement speaks to three strands of academic literature: contentious politics and space, hybrid regimes and democratization, and social movements in China and Hong Kong. Based mostly on fieldwork conducted during the occupation, this book brings together 14 experts who studied the Umbrella Movement from different theoretical perspectives with different methodologies. The studies in the book analyze the occupation as a spontaneous and emotional contentious action, which made good use of public space and creative passion. They also show how civil resistance was shaped and constrained by the hybrid regime and situate the Hong Kong movement in a broader comparative perspective in reference to past student movements in China and protests in Taiwan and Macau.

**Keywords:** civil resistance, social movements, China, Hong Kong, hybrid regime, Umbrella Movement

For 79 days in 2014, the Umbrella Movement staged Hong Kong's most spectacular struggle for democracy and brought the city into the global spotlight. Sparked by disgruntlement over Beijing's denial of an unfettered, free chief executive election in 2017, the protest began with a class boycott and later morphed into a spontaneous, resilient street occupation of three centralized locations in the city. Roads and pavements were turned into protest sites and tent villages. The label "Umbrella Movement/Revolution" originated from a cover story in *TIME Magazine*, which showed protesters holding umbrellas aloft to fend off tear gas and pepper spray from the police. The protesters' actions signified the peaceful and plebeian nature of the

protest—a bottom-up and spontaneous campaign against top-down state control and power.

The Umbrella Movement was a significant episode for both new global activism and Hong Kong's political history. Even by international standards, it was a mass-scale civil disobedience movement spanning nearly three months. University polls showed that 18–20 percent of the city's population, or 1.3 to 1.45 million people, participated in the movement (CUHKCCPOS, 2014; HKUPOP, 2014). The number of protesters who participated in the Umbrella Movement is similar to other recent monumental events that brought about significant political changes, such as the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine, in which 18 percent of Ukrainians participated, and the Arab Spring protests in Tunisia and Egypt, which comprised 8 and 12 percent of their respective populations (Beissinger, Jamal, and Mazur, 2012). However, the Umbrella Movement did not bring about a change of political institutions: no government officials were held accountable or forced to step down; no socio-political reforms have been tabled. Nonetheless, the Umbrella Movement is an unprecedented example of civil resistance in terms of form, nature, and scale. It granted the issue of Hong Kong's democracy to recapture the attention of the international media, Western governments, and the global community as a whole (Veg, 2015). It also represented a grand-scale political awakening for many generations including the youth. While its apparent failure to bring about full democracy seemed to mark the end of Hong Kong's long-envisioned gradual transition to democracy (Ma, 2007), the contentious space of the protest served as both a carrier and an amplifier of democratic spirits. The deep plebeian experience and the regime's reluctance to concede have also given a strong impetus to the currents toward self-determination after 2014, which have fundamentally redefined the China–Hong Kong relationship and led to increasingly severe control over the territory from Beijing.

As one of the most dramatic social protests in the twenty-first century, the Umbrella Movement illustrates the multifaceted dynamics of opportunities, frames, and responses toward mass protest in a hybrid regime context (Tilly and Tarrow, 2016). Originating from a fight for democracy, the resilient occupation soon became intertwined with deep social tensions within and beyond the protest sites and across the city's border. International observers and journalists were impressed by the diversified, innovative, and original expressions of passion in the temporarily liberated urban space, and mostly framed the occupation a peaceful and self-restrained democracy movement. In contrast, the government and pro-regime media framed the mass protests as a violent and illegal occupation orchestrated by anti-Chinese forces. In

doing so, they tried to undermine the spontaneous and civic nature of the movement, which attracted new participants, organizational forms, and movement repertoires that featured a lack of clear leadership or coordinated strategy. Although protesters were contesting the boundaries of contentious politics in Hong Kong, the leaders in Beijing and Hong Kong, who were wrapped around the context of a hybrid regime or liberal autocracy, opted to neither concede to nor suppress the movement (Levitsky and Way, 2010). Instead, the regime adapted a series of responses, including counter-framing, counter-mobilization, and a mixture of tolerance and the threat of violence, that, in the end, managed to tire out the movement.

In this light, the study of the Umbrella Movement as a critical and novel event has implications that go beyond an understanding of Hong Kong politics and social movements. In our view, this study can contribute to at least three strands of the current academic literature, namely, the new contentious politics, hybrid regimes, and China and Hong Kong studies.

## **Contentious Space and its Global (Dis)Connectivity**

The Umbrella Movement, or at least the original, carefully planned Occupy Central with Love and Peace (OCLP) movement, was inspired by the Occupy Wall Street movement in 2011, and its spin-off the smaller-scale Occupy Central Movement held in Hong Kong in the same year. With waves of massive occupation movements occurring around the world, most markedly the Arab Spring upheavals in Tunisia and Egypt, a global trend of political activism and social movements in recent years has become apparent.

By situating the Umbrella Movement in the historical trajectory of new activism both globally and in Hong Kong, this volume explains how and why spontaneous actions are by no means the antithesis of rationality and organization (Fominaya, 2015; Snow and Moss, 2014; Cheng and Chan, 2017). Specifically, this volume examines the conditions under which networked civil society groups and social media helped to aggregate people from diverse backgrounds into public spaces, through the logic of connective actions (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012), to produce a decentralized protest structure that facilitated the resiliency of the occupation. The prevalence of new protest forms and mediating tools situates the Umbrella Movement within the recent wave of popular mobilizations, through which collective identities have emerged in the struggle for social equality caused by political disenfranchisement and uncompleted decolonization (Dabashi, 2012; Gitlin, 2012).

This volume also goes beyond the traditions of social movement studies that focus on resource mobilization and political opportunities by instead paying more attention to the role of emotions and new agency in the protests (Aminzade et al., 2001; Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta, 2001; Jasper, 2011; Sewell, 2005). We show how indignation, driven by police violence, helps both stalwart protesters and newcomers to practice direct action and civil disobedience, transgressing the norms of a conservative political culture and lawful protests. This volume also offers a multilateral understanding of contentious space. “Space” here refers to both the varied physical protest sites and the visual communities that emerge from connective actions, from where the dynamics of protest actions are shaped (Juris, 2012; Lee and Chan, 2018). It shows how free expression in contested spaces serve as a praxis of civic collective action.

Spontaneous and massive participation evolves its own logic and rationality. New forms of collective and connective actions are path-dependent, conditioned by contingent events as much as by antecedent experiences that shape the protest agency’s cognitive capacity. We need to place the protests in the context of Hong Kong’s protracted democratic struggle as a hybrid regime since the 1980s, to explain how and why structural constraints on civil disobedience and occupy tactics can be overcome.

### **Civil Resistance in Hybrid Regimes**

The Umbrella Movement originated from a fight for full democracy, from the aspiration of Hong Kong’s people to shake off their perennial hybrid regime and sub-national status and become a genuine liberal democracy (Ma, 2005; Cheng, 2016). Throughout the occupation campaign, the nature of Hong Kong as a hybrid regime defined, framed, and constrained the process and outcome of the movement, including the possible strategies and responses of state and non-state actors. The Umbrella Movement originated from frustration about the futility of three decades of the democracy movement in Hong Kong. Despite strong public support, the democrats have had no institutional power or channel through which they could draw Beijing into negotiations or force the latter to deliver full democracy to Hong Kong. This drove the democratic leaders and their followers to try more radical, nonconventional, and extra-legal means to fight for democracy, culminating in the mass-scale occupation campaign. In the end, the lack of institutional channels and the power imbalance between Hong Kong and

Beijing remained an important factor in the 79-day occupation's inability to force any concessions.

However, Hong Kong's long history and reputation as a free city with a strong tradition of the rule of law also constrains and shapes both protest strategies and state responses. "Damaging the rule of law" has always been the most powerful framing used against the OCLP, whose organizers emphasized the protest's peaceful nature and the moral nature of civil disobedience. Hong Kong's long history of freedom, stability, and peaceful protest meant that tear gas and batons were already seen as intolerably violent by many people in Hong Kong, so their use served as enough of a provocation and awakening for many people. Hong Kong's image as a free city also constrained the use of force by the state, partly explaining their strategy of tolerance and attrition.

Thus, this volume adds to our understanding of the source and determinants of protest outcomes under hybrid regimes, as well as the patterns of political change after a transformative event (Guigni, 1998; Hess and Martin, 2006; Calhoun, 2013). Recent literature on hybrid regimes and authoritarian reversals has shown that hybrid regime leaders are quickly learning to adaptively suppress or tolerate protests, thereby reducing the pressure for political concessions and social change (Robertson, 2010; Yuen and Cheng, 2017). Through diverse strategies of elite cohesion, media framing, and counter-movements, these hybrid regimes manage to consolidate their rule. While the innovative performance, ideology, and protest structures of the new movements boosted mobilization, they were deficient in organizational capacity and ultimately failed to effect major political change.

## **Social Protests in China and Hong Kong**

It must never be overlooked that the Umbrella Movement was a mass-scale protest on Chinese soil. It took place at a time when China has become more autocratic, increased its international influence and prowess, and grown more confident that the "China model" of governance is superior and capable of standing against the pressure of Western democracies (Nathan, 2015). Nevertheless, international pressure and concern over Hong Kong's freedom and autonomy continued to be an important constraint for China's inaction concerning and tolerance of the movement, as high-handed repressions could have brought about political backlash or repercussions from the West.



Since the idea of an occupy campaign was raised in 2013, Beijing remained the ultimate arbiter of the extent and model of constitutional reform in Hong Kong, as well as state responses to the actual Umbrella Movement. Thoughts and memories of the 1989 Tiananmen protest were invariably invoked, at least at the early stages of the occupation. Fear of a repeat of the brutal 1989 crackdown has always hung over the head of all the protest's leaders, framing their choice of movement strategies.

Within the context of Greater China, the Umbrella Movement inherits a long tradition of student movements, dating to at least the 1919 May Fourth Movement. The Chinese government was wary of the movement's spillover effects, so people on the mainland who voiced support for the Umbrella Movement were arrested and punished heavily. Activists in Hong Kong and Taiwan have frequently exchanged ideas and learned from each other in recent years, as both communities thought about how to resist China's control and influence. The March 2014 Sunflower Movement in Taiwan, when students crashed the gate of the Legislative Yuan and occupied it for several days, was commonly seen as a twin of the Umbrella Movement. This volume also assesses the peculiarity or generality of the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong by referring to other protests in Greater China, including China's past student movements, Taiwan's Sunflower Movement, and Macau's responses.

In the perspective of Hong Kong studies, the Umbrella Movement dealt another blow to long-held notions that Hong Kong's people are apathetic, that they only harbored a "partial vision of democracy" or were "attentive spectators" (Lau and Kuan, 1995) and "occasional activists" (Lee and Chan, 2008). The resilience of this massive protest also indicates that the analysis of institutional deficiencies, legitimacy crises, or governance ills alone is insufficient for explaining the outbreak of the campaign (Ma, 2007; Sing, 2009; Ortmann, 2009). By exploring the attitudes and motivations of the participants, this volume takes a deeper look at the psychological orientations of the Umbrella protest cohort (Cf. Lee, 2015), thereby revealing a more complicated picture of democratic aspirations, pragmatism, rethinking the city, praxis, and calculation.

Years after the conclusion of the Umbrella occupation, it may be still too early to make conclusions about the effects of the movement on Hong Kong's future. Although some people have definitely been "awakened" by the experience, its impact on their future participation or the direction of future movements is uncertain. For want of a clear leadership that points to a future path, for many the Umbrella Movement may remain a "moment" and not a "movement" or "revolution" with a clear ideological blueprint. It

was, nonetheless, a major experience of citizen empowerment, a “plebeian experience”,

an eruption of civic energy that did not crystalize into large political organizations, but instead left traces and kept the hope alive that the world can be changed alive (Breugh, 2013; Krastev, 2014).

## **Methodology and Origins of the Book**

Although the original OCLP movement was scripted in detail during a long period of planning and deliberation, the outbreak of the occupation on 28 September 2014 was largely spontaneous and did not proceed as originally planned by the OCLP. The spontaneous nature of the movement meant that almost none of the authors in this book had detailed plans to conduct fieldwork on the occupation movement beforehand. The OCLP was expected to last for at most a few days before the protesters would be removed. During the outbreak from 26 to 28 September, most researchers concerned with political developments in Hong Kong were watching with anxiety, unaware of how long the movement could last.

As a result, most of the authors in this volume began to conduct fieldwork at the occupation sites only in October, when it was apparent that the occupation could last for a longer period. Without much coordination, the scholars involved in this volume proceeded based on their own theoretical persuasions and perspectives; designed their own methodology, hypotheses, and questions; and conducted their own research on the movement. They spent much of their time at multiple field sites across time, talking to organizers and protesters, participating in their meetings, and observing their practices and strategies, as well as situating the joys and fears of both casual and stalwart protesters. Some scholars conducted random sample surveys to capture changes in the protest’s claims and attitudes, along with the opinions of non-participating members of the public. Others interviewed protest leaders and politicians to unpack the decision-making process and power dynamics of the so-called decentralized protests. This spontaneous order of research efforts has brought an interesting diversity of research methods to this volume, resulting in a thickened understanding of the complex and multifaceted Umbrella Movement.

The idea of bringing all of this fieldwork together started when the two editors ran into each other at the Admiralty site in October 2014. We then scheduled a small-scale workshop that invited people who had done first-hand fieldwork during the occupation to present their findings. Most of the

research papers in this edited volume originated from this workshop at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in June 2015. Thus, a common thread that runs through most of the Hong Kong chapters is the use of first-hand data based on interviews, surveys, and fieldwork conducted during the occupation.

## Structure of the Volume

The aims of this volume are both empirical and theoretical. The occupy tactics and networked actions of the Umbrella Movement were surveyed to demonstrate how contentious space can be the carrier and amplifier for democratic spirits. On the one hand, these voluntary and participatory practices attract a broader populace both within and beyond the city. Life stories and images connect diverse individuals, both at the physical sites of the movement and in virtual communities related to it. Such connections partly explain why public support did not significantly diminish over the 79-day period despite activists' tactical errors and the regime's strategic responses. The decentralized movement made contention resilient and variegated while empowering ordinary citizens to express grievances through their own agency and tools, without relying on the intermediation of political parties or movement organizations. On the other hand, the claims and values committed by the protest agency are both old and new. These articulations are old, in the sense that protesters still considered liberal democratic institutions to be the solution to their socioeconomic grievances and disenfranchisement. They are also new, in the sense that the protesters embodied an increasingly collective local identity in their democratic struggle. By subsuming universal suffrage under an identity frame, the Umbrella Movement articulated a claim that synergized the subject of contention between political representation and political belonging. In the face of Beijing's authoritarian advances, mass mobilization and identity construction are intertwined. The peculiarity of Hong Kong's new social movements lies in their transgression of stagnant repertoires in an apathetic society performed by rational spectators.

This volume brings together 14 experts from Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, and Macau. Most of the chapters dealing with Hong Kong are based on empirical research conducted during the occupation period. We also draw comparative and historical perspectives by situating the Umbrella Movement in the broader context of social movements in Greater China across space and time.

Part A focuses on the impetuses and claims that account for the outbreak of the Umbrella Movement. It begins with Ngok Ma's background chapter

(Chapter One), which outlines the trajectory of Hong Kong's social and democracy movements over the past four decades. Chapter One offers the historical context for understanding how conventional protests have evolved into direct actions in the past. Decades of fruitless struggles for democracy and the coming of a new protest agency have sown the seeds for unprecedented civil resistance, as the young generation is determined to seize their own political future. In Chapter Two, Edmund Cheng examines the relationships between the contingent and antecedent origins of the Umbrella Movement. Using data derived mainly from a large-scale onsite survey, he shows how educated youth and stalwart protesters formed the core of the protest, generating preemptive occupations and emotional primaries to spawn and sustain self-mobilized, horizontal, and participatory practices. By situating spontaneity in an eventful analysis, Cheng makes sense of the uncompromising claims and resilience of the occupation. In contrast, Ngok Ma (Chapter Three) is more interested in exploring the motives and thoughts of the committed occupiers at the three sites. His in-depth interviews suggest that many of those committed occupiers were newcomers to protesting and were mostly provoked by police brutality. Their anger enabled them to overcome the threshold of participation and join the civil disobedience movement. This spontaneous nature also partly explains their choice of the form and structure for the movement.

Part B focuses on the diversity of protest strategies and repertoires in the 79 days of the occupation. In Chapter Four, Francis Lee and Gary Tang examine how efficacy and perceived outcomes shaped the protesters' decisions about strategies and practices. Using survey data obtained from the Admiralty and Mongkok sites, the authors show that instrumental rationality is not necessarily incompatible with new social movements. Lee and Tang conclude that a decentralized movement makes strategic decisions unfeasible—not because all protesters are expressive in spontaneous actions or unwilling to compromise, but because they cannot agree on when and how to dialogue or retreat. In Chapter Five, Cheuk-Hang Leung and Sampson Wong expand the category of repertoires to include expressive and participatory practices of art in the occupied squares, streets, and other urban public spaces. They discuss the overlapping spheres of politics and aesthetics that connect the Umbrella Movement to the global wave of activism since 2011. As diverse forms of artistic participation and creative practices help build emotional attachment to the space, acquire a sense of place, and persuade fellow citizens to join an event of civil disobedience, Leung and Wong's chapter analyzes how participants also found a mode of personal existence and demonstrated civic and moral identities in the

collective actions. In parallel, Sebastian Veg (Chapter Six) analyzes the textuality of more than 1000 slogans and texts created by diverse groups and exhibited in the occupied space. He observes a great diversity of historical and cultural references with expressive connotations and communication effects that result in debate and reflection upon the connections and contradictions between the occupy community and the Hong Kong and Chinese political communities. By articulating the deliberative nature and hybrid characters of the Umbrella Movement, Veg differentiates it from other more contentious forms of social movement in China and beyond.

The four chapters in Part C analyze the strategies, responses, and attitudes of the movement, the state, and the public. In Chapter Seven, Samson Yuen discusses in detail the state's choice of strategies and the motives behind them. He shows how the state shied away from repression; instead of concession, they adapted a strategy of "attrition" in order to outlast the protesters. Complemented with counter-framing, counter-movements, and legal intervention, this strategy can be effective in hybrid regimes seeking to avoid massive repression without giving in to reforms. In Chapter Eight, Yongshun Cai analyzes the movement leaders' strategic decision to escalate the protests through interviews with the student leaders. He shows that the ill-conceived escalation was a major reason for the gradual loss of public support during the later stages of the movement. The chapters by Sing Ming and Stan Wong deal with the attitudes of the public. From a macro perspective, Sing Ming's Chapter Nine analyzes how grievances (including socioeconomic ones) against governance, distrust of the Chinese government, and the perceived worsening of the freedom situation fueled the drive for protest. In Chapter Ten, Stan Wong explores what the public thought of the Umbrella Movement through a street survey in November and December 2014. Wong discovered that, instead of a fear of suppression, citizens refrained from supporting the Umbrella Movement because they were skeptical of the capacity of democracy to solve their daily problems; they worried that the campaign was damaging the rule of law. In a way, this showed the effectiveness of the counter-frames the government used against the occupy campaign.

In Part D, we bring the Umbrella Movement into comparative perspective with other areas in Greater China and with past student protests in China. In Chapter Eleven, Ming-sho Ho and Thung-hong Lin discuss the origins of the Taiwan Sunflower Movement. They show that it was the economic victims of cross-strait trade liberalization, suffering from rising inequality and unemployment, who formed the major support for the Sunflower Movement. The Sunflower Movement was thus an example of the backfiring of Beijing's political use of capitalism, as people in Taiwan were concerned that

deeper economic integration with China would hurt democracy in Taiwan. In contrast, in Chapter Twelve Eilo Yu shows that in Macau, the Umbrella Movement was seen as a negative example of a democracy movement, which hurt relations with Beijing and, hence, affected the economy of Macau. With the pervasiveness of pro-Beijing sentiments and strong social control by pro-government groups, Macau society showed a lukewarm response to the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement.

Jeffrey Wasserstrom's concluding thoughts in Chapter Thirteen take us through time and space to various episodes of student protest in China and elsewhere. These protests and movements at times show remarkable similarities, to the extent that it all sounds familiar to an observer as "outside" as Adam Michnik. Although history may not always repeat itself, a lot can be learned from more detailed studies of comparative and historical episodes of massive protests.

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