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Can Hong Kong Become Independent from China?

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DECLARATION

I, Jankin Chin Kan Hung, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature.....

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Abstract

In the past two years, the independence movement in Hong Kong had gained a lot of attentions from the mainstream media. Various politicians as well as the president of China had commented on the movement via newspaper and television. However, the media only focused on the fact that the Beijing Government will not allow Hong Kong to become independent and did not look at the underlying reasons why Hong Kong cannot become a country. This thesis will fill in the blank left by the mainstream media and investigate whether or not Hong Kong possess the essential conditions to become independent from China.

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Chapter 1:

1.1 Introduction

The independence movement in Hong Kong stems from Hong Kong's colonial history. Hong Kong is made up of 3 areas: Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories. After the First Opium War, Hong Kong Island and Kowloon Peninsula had become the colony of Britain. The New Territories was on a 99-years lease to Britain starting from 1898. The lease of the New Territories ended in 1997. On 1 July, 1997, the British government handed over all 3 parts of Hong Kong back to China and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, also known as the Hong Kong SAR, was formed on the same day. Under the Sino-British Joint Declaration signed by China and United Kingdom in 1984, the Chinese Government agreed that Hong Kong would become a special administrative region (Hong Kong Department of Justice, 2016).

The Sino-British Joint Declaration stated that Hong Kong would be governed under the "one country, two systems", where Hong Kong would have its own economic and political systems. For example, Hong Kong would remain a capitalist society in contrast to China's socialist system. Hong Kong would also have its own law, monetary policy and immigration policy. Furthermore, the Sino-British Joint Declaration also stated that Hong Kong would have high degree of autonomy and this arrangement would not be changed for 50 years. The "one country, two systems", "high degree of autonomy" and the promise of the above arrangement would remain unchanged for 50 years are the most important core principles of the Sino-British Joint Declaration (Hong Kong Department of Justice, 2016).

The Hong Kong government had spent a lot of resources on educating the general public about the 3 main principles in 1997 before and after the handover. The 3 main principles were simplified as a slogan and it could be heard on both television and radio. Everyone who lived in Hong Kong in 1997 must have heard or seen one of those educational advertisement prepared by the government. The 3 main principles of the Sino-British Joint Declaration is a promise made by the Beijing Government of how Hong Kong will be governed after the handover.

However, during recent years, various political events led to Hong Kong people thinking that the Beijing Government did not truly realize the 3 core principles stated in the Sino-British

Joint Declaration. Since there is no universal suffrage in Hong Kong, the citizens in Hong Kong have no voting power to determine who will be the Chief Executive. According to the Hong Kong Basic Law Annex I, the Chief Executive in Hong Kong is selected by The Election Committee. The Election Committee consists of 800 members coming from different sectors. Different sectors include commercial sector, industrial sector, religious sector and representatives coming from various professions such as doctors and accountants. The selected Chief Executive then needed to be appointed by the Beijing government. (Basic Law, 2016) Therefore, if the Election Committee picked someone who is not preferred by Beijing, the Beijing government can refuse to appoint that person to be the Chief Executive. Since the Beijing government is holding power to make the final decision on the selection of Chief Executive, all appointed Chief Executive in Hong Kong since 1997 are Pro-Beijing politicians.

In 2010, the Hong Kong government had launched the Hong Kong electoral reform for the Chief Executive election in 2012. The result of the electoral reform had increase the number of Election Committee from 800 members to 1200 members. Despite the number of Election Committee was greatly increased by 50%, the result of the electoral reform is nothing close to a universal suffrage (The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2016). The population in Hong Kong is approximately 7 million people and only 1200 of them have the right to vote for their preferred Chief Executive candidate. Since the Chief Executive in Hong Kong is selected by a small group of people, the Election Committee, the selected Chief Executive does not have the reason nor incentive to answer to the people in Hong Kong. In contrast, the Chief Executives often execute the will of the Beijing government despite any potential objections from Hong Kong people resulting in various controversial political turmoil.

One of the major political turmoil happened in 2012 when the Hong Kong government was trying to introduce compulsory moral and national education at schools. The strong opposition from the public had led to a serial of protects and demonstration. According to Ming Pao (2012), the protectors believes that the true purpose of moral and national education is to brainwash Hong Kong people to love the Beijing government. Eventually, the Hong Kong government had yielded to the public opinion and did not implement moral and national education as a compulsory subject at school. However, this political incident had triggered the hatred of some Hong Kong people towards Beijing. According to Ta Kung Pao (2012), the

independence movement in Hong Kong started to take form after the political turmoil from the moral and national education incident.

Another notable political event which resulted in the formation of Hong Kong independence movement was the Umbrella Movement, which was also known as Occupy Central. In 2014, protestors had occupied several areas in the central business district. The demand of the protestors was for Hong Kong to have universal suffrage; thus, the people in Hong Kong will have the power to vote for a Chief Executive they prefer. According to People (2014), apart from demanding universal suffrage, a minority of protestors were also demanding Hong Kong to become independent from China.

In addition to the 2 major political turmoil mentioned above, there were also other smaller but yet controversial political events. All those events added up together and led to some Hong Kong people want Hong Kong to be separated from China. The people in Hong Kong started to think that the Beijing government is not upholding the 3 main principles of the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the idea of high degree of autonomy was being threatened because the Beijing Government had started to intervene in Hong Kong's affair more often. Furthermore, according to Ming Pao (2012), some Hong Kong people think that the moral and national education was a mean to brainwash the next generation to love the Beijing Government. The aim of moral and national education was to strengthen the idea of "one country" and let the idea of "two-systems" to fade away slowly. As long as Hong Kong does not have universal suffrage, the Beijing Government will always be holding the power to interfere in Hong Kong's affair; thus, weaken Hong Kong's autonomy. Because of the reasons stated above, some Hong Kong citizen want Hong Kong to become independent from China.

The independence movement in Hong Kong did not attract too much media attention until recently. Before 2016, people who support the Hong Kong independence movement did not contribute any tangible actions to support the cause. There were only some small scale protests once in a while. The protests usually take place on special dates such as The National Day of the People's Republic of China, which is the first of October, and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day, which is the first of July since 1997. The actions of the independence supporters were merely marching down the street and chanting independence slogan. Since the protests were usually in small scale and short duration, it did not attract too

much media attention and the Hong Kong government chose to ignore them instead of addressing the issue.

However, the situation regarding to the independence movement in Hong Kong had changed recently. In March, 2016, a political party named Hong Kong National Party was established. The Hong Kong National Party is the first political party which advocate Hong Kong should become independent from China. The party members are planning to participate in the Legislative Council election in September, 2016. The party had listed out 6 agendas as their platform where the first and most important platform is Hong Kong becoming independent and establish a state named Hong Kong Republic upon gaining sovereignty (Hong Kong 01, 2016).

The newly formed Hong Kong National Party had attracted a lot of media attention and responses from the Hong Kong government. According to Ming Pao (2016), high ranking officers from the Hong Kong government, Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office of the State Council and the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region had released official statement criticizing the newly formed political party. Scholars from mainland China had also criticized the independence movement is unpractical and radical.

The situation regarding the Hong Kong independence movement is still developing at the moment. However, the Hong Kong government had changed its approach from ignoring the independence movement to criticizing it publicly using official statements. The change of attitude of the Hong Kong government shows that Beijing is seeing the independence movement in Hong Kong as a threat and is taking it seriously. This thesis will follow the latest development of the independence movement and investigate if Hong Kong really possess the essential conditions to become independent from China.

In order for a place to declare sovereignty, there are certain conditions needed to be met. For example, the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States was a treaty signed by United States and 18 other countries in South America in 1933. The treaty defined the right of a state and what a state should possess in order to be qualified to become a state (Council on Foreign Relations, 2016). According to Council on Foreign Relations (2016), Article 1 of the treaty stated that a state should have "a permanent population, a defined territory, a government

and capacity to enter into relations with the other states.". These four conditions are the most basic requirements for a place to qualify as a state. All four conditions have to be met at the same time; therefore, if a place fails to fulfill any of the requirement above, it cannot be defined as a state.

However, the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States was only signed by 19 countries in 1933. The number of countries which signed the treaty was relative small when comparing with the total number of countries in the world. Therefore, this treaty is often being used as a guideline only and not everything stated in the treaty can said to be true today. For example, Article 3 of the treaty stated that "The political existence of the state is independent of recognition by the other states." (Council on Foreign Relations, 2016). However, this statement may not be true anymore in 2016. Since the treaty was signed in 1933, there was no United Nations at that time. After the World War II, the United Nations was found in 1945 with the goal of peace keeping. The United Nations now has 193 Member States. Since there are more interaction between states than it used to be in 1933, states are less likely to survive if there other states do not recognize it as a sovereign state.

According to Hillier (1998), the constitutive theory of statehood stated that a state can only be a state when other already existing states recognize it as one. Therefore, if a place declared independence but other already existing states do not agree with its state status, the newly declared state does not count as a new sovereign country according to the constitutive theory of statehood. One notable example is a terrorist group known as ISIS. In June, 2014, ISIS declared themselves as The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Roggio, 2014). However, major power such as the United States, United Nations and many other governments had refused to accept the statehood of ISIS (Akyol, 2015). Therefore, despite ISIS declared statehood for themselves, due to lack of recognition in the international arena, ISIS cannot be considered as a state.

Another condition for a place to declare independence is that the population living there agree with the decision. Therefore, an independence referendum is necessary so that the population living in affected area can give their opinion on whether or not they want to be separated from the original country. The purpose of an independence referendum is for people to decide if they want to become a independent sovereign state. However, the result of the

independence referendum may not always be realized. The majority of the population can agree to become independence, but the result can be rejected by the original state. Having the majority to support independence in the referendum is first condition of gaining sovereignty, the second condition would be for the original state to recognize the result of the referendum.

Apart from having an independence referendum, getting approval from the original state is the second criterion for a place to gain independence in a peaceful manner. There are examples that places had decided to become independent after the referendum, but the result was rejected by the original state. For example, in 1946, Faroe Islands had an independence referendum and the majority of people living there voted for Faroe Islands to become a sovereign state. However, the result was annulled by Denmark and Faroe Islands is still a part of Denmark today (Poddar, Patke and Jensen, 2008). Therefore, unless the place which wants to declare sovereignty has a strong military power or strong bargaining chip to overrule the decision of their current state, the result of an independence referendum can be annulled by the original state.

A lot of countries had successfully become independent due to decolonization. Decolonization is a process for people living in colonies to gain back their domination over the place from the colonial power. Decolonization had taken place in different time period and different colonies. For example, there were the decolonization of the Americas, the decolonization of the Ottoman Empire and the decolonization of French colonies. Among all the decolonization, the decolonization of the British Empire will be the most relevant reference to the independence movement in Hong Kong because Hong Kong was also a colony of the United Kingdom.

According to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the United Nations had listed out a list of countries which are defined as non-self-governing territories. Places appear on the list are entitled to the decolonization process (United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, 1960). Hong Kong was on the list of non-self-governing territories. However, in 1972, the People's Republic of China (China) had replaced Republic of China (Taiwan) in the United Nations. After China replaced Taiwan in the United Nations, China requested Hong Kong to be excluded from the list of non-self-governing territories. The request had gained the majority support in the UN and was approved (The United Nations, 2016). As a result, Hong Kong was not entitled to the process of decolonization

anymore and could not gain sovereignty through the decolonization process like other former British colonies.

On the other hand, there are also examples that places wanted to become independent, but did not successfully gain sovereignty in the end. There are mainly 2 reasons why a place could not become independence. The first reason is that the majority of the population voted no in the independence referendum. For example, in 2014, Scotland held an independence referendum to become independent from the United Kingdom. The majority of the people living in Scotland voted no and the independence campaign in Scotland was abandoned (UK Government, 2016). The second reason why a place could not become independence is the opposition from the original country. For example, the majority of people living in Faroe Islands had decided to become independent from Denmark; however, the Denmark government annulled the result of the referendum (Poddar, Patke and Jensen, 2008).

This thesis will investigate whether or not Hong Kong possess the essential conditions to become independent from China by comparing Hong Kong with places which had successfully declared independent and places which failed in their independent movement.

1.2 Significant of the studies

The independence of Hong Kong has become a popular topic among the Hong Kong public in recently years. News and discussions regarding whether or not Hong Kong can or should become independence from China were constantly covered by the mainstream media. However, since media freedom in Hong Kong is only partly free, the news reports are often one sided when they cover the topic regarding the Hong Kong independence movement. The mainstream media usually focus on perspective like it is not possible for Hong Kong to become independent from China or any movement that aims to achieve Hong Kong independence is illegal. However, what the mainstream media fails to report is the underlining reasons why Hong Kong cannot be separated from China or what conditions Hong Kong lacks in order to become a sovereign state. The one sided pro-Beijing coverage on this topic could be caused by the Beijing government having influence on the Hong Kong media. According to the 2016 World Press Freedom Index (Reporters without Borders, 2016), Hong Kong was given the rating of "problematic" regarding to press freedom. The World Press Freedom Index ranked 180 countries

according to their degree of freedom in media and Hong Kong was ranked 69. The “problematic” rating means that press freedom in the mainstream media such as TV, newspaper and radio is only partly free, but not entirely free.

According to Reporters without Borders (2016), the media in Hong Kong is under the influence of the Beijing government. The influence from Beijing makes it difficult for the media to cover sensitive news regarding the Hong Kong or Beijing government. In addition, news media in Hong Kong is using a practice known as “self censorship”, meaning the media will avoid reporting sensitive stories completely in order not to have any problem from Beijing. Because of the reasons stated above, the general public in Hong Kong is constantly getting the message that Hong Kong independence is both impossible and illegal; however, the reasons why it is impossible for Hong Kong to become independence from China are often being neglected. It is true that the mainstream media do not have the responsibility to report a social issues on both sides; however, the general public gets their information mainly from the mainstream media; therefore, if the reports from the news are one-sided, the perspective from the general public can also become one-sided because they are getting their information from the news. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to look at the issue on both sides.

Another reason that this topic is chosen is because only a very limited amount of research regarding Hong Kong independence can be found up until the date when the research question was decided. The Chinese University of Hong Kong had conducted survey regarding how many people support Hong Kong independence; however, no qualitative research scholarly articles which are dedicated to this topic can be found on Google Scholar before this research questions was chosen.

The reason why limited research has been conducted on this topic could be because academic freedom is also not completely free in Hong Kong. According to (Altbach 2001), academic freedom is the most fundamental value to academic research. Academic freedom grants researchers the right to research on any topic they see fit, no matter how sensitive the topics are. In general, sensitive research topics in academic research usually involve researches on a current government regime, or topics related to the researchers own university. Altbach (2001) states that academic freedom is not a privilege that can be enjoyed by researchers everywhere in the world. For example, in Malaysia and Singapore, researches regarding any

political topic of their own government is considered to be a taboo and publication of scholarly articles on such topics is difficult due to the pressure from the government. In recent years, the academic field in Hong Kong has been facing the same issue faced by the scholars in Malaysia and Singapore. In July, 2015, there was a scandal in the University of Hong Kong where Professor Robert Chung had claimed that his right of academic freedom has been intervened. According to Altbach (2015), Professor Robert Chung, a well known researcher who conducts various polls in Hong Kong, had accused the vice chancellor of school had asked him to stop conducting polls regarding the public approval ratings of the Hong Kong Chief Executive. The University of Hong Kong had appointed a special committee to investigate Professor Chung's claim and investigate the academic freedom in Hong Kong in general. This incident had showed that not only the media freedom is not completely free in Hong Kong, academic freedom was also started to be interfered by the Beijing Government and became only partly free.

Since the media freedom and academic freedom in Hong Kong is only partly free, and only a limited amount of research regarding the independence movement in Hong Kong had been conducted, this thesis aims to tackle this sensitive topic without any political burden and definitely without any influence from Beijing Government. This thesis aims to investigate whether or not Hong Kong posse the essential conditions to become independent from China in a objective manner, look at the issues from various perceptive and finally come up with a objective analyze without any political bias.

1.3 Research Question

Research Question: "Does Hong Kong possess the essential conditions to become independent from China?"

This thesis aims to investigate whether or not Hong Kong has the required elements to separate from China and become an independent country. In this thesis, the terms "Hong Kong", "essential conditions", "independent" and "China" are defined as follows:

Hong Kong

Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region in China. Hong Kong consists of the Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories. Unlike the majority of other

cities in the world, Hong Kong has a boarder that separates Hong Kong from the country it belongs to. The boarder was established when Hong Kong became a British colony. On 1 July, 1997, the United Kingdom handed over Hong Kong back to China and on the same date, the Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region was established. However, the handover of Hong Kong did not abolish the border. Boarder control between China and Hong Kong is still in effect and Hong Kong citizens are required to present a return home permit when they cross the border.

Essential Conditions

Essential conditions can be any vital elements that is necessary for a place to become an independent country. These essential conditions can be military power, peoples' will, rule of law or any other conditions that can be found in the literature review. This thesis will first investigate what these essential conditions are, then the essential conditions will be compared with the current situation Hong Kong.

Independent

In order for Hong Kong to be considered as independent, Hong Kong has to become a completely sovereign state. Hong Kong should be separated from China and operates as a new country without any influence from the Beijing government. Moreover, Hong Kong should be entitled to the same status as other countries in the international arena, such as being recognized by the United Nations.

China

China is now usually being referred to the People's Republic of China. However, in Chinese political studies, there have been debates regarding whether the People's Republic of China (China) or the Republic of China (Taiwan) is the China. While there can only be one China, both People's Republic of China and Republic of China are both claiming that they are the sole legitimate Chinese Government. The original China was the Republic of China which was found in 1912. However, after the Chinese Civil War, the Communist party replaced Republic of China and founded the People's Republic of China. The defeated Republic of China had fled the mainland and continued their existence in the island of Taiwan. According to the United Nations (2016), the United Nations recognized the Republic of China (Taiwan) as China up until 1972. In

the same year, the People's Republic of China (China) had replaced the Republic of China (Taiwan) in the United Nations and became the only China being recognized by the United Nations and most countries in the world. In this thesis, China is referring to the People's Republic of China, the one which is currently being recognized as China by the United Nations. Meanwhile, the Republic of China (Taiwan) will be considered to be a de facto independent country in the case study that compares the situations between Hong Kong and Taiwan.

1.4 Methodology

This thesis will be divided into three parts and three different methods of research will be utilized in the writing of this thesis. The three different research methods are literature review, comparative research and making use of secondary data from other studies and public interview of Hong Kong and China politicians conducted by the media.

The first part of the thesis will be literature review. This part of the thesis will define the definition of an independent country and investigate what are the most fundamental requirements for a place to become a country.

The second part of the thesis will be comparative research. The part of the thesis aims to compare the current situation in Hong Kong with countries that had successfully gained independence and places that wanted to gain independence but failed. The comparative research method is often seen in quantitative research where researchers conduct quantitative analysis using the data from other researches. However, Deutsch (1987) stated that despite the majority of comparative research are involved in working on quantitative data, the comparative method can also be used in qualitative research. According to Peterson (2005), the comparative method is one of the most useful tool in social science. The comparative method is mainly used in situation that designing and conducting an experiment is not possible. In such case, data collecting will be based on observation instead of experiment. According to Heidenheimer, Hecllo & Adams (1990), the comparative method is a method of discovering new knowledge and answers by comparing two or more events or phenomena. By comparing one situation with another, the comparative method allows researchers to gain new perspective regarding the issue and also allows researchers to understand other peoples' opinions on the issue as well as the constraints faced by the event or incident being studied. In this thesis, the constraints being looked at will be the

constricts faced by the independence movement in Hong Kong. Given the nature of the research question, it would not possible to conduct any experiment regarding whether it is possible for Hong Kong to become independent from China. Therefore, data collection of this part of the thesis will be based on observing historical cases from other countries. The historical cases from other countries will then be compared with Hong Kong. In addition, this part of the thesis will also look at any potential conditions that Hong Kong possesses which allow Hong Kong to function as an independent country as well as any potential conditions that Hong Kong possesses which prevent Hong Kong from being independent from China.

The third part of the thesis will focus on secondary data obtained from the media. Given the timeframe and resources for writing this thesis, it is not possible to conduct any large scale survey with a sufficient sample size for statistical analysis. Conducting first hand interviews with famous Hong Kong politicians is also not possible due to the lack of contacts. Therefore, this part of the thesis will make use of interviews and press release from the main stream media. Various Hong Kong and China politicians have made comments regarding to the Hong Kong independence movement, this part of the thesis will give a few notable examples of those comments.

Finally, a final verdict will be given to the research question based on the analysis conducted above. A conclusion will be made by comparing the current situation of Hong Kong with the countries that successfully gained independence and places that failed to gain independence. If the current situation in Hong Kong is similar to the countries which had become independent, then it can be concluded that Hong Kong also possess the essential conditions to become independent from China. However, on the other hand, if the current situation in Hong Kong is similar to places which failed to become independent, then it can be concluded that Hong Kong does not possess the essential conditions to become independent from China.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Definition of a sovereign state according to the old Westphalian concept

One of the earliest concepts that defines how a place can be considered to be a sovereign state is the old Westphalian concept. According to Jackson (2003), the Westphalian concept defines a place to be a sovereign state when a place is the only actor that can exercise its powers

on its citizens and territory without the influence from other states. Krasner (1999) states that the exclusion of any foreign actors exercising their power on a state's territory is the most fundamental value of a sovereign state according to the Westphailain. In other words, if Hong Kong needs to satisfy the definition of sovereign state in the Westphailian concept, then the Hong Kong Government should be operating on its own without any influence from the Beijing government, which is not the case right now in reality. According to Krasner (1999), Taiwan can be considered to be a sovereign state according to the Westphailain concept. This is because the Taiwan Government is operating on its own without any influence from the Beijing Government.

2.2 The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States

The Westphailain concept mentioned above is one of the oldest sovereign state concepts; however, it is also the most fundamental value of what a sovereign state should be. In addition to the Westphailain concept, scholars have also added extra conditions to the definition of sovereign states at the later time.

According to Ijalaye (1971), Professor Philip Jessup, the United States Representative in the United Nations Security Council, had pointed out the conditions of a sovereign state in a United Nations meeting regarding whether or not to admit Israel as a new member in 1948. Professor Jessup pointed out that under international laws, a sovereign state should satisfy the following four requirements. First, the state should have its people. Second, the state should have its territory. Third, the state should have a government. Last but not least, the state government should be able to enter into relations with other existing states. However, Ijalaye (1971) states that Professor Jessup merely paraphrased The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States and did not add anything new to the requirements of being a sovereign state.

The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States was a treaty signed in 1933 in South America by 19 countries, including the United States. The treaty listed out the right of sovereign states as well as four fundamental conditions a place should possess in order to be considered to be a state (Council on Foreign Relations, 2016). According to Ijalaye (1971, p.551) Article 1 of The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States stated that a state defined under international law should have " (a) a permanent population; (b) a defined

territory; (c) government; and (d) capacity to enter into relations with other States". For a place to be considered to be a sovereign states, all of the four conditions listed above must be fulfilled at the same time. Therefore, if a place fails to meet one of the requirements states above, that place cannot be considered to be a state.

However, Ijalaye (1971) argued that the four conditions listed out in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States can only be used for reference only as the requirement of "a defined territory" is not always being followed. Ijalaye (1971) argued that whether a state has a fixed territory or not does not affect its status of statehood. For example, in May, 1949, Israel was accepted to become a member in the United Nations despite the boundaries of Israel's territory were not well defined at that time. Ijalaye (1971) further argued that the requirement of (a) a permanent population may not be essential requirement either because if a state does not have a defined territory, then its permanent population is also not defined. It is because the permanent population would change when the defined territory of the state changes.

The four conditions listed out in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States can be applied to most countries most of the time; however, it is always possible for a sovereign state to lack one or two conditions listed above, such as Israel. In addition, the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States was only signed by 19 countries and the majority countries in the world did not participate in signing this treaty. Thus, as mentioned by Ijalaye (1971), the four conditions listed in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States should be used as reference and they may not be always true in reality.

Since Professor Philip Jessup did not add any additional requirements of being a sovereign state in the United Nations Security Council in 1948, the four conditions mentioned in The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, along with the old Westphalian concept where it stated a sovereign state should not be controlled or under the influence of another state when it exercises its power on its citizens and territory, can be treated as the five fundamental requirements of being a sovereign state.

2.3 A state's sovereignty Depends of its state status Being Recognized by other existing states

For a place to be considered to be a state, apart from fulfilling the requirements listed above, a place also need to gain recognitions in the international arena. According to Hillier (1998), the requirement is stated in the constitutive theory of statehood where it stated that the existence of statehood of a state depends on it being recognized by other existing states. In other words, if a place declared to be a state but no other existing states recognize it as such, then the newly declared state cannot be considered to be a state even it declared itself to be one. This requirement can be treated as a further elaboration of "(d) capacity to enter into relations with other States" as mentioned in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States. Ijalaye (1971) identified this requirement as the most important requirement of all four and reinterpreted it as "a state must have recognized capacity to maintain external relations with other states." (p.552). In other words, same as what is stated in the constitutive theory of statehood, a state can only be a state when it is being recognized by other existing state as such. According to Krasner (1999), this requirement can also be referred as international legal sovereignty where a state can only be determined to be a sovereign state when other countries agree with its status. For example, according to the Westphailian concept, Taiwan has Westphailian sovereignty. However, under the condition that a state must be recognized by other states, Taiwan does not have international legal sovereignty because Taiwan only has limited recognition in the international arena and not being recognized as a state by the United Nations.

The generally accepted method for a new state to gain recognitions in the international area is to become a member of the United Nations. The United Nations (2017) stated that the United Nations "is open to all peace-loving States that accept the obligations contained in the United Nations Charter and, in the judgment of the Organization, are able to carry out these obligations". Admission to the United Nations is subject to approval from the General Assembly after the application was recommended by the Security Council. However, the United Nations (2017) also states that the United Nations is an independent organization; thus, it cannot grant recognitions on behalf of its members. It is up to each member state to decide to recognize a new state or not. Therefore, becoming a member in the United Nations will not automatically grant recognitions to a new state from all existing members. For example, Kosovo, a member of the

United States, only gained recognitions from 111 out of 193 countries members in the United Nations.

Another notable example of a group that declared itself to be a state but not being recognized by other existing countries is the terrorist group ISIS. In June, 2014, ISIS declared themselves as The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Roggio, 2014). However, since the United Nations and other major countries such as the United States do not recognize ISIS to be a state, ISIS cannot be considered to be a state due to the lack of recognitions in the international arena despite they declared themselves to be a state (Akyol, 2015).

Chapter 3:

3.1 Real Life Examples of How Other Countries Became Independent and How They Can Be Compared with Hong Kong

According to the United States Department of State (2017), there are currently 195 independent states in 2017. Various countries had become independent in different times. Some of the countries had become independent a very long time ago and some countries had only become independent recently. For example, according to the CIA World Fact Book (2017), San Marino claims itself to be the oldest independent country in the world. San Marino was founded by Saint Marinus, a Christian stonemason, in 301, which is more than 1700 years ago. On the other hand, according to the United Nations News Center (2011), South Sudan is the newest country in the world up until today. Following the result of a referendum held in January, South Sudan was declared to be an independent country in the same year on 9 July, 2011 and became the newest member of the United Nations. The referendum was held under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed by the Sudan Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in 2005, ending the civil war between North and South Sudan which lasted for decades.

Since the international arena and the norms of international diplomacy are constantly changing throughout history, it would be illogical to compare the situation of Hong Kong with countries which became independent a few hundred years. In addition, The international arena as we know it today was mainly established after Second World War with the founding of the United Nations in 1945. Therefore, this part of the thesis will only focus on countries that

became independent recently, especially after the Second World War. Countries which became independent a long time ago are not likely to have any comparison value; thus, they will be not be looked into details in this thesis.

In general, the reasons behind how a place could become an independent country can be categorized into the following reasons: decolonization, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the end of a civil war in a country and peaceful separation of a country when two places within a country agree to split instead of staying together as one country. This part of the thesis will look into each category with a few notable examples. The conditions or reasons of how those places become an independent country will then be compared with the situation in Hong Kong.

3.2 Decolonization

Decolonization is referring to a process that colonial power, such as the United Kingdom, is giving up its colonies and let those colonies to become independent countries. Decolonization is an event that can lead to many places becoming independent countries and it had happened multiple times in human history. For example, three were the decolonization of the Ottoman Empire, the decolonization of the Americas and the decolonization of French. However, the above mentioned examples happened too long ago; thus, lack the value of compassion with the situation in Hong Kong. The most relevant reference of decolonization regarding the independence movement in Hong Kong is the decolonization of the British Empire. According to Pierce (2009), after the Second World War, the United Kingdom had started letting its colonies to become independent countries. Since Hong Kong was also a colony of the United Kingdom, the decolonization of the British Empire is the most relevant decolonization event to Hong Kong.

According to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the United Nations had listed out a list of counties that are entitled to the decolonization process. Places appeared on the list are defined by the United Nations as " non-self-governing territories" and Hong Kong was being defined as one by the United Nations (United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, 1960). As a result, Hong Kong would have been become an independent country according to the list. However, in 1972, the United Nations had revoked the United States membership of Republic of China (Taiwan). In the same year, the People's Republic of China (China) had become the sole Chinese government being recognized

by the United Nations. According to United Nations (2016b), after China had replaced Taiwan in the United Nations, China had requested to have Hong Kong being removed from the list of non-self-governing territories. China's request had passed the majority vote and was approved by the United Nations. As a result, Hong Kong was removed from the list of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and not entitled to the decolonization process anymore. In other words, due to China's request in the United Nations, Hong Kong had lost its right to become an independent country through decolonization.

3.3 The Dissolution of the Soviet Union

Apart from decolonization, the dissolution of the Soviet Union is another single historical event that led to a large amount of places declaring to be independent. According to Walker (2003), the dissolution of the Soviet Union had led to the USSR being broken down into fifteen successor states. The fifteen successor states are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The reasons for the dissolution of the Soviet Union are a series of complicated historical events. The most important point about the dissolution of the Soviet Union is that places had become independent states because of the collapse of a former regime. Therefore, if Hong Kong were to become independent through a similar process, then the Communist's regime will need to collapse similar to the Soviet Union. However, China is one of the major powers in the world right now and there is no indication that the Beijing Government will collapse anytime soon. According to Apple Daily (2016), former Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten, had also mentioned in a seminar in the University of Hong Kong that he does not see any possibility that the Communist regime in Beijing will collapse in any near future. Therefore, it is not likely that Hong Kong can become an independent state through the dissolution of the People's Republic of China.

3.4 The End of a Civil War

Another reason that places can become independent is from the direct result of the end of a civil war. For example, the newest country in the world, South Sudan, had gained its independence on 9 July, 2011 following the end of a decades long civil war between the Sudan Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in 2005. According to the United

Nations News Center (2011), the two parties signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and a referendum was held in January, 2011 in South Sudan based on that peace agreement. The yes side won the independence referendum and as a result, South Sudan had become an independent country and was recognized by the United Nations through its admission of being the latest member in the United Nations.

Similarly, the People's Republic of China (China) and the Republic of China (Taiwan) are also a direct result from the end of the Chinese Civil War. The Republic of China was founded in 1912 after the collapse of the Qing Dynasty. From 1927 to 1934, and from 1945 to 1950, a civil war broke out between the Communist Party and the Nationalist Party. The Communist Party won the war and declared the founding of the People's Republic of China Pepper (1999).

However, since Hong Kong does not have any military personnel, it is not possible for Hong Kong to gain independence by having a civil war with China.

3.5 Peaceful Separation of a Country

A peaceful separation of a country happens when two places within a country find that it is no longer at their best interest to remain as one country and agree to separate peacefully. The reasons behind a peaceful separation can be culture differences, ethnicity difference or any other problems that cause conflicts between the two places.

One notable example of a peaceful separation of a country was the separation of Czechoslovakia. In 1993, Czechoslovakia was divided into two countries: Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The separation process was achieved peacefully without having a civil war (Kirschbaum, 1993).

Since Hong Kong does not have any military force to start a civil war, a peaceful separation is the only viable solution to Hong Kong independence. In order to achieve a peaceful separation, Hong Kong must get the approval from the Beijing Government. However, the Beijing Government had already made a clear stand that China would not let Hong Kong to be separated and become independent from China. According to Sing Tao Daily (2016), Xi Jinping, the President of the People's Republic of China and the General Secretary of the Communist

Party of China, had commented on the independence issue during his speech in a convention that celebrated the 150th birth anniversary of Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of the Republic of China. President Xi Jinping had dedicated a large part of his speech to address the ongoing independence movement happening within China. President Xi Jinping said any activities or any movements that would cause territory to be separated from China would be strongly opposed by the Chinese people. The Beijing Government would not allow anyone, any organizations or any political parties to cause China's territory to be separated from China at any time and in any form. President Xi Jinping also added that Mr. Sun Yat-sen was sworn to protect the integrity of China's territory and the unity of Chinese people. Mr. Sun Yat-sen would have opposed any speeches or any movements that would lead to the separation of China's territory or the separation of Chinese people. President Xi Jinping stressed that realizing the complete unification of China is for the best interest of all Chinese people and it is a duty for all Chinese people to help achieve this complete unification. In the long history of China, China had been invaded by different countries in different wars and this had led to the incompleteness of China's territory. The Beijing Government is dedicated to protect the integrity of China's territory and would not allow history to repeat itself.

The long speech given by President Xi Jinping in the convention had showed that the strong determination of the Beijing Government to stop any independence movement in China. Instead of directing the speech specifically to Hong Kong, President Xi Jinping empathized on the words of "any places" and "any independence movement". Since Hong Kong is not the only city in China that has an ongoing independence movement, President Xi Jinping's speech could be a warning to all independence movement activists in China. Apart from Hong Kong, there are also independence movements in Taiwan, Tibet and East Turkestan. The speech from President Xi Jinping had clearly showed that the Beijing government would not allow any places, including Hong Kong to be separated from China and become an independent country.

Chapter 4:

4.1 Real Life Examples of How Other Places Failed to Become Independent and How They Can Be Compared with Hong Kong

Apart from the above mentioned notable examples of countries which successfully gained independence, are some places wanted to become. However, places which wanted to become independent but failed only got covered by the media extensively when their independence . Small scale independence movements which are still at their early stage often do not get covered in international news. Those small scale independence movements usually do not get enough support from their people and the movements are not significant enough to cause any attentions or real changes to the local political climate.

4.2 The Independence Movement Could Not Achieve a Majority Vote in The Referendum

Holding a referendum is one of the final steps in an independent movement. However, not every independent movement can be developed into a stage that a referendum can be held. Holding a referendum let the people living in the place which seek independence to decide whether or not to become independence by voting. In general, a referendum follows the rule of majority, meaning the decision will be made based on which camp gets more votes. However, there are also some other rules regarding referendums depending on the country. For example, in the Scotland independence referendum, the minimum age to take part in the referendum was 16 years old instead of 18 years old as compared to other countries. (The Independent, 2015). In addition, in Taiwan, according to the referendum law, the result of a referendum can only be considered to be legit when the voting rate is above 50% (Laws & Regulations Database of The Republic of China, 1947).

It is an essential requirement for the independence movement to win the referendum in order to gain independence for their city or state. Failing to achieve the majority of votes in the referendum is one of the reasons that led to the failure of an independence movement.

The latest example of this is the Scotland Independence referendum. According to the UK Government (2016), the Scotland Independence referendum was held on 18 September, 2014 where Scottish people were asked to vote for the question "Should Scotland be an

independent country?". The result of the referendum was 55.3% of voters voted no and 44.7% of voters voted yes. The no side was the majority of the referendum; therefore, Scotland remained in the United Kingdom and did not become an independent country.

Another example of places failed to become independence because independence advocates did not achieve the majority of votes in the referendum is Quebec in Canada. There were two Quebec independence referendum, one was held in 1980 and the another one was held in 1995. According to Fitzmaurice (1985), 59.56% of voters voted no and 40.44% of voters voted yes in the 1980 Quebec independence referendum. The no side had the majority. In 1995, Quebec held its second independence referendum. According to Parizeau (2010), 50.58% of voters voted no and 49.42% of voters voted yes. The no side once again had the majority. Since the Quebec independence movement did not achieve the majority of votes in both referendums, Quebec remained in Canada and did not become an independent country.

No independence referendum has been held in Hong Kong; however, the Chinese University of Hong Kong had conducted a poll regarding whether or not Hong Kong people want Hong Kong to become independent from China. It is not uncommon for the actual result of a referendum or an election to be different from the poll results, but the poll result can be used as reference to see approximately how many people in Hong Kong support the independence movement.

According to Hong Kong Free Press (2016), the Chinese University of Hong Kong had conducted a poll in July 2016 regarding how many people in Hong Kong wants Hong Kong to become independent from China. Researchers had interviewed 1010 people randomly over the phone and the result showed that 17% of people support Hong Kong to become independence in 2047, while 57% of people object. The remaining 26% was either no opinion or did not answer. The poll result from Chinese University of Hong Kong showed that only a small percentage of Hong Kong people support the independence movement in Hong Kong; therefore, if Hong Kong were to Hong a independence referendum, based on the poll result, it is likely that the no side will have the majority.

4.3 The Mother Country Would Not Let a Place to be Separated from it and the place that wanted to become Independent Did Not Have the Military Power to Force Its Way to Independence

Getting the majority of votes in the independence referendum is only one of the requirements for a place to become an independent country. The independence referendum also needs to be recognized and considered legal by the mother country. If the country considers the referendum to be illegal, a place will not be able to become an independent country even if the majority of people voted yes to become independent. Unless the place which seeks to become independent has the military power to fight the mother country, it is likely that the result of the independence referendum will be annulled by the mother country.

For example, according to Poddar, Patke and Jensen (2008), Faroe Islands in Denmark held an independence referendum on 14 September 1946, where 50.73% of voters voted yes and 49.27% of voters voted no to independence. The yes side had the majority and Faroe Islands was declared on 18 September 1946. However, on 20 September, 1946, the Danish Government annulled the referendum result. Since Faroe Islands did not have the military power to take on the Danish Government, Faroe Islands remained as part of Denmark after the referendum result was annulled.

On the other hand, if a place had the military power to take on the mother country, a place can still become separated from its mother country even if the referendum is being considered as illegal and not being recognized by the original government. For example, according to The Guardian (2014), Crimea in Ukraine held a referendum on March 16, 2014 to decide whether or not to be separated from Ukraine and become a part of Russia. The result of the referendum showed that 95.5% of voters voted in favor. The Ukraine government stressed the result of the referendum was illegal; however, with the support from Russia, Crimea was able to be separated from Ukraine and became a part of Russia.

The situation in Hong Kong is similar to Faroe Island in Denmark. According to Sing Tao Daily (2016), Xi Jinping, the President of the People's Republic of China, had stressed that the Beijing government will not tolerate any independence movement in China. Since Hong Kong does not have any military personnel, there is no doubt that it is impossible for Hong Kong to

take on China's People's Liberation Army. Therefore, if Hong Kong held a independence referendum, even if the majority of voters voted in favor of independence, the result of the referendum would be annulled by the Beijing Government similar to what happened to Faroe Islands in 1946.

4.4 The Independence Movement Remained at Small Scale and Could Not Cause Any Real Changes

Having an independence referendum is one of the final stages of an independence movement. However, The independence movement itself needs a lot of support and momentum for the society to be able to reach this stage. In reality, a lot of independence movements remained at small scale and did not gain enough support to become a movement that can cause significant changes to the political climate. It is difficult to identify all these small scales independence movement because they often do not get too much coverage on the media until they have gained enough support and became a larger scale. Most of these small scales independence movement end up being forgotten and the people living in those places would move on as usual. For example, according to Yes California (2017), an organization named Yes California is planning to hold a referendum in Spring 2019 to decide whether or not California should leave the United States. However, since this independence movement is still at its early stage, the international media coverage of this movement is limited.

The current independence movement in Hong Kong is similar to the characteristics described above. Up until May, 2017, the independence movement in Hong Kong still remained as a slogan used by independence advocates. There was no large scale protest or any other significant from Hong Kong people to seek independence from China.

Chapter 5:

5.1 Hong Kong Dependent on China

As already mentioned in the previous section of this thesis, the Beijing government has a very clear stand that it will not allow Hong Kong to be separated from China. The last resort of the Beijing government to resolve any independence movement in Hong Kong would be to utilize the People's Liberation Army. However, given that Hong Kong itself does not have its

own army, Hong Kong and China will not end up having another civil war similar to the one fought between China and Taiwan. The sheer forces from the People's Liberation Army would be able to put an end to any movement in Hong Kong which seeks Hong Kong independence. However, the Beijing government may not need to use the People's Liberation Army because Hong Kong is highly dependent on China in aspect like water, food and income from tourist industry. Hypothetically speaking, if Hong Kong were to seek independence from China, the Beijing government could impose a sanction on Hong Kong before utilizing the People's Liberation Army. Since a city cannot survive without its most basic necessities which sustain the population, a sanction posed on any of the aspects mentioned above would be a powerful bargaining chip to stop any independence movement without using military forces. The following sub-sections will look at Hong Kong dependent on China in the aspect of water, food, power and income from tourist industry.

5.2 Dependent on Water

Water is the most basic necessity to sustain any society. A city cannot survive without water as water is essential for human beings to survive. According to the Water Supplies Department of Hong Kong (2017), Hong Kong has 2 major sources of water. The 2 main sources of are natural water collected from rainfall and water purchased from Dongjiang river which is located in Guangdong, China. The arrangement of Hong Kong purchasing water from the mainland China can be dated back to 1960 where 22.7 million cubic meters of water was being purchased every year. The amount of water being purchased had been increasing since 1960 due to the growing population in Hong Kong. In 2006, the amount of water being imported every year has been increased to 1,100 million cubic meters. The Water Supplies Department of Hong Kong (2017) states that the amount of water imported from Guangdong, China every year make up of 70-80% of the total water supply in Hong Kong. Therefore, if China imposes a sanction on water export to Hong Kong, the water supply from Hong Kong itself can only maintain a 20-30% of the total water demand in Hong Kong. If the Beijing government stops exporting water to Hong Kong, it will cause a water crisis in Hong Kong. Therefore, if Hong Kong wants to become independent from China, Hong Kong will have to seek a new alternative water source that can satisfy 70-80% of the total water demand which is now being provided by China. Since Hong Kong is a peninsula city which is only connected to the mainland China in the north and

being surrounded by the sea in the South, seeking a new water source for the water shortage problem will be very difficult and not possible to be achieved in a short period of time. Therefore, assuming China will stop exporting water to Hong Kong if Hong Kong forces its way to become independence, it will not be possible for the population in Hong Kong to survive unless Hong Kong can find a new alternative water source.

5.3 Dependent on Food

Apart from the highly dependent on water on China, Hong Kong also has a great dependent on food on China. According to Mathews, Lü and Ma (2008), Hong Kong is almost wholly dependent on China in its food supply as most of the food eaten by Hong Kong citizen everyday is being supplied by mainland China. According to the Hong Kong Food and Health Bureau (2017), the food produced locally in Hong Kong is not able to satisfy the needs of the Hong Kong population. The locally produced food can only fulfill 10% of the food demand in Hong Kong. Therefore, Hong Kong imports 90% of its food from other countries where mainland China is the main supplier, especially in fresh food such as vegetables and fresh animal meats. According to the statistics from the Hong Kong Food and Health Bureau (2017), Hong Kong imports 94% of fresh pork, 92% of fresh vegetables 66% of fresh eggs and 100% of fresh meats from mainland China. In order to maintain a stable supply of food, Hong Kong also import frozen food from many other countries such as frozen meats from Brazil and salmon from Norway. However, mainland China remains the main supplier for various type of food for Hong Kong. The type of food where mainland China is the main supplier are chilled pork, frozen pork, frozen chicken, live freshwater fish, chilled fresh water fish, frozen water fish, chilled marine fish, frozen marine fish and fresh eggs and vegetables. In some food categories, China is even the only food supplier and 100% of the food imported from those categories is from mainland China. For example, Hong Kong imports 100% of its fresh pork, fresh beef, and live chicken from mainland China (Hong Kong Food and Health Bureau, 2017).

Similar to the water supply in Hong Kong, Hong Kong is highly relying on China to provide food for its population. Therefore, under the same assumption that the Beijing government can impose a sanction on food export to Hong Kong if Hong Kong forces its way to become independent, Hong Kong will have to find an alternative country to import food from. However, as stated in the statistic provided by the Hong Kong Food and Health Bureau (2017),

there is no alternative importing country for fresh pork, fresh beef and live chicken as Hong Kong imports 100% of these products from the mainland. While imposing a water sanction will cause a humanitarian crisis in Hong Kong, it is more likely that China will pose partly food export sanction to deal with any independence movement when necessary. For example, the Beijing government can impose a temporary ban on fresh pork export to Hong Kong. Since Hong Kong imports 100% of its fresh pork from China, there will be no alternative import option if China imposes a ban. This act will not cause any humanitarian crisis, but it will cause huge inconvenience to the public and make the people living in Hong Kong to realize that food supply in Hong Kong is not self-sustainable and Hong Kong needs to rely on China to feed the population.

5.4 Dependent on Tourist Industry

Apart from being highly dependent on China on basic necessities like food and water, one of the income sources, the tourism industry in Hong Kong, is also relying on tourists from mainland China visiting Hong Kong. According to the Hong Kong Tourism Commission (2016), tourism is one of the most important industries in Hong Kong where approximately 59.3 millions of visitors visited Hong Kong from worldwide in 2015. According to the Government of Hong Kong (2016), the income generated by the Hong Kong tourist industry had contributed 5% to the GDP in 2014. Hong Kong tourism supports the employment of 271 800 people and it is approximately 7.2% of the total employment.

The Hong Kong tourism industry is an important element to Hong Kong's economy. However, the composition of visitors is not healthy distributed among different countries worldwide. According to the statistic from the Hong Kong Tourism Commission (2017), the main source of tourists visiting Hong Kong is from mainland China. Mainland China had contributed 77% of total visitors to Hong Kong in 2015 where 45.8 millions out of 59.3 millions of tourists were from mainland China.

Hong Kong's high degree of dependent on tourists from the mainland started in 2003. In 2003, there was a disease outbreak in Hong Kong known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). SARS had crippled the economy in Hong Kong back then and The Individual Visit Scheme was introduced under the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement on 28 July 2003 in

order to stimulus economic growth. At first, only residents living in four Guangdong cities can visit Hong Kong under this scheme. They four city were Dongguan, Zhongshan, Jiangmen and Foshan. The number of cities on the allowed list has been increasing since 2003 and by 2017, residents living in 49 different cities in mainland China can visit Hong Kong (Hong Kong Tourism Commission, 2017). The significant increase of mainland cities being allowed to visit Hong Kong under The Individual Visit Scheme had led to Hong Kong's great dependent on mainland tourist in the tourism industry.

Similar to Hong Kong high degree of dependent on China's food and water supply, China can also use the tourism industry as leverage to threaten any Hong Kong independent movement to step down. China had already proven that it is capable of issuing a traveling ban to certain country. On 2 March 2017, China's national tourism administration had issued a travel ban to South Korea, stopping all travel agencies to provide any grouped tour to South Korea. This act from China was to protest against South Korea agreeing to let the United States to deploy an antimissile system there. By the end of March, 2017, the Korea Tourism Organization had reported that the total number of travelers visiting South Korea in March 2017 has dropped by 11.2% when being compared to the statistic from March 2016 (Pulse News, 2017). The significantly drop in South Korea visitors shows that the China government is capable of imposing an effective sanction on the tourism industry. Therefore, if Hong Kong tries to force its way to become independent from China, the Beijing government can easily issue the same sanction to Hong Kong.

To summarize, it is clear that the Beijing government will not let Hong Kong to separate from China. Since Hong Kong does not have its own army, it is without a doubt that the People's Liberation Army can resolve any Hong Kong independent by force. However, mobilizing the army to resolve any domestic movement is a highly sensitive subject in China and such action is very likely to attract attentions in the international arena. On 4 June, 1989, the Beijing government had used the People's Liberation Army to clear the democracy movement protestors gathering at the Tiananmen Square. This event is known as the Tiananmen Square Massacre. Therefore, if China takes military action against its own people in Hong Kong, it is likely to attract intervention from other foreign actors such as the United States or the United Nations.

Thus, mobilizing the People's Liberation Army to deal with the independence movement in Hong Kong will be China's last resort.

Given Hong Kong's high degree of dependency on China on food supply, water supply and tourist source, China is holding various leverages against Hong Kong on the above mentioned aspects. Therefore, the Beijing government is capable of containing any Hong Kong independence movement in a non-violent way without using any military forces. For example, an export ban on certain type of food such as fresh pork will cause a huge inconvenience to the general public. The inconvenience caused will be significant enough to turn the Hong Kong people who do not support the independence movement against the ones who do. Since a sanction on water is very likely to cause attention from other countries, similar to mobilizing the People's Liberation Army, it is very unlikely that China will choose this option. For a more severe level of sanction, China can also issue a travel ban similar to the one it had issued on South Korea. The travel ban can easily cripple Hong Kong's tourism industry as 77% of the tourists visiting Hong Kong are from mainland China. (Hong Kong Tourism Commission, 2017) Due to Hong Kong's high dependency on China, Hong Kong needs to maintain a good relations with the Beijing government. Therefore, it will not be possible for Hong Kong to force its way to independence without having prior approval from Beijing.

Chapter 6:

6.1 Conditions that Hong Kong process to function as an independent country

Despite there are many factors that prevent Hong Kong to become independent from China as mentioned in previous sections in this thesis, Hong Kong does process some other conditions that let it function as an independent country. The most notable condition is that Hong Kong and China have two separate governments both have their own independent structure. They are often being referred as “The Beijing Government” and “The Hong Kong Government”. In addition, Hong Kong has its own currency, own financial reserve, own passport. Although Hong Kong is not a member of the United Nations as it is not a country, Hong Kong has been participating in the international arena under the name of "Hong Kong" alongside with other independent countries. This part of the thesis will look at these aspects one by one.

6.2 The Beijing Government and The Hong Kong Government

Despite Hong Kong is a part of China, Hong Kong and the rest of the mainland in China do not share the same government. The government that rule over mainland China is known as the Beijing Government and the government that rule over Hong Kong is known as the Hong Kong Government. When Hong Kong was still a British colony before 1 July, 1997, Hong Kong was ruled by the Hong Kong Governor appointed by the United Kingdom. On 1 July, 1997, Hong Kong was handed over back to China and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region was established. According to the Hong Kong Department of Justice (2016), Under the principle of "one country, two systems", Hong Kong would enjoy a high degree of autonomy and Hong Kong people would be ruled by the Hong Kong Government formed by Hong Kong people.

The Hong Kong government has a complete structure similar to other governments in the world. According to the Hong Kong Government (2017h), 164 900 people are employed under various departments in the Hong Kong Government. Similar to other governments in the world, the Hong Kong Government provide services to Hong Kong citizens ranging from education, housing to health care. The only differences between the Hong Kong government and governments of other independent countries is that Hong Kong does not have controls over defense and foreign affairs (Government of Hong Kong, 2017a).

According to Ijalaye (1971), the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States stated that having a government is one of the requirements of being a sovereign state. Since Hong Kong its own functional government, this requirement can be considered as fulfilled.

6.3 Hong Kong's Own Currency and Own Financial Reserve: The Hong Kong Dollar

Being a special administrative region in China not only allow Hong Kong to have a separate fully functional government, it also allows Hong Kong to have its own currency and own financial reserve just like other independent countries in the world. Similar to other major sovereign states, except for the countries within the Euro Zone and some small countries which use foreign currency as local currency (Prock, Soydemir & Abugri, 2003), Hong Kong is responsible for printing and backing its own money. Hong Kong also has its own financial reserve, which is separated from the financial reserve of the Beijing Government. Hong Kong financial reserve is gathered by taxing on Hong Kong's citizens and the reserve will be used on

Hong Kong citizens only. The Beijing Government does not contribute nor take money from Hong Kong's financial reserve.

The official currency being used in mainland China is Chinese Yuan, it is also known as Renminbi. On the other hand, the official currency being used in Hong Kong is Hong Kong Dollar. Being a former colony of the United Kingdom, Hong Kong had been using Hong Kong Dollar before the handover in 1997. After Hong Kong was handed over back to China, Hong Kong Dollar remained as the official currency in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Dollar is a well established and trusted currency. According to a triennial central bank survey conducted by Bank for International Settlements (2013), Hong Kong Dollar was ranked 13th in the most traded currency in 2013. Hong Kong Dollar had contributed 1.7% to the total currency trade. The percentage of contribution to the total trade was same as Norwegian Krone and South Korean Won, which were also 1.7% and were ranked 14th and 15th in the most traded currency in 2013 respectively.

Furthermore, Hong Kong Dollar also has a relatively stable exchange rate with other currencies. This is because the exchange rate of Hong Kong Dollar is pegged with US Dollar. According to the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (2011), in order to maintain Hong Kong's monetary stability, a linked exchange rate system between Hong Kong Dollar and US Dollar was introduced in October, 1983 and the system is still in use today. Under the linked exchange rate system, the exchange rate of one US Dollar is always equal to \$7.8 Hong Kong Dollar. Therefore, the fluctuation of the exchange rate of Hong Kong Dollar against other currencies will only be caused by the appreciation or depreciation of US Dollar. Since US Dollar is the number one most used currency in the world (Bank for International Settlements, 2013), the exchange rate of US Dollar against other currencies is relatively more stable. As the exchange rate of Hong Kong Dollar is linked to US Dollar, as a result, Hong Kong Dollar is also relatively more stable in its exchange rate. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (2017) stated that all Hong Kong Dollar issued is fully backed up by Hong Kong's own US Dollar reverse held in the Hong Kong Exchange Fund.

Apart from having its own currency, Hong Kong also has its own financial reserve separated from the one from the Beijing Government. The financial reserve is being used to

provide public services to Hong Kong citizens. The Hong Kong Government is responsible for making a financial budget every year and this is being done separately with the financial budget in China.

If Hong Kong does not have its own currency and its own financial reserve, Hong Kong would face two major questions if it wanted to become independent from China. The first question would be whether or not Hong Kong should keep the current currency or develop a new one. The second question would be how to split the financial reserve between China and Hong Kong. Since Hong Kong already have its separate currency and separate financial reserve, the problems stated above would not happen if Hong Kong were to become independent from China. Having a well established and trusted currency and its own financial reserve would allow the financial system in Hong Kong to function on its own if Hong Kong were to be separated from China.

6.4 Hong Kong's Own Passport: The HKSAR passport

Although Hong Kong is now a part of China, Hong Kong citizens do not use the same passport used by the citizens living in mainland China. The Hong Kong passport is a well recognized passport in the world giving its holder to travel to many countries as ease.

According to the Hong Kong Government (2017b), all Chinese citizens are eligible to apply for a Hong Kong passport given that they have a permanent Hong Kong identity card and have the right of abode in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. In other words, the Hong Kong passport can only be used by Hong Kong citizens, but not other Chinese citizens living in mainland China. Other Chinese citizens living in mainland China without the right of abode in Hong Kong and a permanent Hong Kong identity card use the People's Republic of China passport instead when traveling.

Having a separate passport from mainland China gives Hong Kong a special status in the international arena as if it is an independent country. For example, a lot of countries treat Hong Kong passport holders and China passport holders differently when it comes to visa requirement and immigration requirement. The Hong Kong passport is one of the most powerful passports in the world as it allows its holder to enjoy visa-free access or visa-on-arrival to the majority of countries. According to the Hong Kong Immigration Department (2017), Hong Kong passport

holder can enjoy visa free entries to 158 countries and territories in the world. The number of countries that grant Hong Kong passport holders visa free entries is approximately three times more than the number of China passport, where China passport holders are only granted visa free entries into 62 countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2017).

The use of Hong Kong passport instead of China passport not only grants Hong Kong citizens a different visa treatment overseas, it also confirms Hong Kong special status in the international arena. If Hong Kong could become independent with the approval from China, it is likely that Hong Kong can maintain its current travel agreements with other countries.

6.5 Hong Kong's Special Status in the International Arena

Since Hong Kong is not a country and is not allowed to take part in national defense and foreign affairs (Government of Hong Kong, 2017a), Hong Kong is not a member of the United Nations and cannot join it under the current circumstances. However, in some international organizations, Hong Kong has been given special treatment in some cases in the international arena as if it is an independent country.

For example, Hong Kong is allowed to join the Olympic games under the name of "Hong Kong" and compete against teams from other countries in the world. During the opening ceremony, Team Hong Kong would enter separately from Team China and the flag holder of Team Hong Kong would hold the flag of Hong Kong instead of the flag of China. In addition, on the Olympic games official website, in the page where it displays all the participating countries, Hong Kong is listed side by side with other countries as if Hong Kong is also a country of its own (Olympic Games, 2017). Moreover, if Hong Kong won a medal, the medal count will go to "Hong Kong" instead of adding it to the total medal count of China.

Apart from taking part in international sport event under the name of "Hong Kong", Hong Kong was also invited to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank under the name of "Hong Kong". The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a new multilateral financial institution that aims to help the development of infrastructure in Asia. According to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (2017), the AIIB was founded by China and China is the biggest investor of the bank having 32.38% share of the bank. All the members of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank are independent countries such as Australia, New Zealand and

Russia. However, although Hong Kong is not a country, Hong Kong was invited by the AIIB to join the membership (Sing Tao Daily, 2017).

The above examples show that Hong Kong is already enjoying a special status as if it is an independent country in the international arena. This existing relations with various international organizations shows that despite Hong Kong is a city, Hong Kong is capable of functioning similar to an independent country. If China allows Hong Kong to become independent, it is likely that Hong Kong can continue to benefit from the existing relations with various international organizations without any major changes.

Chapter 7:

7.1 Case Study of Taiwan of How Hong Kong Can Be Compared with Taiwan

Taiwan is an island located east of mainland China. Taiwan is surrounded by sea and geographically the land of Taiwan and the land of mainland China are not connected to each other. Taiwan is a part of China; however, "Which China is the legitimate China?" has been an ongoing debate between the government of People's Republic of China and Republic of China as both China and Taiwan claims to be the sole legitimate Chinese Government. According United Nations (2016), the Republic of China (Taiwan) was a member in the United Nations until 1972. In 1972, the United Nations revoked the membership of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and admitted People's Republic of China (China) to the United Nations. Despite of having limited recognition in the international arena, Taiwan is now a de facto state. According to Krasner (1999), Taiwan can be considered to be a sovereign state in the Westphalian concept because the Taiwan Government is operating on its own without any influence from the Beijing Government. This part of the thesis will look at how Taiwan is able to maintain Westphalian sovereignty despite the Beijing Government had mentioned from time to time that Taiwan is a part of China. There are two main reasons that Taiwan is able to maintain its Westphalian sovereignty: Taiwan's Military Power and the potential intervention from the United States if China tries to take over Taiwan by force

7.2 Taiwan's Military Power

According to the People's Republic of China (China), both Hong Kong and Taiwan are part of China. However, there is one major difference between Hong Kong and Taiwan, which is the military power. While Hong Kong has zero military personnel, Taiwan possess its own military force known as The Republic of China Armed Forces. According to the annual report from United States Department of Defense (2016), Taiwan has approximately 175,000 active military personnel. In addition, the United States Department of Defense (2016) states that Taiwan military's advantage over China's military lies in its technological superiority and the geographic advantage of defending an island. Geographically, Taiwan is an island and there is a sea separating China from Taiwan. The sea can be considered as a nature barrier if China wants to launch a full scale invasion against Taiwan.

Having the Republic of China Armed Forces is the major reason of how Taiwan can maintain its Westphalian sovereignty. Since Taiwan has its own military force, any attempt from the Beijing Government to take over Taiwan by force could lead to another Chinese civil war. Therefore, it is unlikely that China will risk its reputation in the international arena by starting a civil. On the other hand, since there is no military force in Hong Kong, there will be no civil war even if the Beijing Government mobilize The Chinese People's Liberation Army to resolve the independence movement in Hong Kong. The result of using the army to resolve any large scale independence rally in Hong Kong is likely to be similar to the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989, but there will not be any civil war between Hong Kong and China.

7.3 Potential Intervention from a Foreign Actor: The United States

Despite Taiwan's United Nations membership was revoked in 1972 (The United Nations, 2016), Taiwan is still having a special relationship with the United States. According to the US Department of State (2016), Taiwan and the United States "enjoy a robust unofficial relationship". The United States stated that they do not support Taiwan seeking independence; however, the United States has been selling weapons to Taiwan changes the balance of power between China and Taiwan. According to United States Department of Defense (2016), up until 2016, the United States had sold more than \$14 billion USD worth of weapons to Taiwan since 2009.

In addition, according to the same annual report from the United States Department of Defense (2016), the United States predicated that if China launches a full scale invasion against Taiwan, China will seek to deter and delay any intervention from the United States, meaning it is very likely that the United States will interfere if a war broke out between China and Taiwan. Therefore, with the potential of being interfered by another super power, the United States, it is not likely that China will launch a full scale invasion against Taiwan under the current situation.

The current situation in Hong Kong is completely different than the situation in Taiwan. First, Hong Kong does not have any military force; therefore, China does not risk starting a civil war even if China needs to use its army to resolve the independence movement. Second, as there is no risk of having a war, potential intervention from other countries such as the United States is lower than taking military actions against Taiwan. Since Hong Kong does not have an army, it will not be possible for Hong Kong to enjoy Westphalian sovereignty as being enjoyed by Taiwan.

Chapter 8:

8.1 Opinion from famous Hong Kong and China politicians regarding the independence in Hong Kong

The independence movement in Hong Kong had gained a lot of media attention in the past two years. Some famous Hong Kong and China politicians had expressed their opinion on this subject via the media. This part of the thesis will look at how those famous politicians think of the independence movement in Hong Kong. In order to look at the independence movement in Hong Kong from different perspectives, this part of the thesis will cover the opinions from politicians with different political background. One notable example will be chosen for each of the following political background: politicians with a pro-Beijing background, politicians with a pro-democracy background and independent politician without any pro-Beijing or pro-democracy background.

8.2 Opinion from a Politician with a Pro-Beijing Background: Wang Zhenmin

Wang Zhenmin is a politician and scholar in China. He is a professor and the head of the law department in Tsinghua University School of Law (Tsinghua University School of Law,

2017). Wang Zhenmin is also the legal chief for the China Liaison Office, a China's office that is set up in Hong Kong with the aim to facilitate the interaction between Hong Kong and China.

According to Oriental Daily News (2017), Wang Zhenmin was a speaker in a forum that celebrated the 27th anniversary of the introduction of the Basic Law. The forum was held in April 2017 and Wang Zhenmin had given a speech regarding his opinion on the independence movement in Hong Kong. Wang Zhenmin said the "one country, two systems" is a mean to achieve China's unification in a peaceful manager. The idea of having "one country, two systems" is to satisfy the goal of having "one country". If the concept of "one country" cannot be fulfilled, then it will be meaningless to talk about "two systems". If the nature of "one country, two systems" had changed to an excuse to seeking independence, then the "one country, two systems" would jeopardize national security. If that happens, China would not allow "one country, two systems" to continue to exist. Wang Zhenmin also added, if China takes back the "one country, two systems", the Beijing Government will lose its reputation; however, Hong Kong will lose everything. Therefore, failure is not an option for "one country, two systems". Wang Zhenmin stressed that if Hong Kong people can trust the Beijing Government and act according to the interest of China to protect the integrity of its territory, then the Beijing Government would allow Hong Kong to continue to enjoy a high degree of autonomy. On the other hand, if Hong Kong people do not trust the Beijing Government and seek independence, then China will have no choice but to put more constrains on Hong Kong. Wang Zhenmin said it is sad that the independence movement in Hong Kong had already infiltrated into high schools and universities; therefore, it is necessary for the independence movement to be stopped.

8.3 Opinion from a Politician with Pro-democracy Background: Dr. Horace Chin Wan-kan

Dr. Horace Chin Wan-kan is scholar and a Localism activist in Hong Kong. He is the founder of a political group named Hong Kong Resurgence. Dr. Chin is well known for his publication "On the Hong Kong City-State" where he stressed the importance of Hong Kong's autonomy (Chin, 2011). Dr. Chin is often being referred as "The Father of Localism" by the Hong Kong media. In Hong Kong, Localism is defined as movements that aims to preserve Hong Kong's autonomy and local culture. Dr. Chin is also an advocate of "Hong Kong First". "Hong Kong First" is an ideal that Hong Kong people should have priority to the social resources in Hong Kong over the new immigrants from mainland China.

According to Oriental Daily News (2015), Dr. Chin talked about his opinion regarding to the independence movement in Hong Kong in a seminar held in Taiwan. In the seminar, Dr. Chin stated that the independence movement in Hong Kong and Taiwan can learn from the city-state system in Europe during the Middle Ages. Hong Kong and Taiwan should first secure and maintain its high degree of autonomy, then eventually become a part of a Republic. Dr. Chin added that his idea is for Hong Kong to gain the status of "city-state" in China. At the same time, Macau, another special administrative region in China, and Taiwan should also gain the status of "city-state". After that, China, Taiwan, Macau and Hong Kong should form a Republic and within the Republic, each city-state should be entitled to their own sovereignty without the interference from other city-state. Dr. Chin stated that this idea is similar to the concept of the federal government in the United States where states in the United States co-exist with each other and at the same time main certain degree of sovereignty such as each state can have different local laws. Dr. Chin said the idea of Hong Kong being a city-state in a Republic can also be compared with the European Union where different European countries are joined together but at the same time remain as separate sovereign country,

The fundamental requirement of Dr Chin's idea of Hong Kong city-state requires elevating the status of Hong Kong from a special administrative region to a city-state. However, Dr. Chin did not mention any specific methods of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan can achieve the such status. Dr. Chin also did not mention how his idea of city-state can gain the support from the Beijing Government and eventually making this concept a reality. As a result, the idea of Hong Kong city-state remains just a concept without any plausible method to achieve it.

8.4 Opinion from an Independent Politician any without Pro-Beijing or Pro-democracy

Background: Chris Patten

Chris Patten is a former Hong Kong Governor. He was the 28th and also the last Hong Kong Governor before Hong Kong was handed over back to China on 1 July, 1997. After retiring as the Governor of Hong Kong in 1997, Chris Patten still makes comments on the Hong Kong's democracy as an private individual from time to time.

In November, 2016, Chris Patten visited Hong Kong for a seminar held in the University of Hong Kong. The theme of the seminar was "Conversations with Chris Patten: Hong Kong's

past and future from 1997 to 2047". During the seminar, Chris Patten talked about how he thinks of the independence movement in Hong Kong (Apple Daily, 2016).

According to Apple Daily (2016), Leung Tin-kei, a Localism activist in Hong Kong said the ruling of the Beijing Government is close to a dictatorship, he then asked Chris Patten should Hong Kong people succumb to the Beijing Government and give up their right to democracy. Chris Patten replied that the opinion of Leung Tin-kei is "dead wrong" and he does not know what plan Leung has to fight the Beijing Government regime. Chris Patten said people can talk about Hong Kong independence and win the support from some other people, but this is not a good idea. If anyone thinks that the Beijing Government regime will somehow collapse in a few years and Hong Kong will become independent from China, those people are not thinking practically. Chris Patten said the reason why he came to Hong Kong to hold this seminar with the local students is that he loves Hong Kong and does not want to see the young people in Hong Kong picking the wrong path for Hong Kong's democracy movement. In the same seminar, a student asked Chris Patten that what does he think of the reasons behind why Hong Kong people are demanding to become independence from China; however, Chris Patten did not reply directly. Instead, Chris Patten stressed that the democracy movement started off as demanding a universal suffrage for the Hong Kong chief executive, but it has now changed to demanding Hong Kong to become independent from China. The change of demand from universal suffrage to independence will only cause the democracy movement to loss support from other countries as well as Hong Kong people. Chris Patten stated that he felt that it was his duty to come and warn the students in Hong Kong that demanding Hong Kong to become independent from China is the wrong choice for the whole democracy movement.

To summarize, Chris Patten is an independent politician without pro-Beijing or pro-democracy background. He thinks the independence movement in Hong Kong is impractical because the Beijing Government had already made it clear that China will not tolerate any movements that will lead to the separation of China's territory. Since there is no indication that the Beijing Government will collapse anytime soon, any movements that seek Hong Kong independence will certainly fail. Therefore, if the young people in Hong Kong continue to go down the path of seeking Hong Kong independence, their movement will loss support from the other countries as well as Hong Kong people.

Chapter 9: Analysis

The research question of this thesis is "Does Hong Kong possess the essential conditions to become independent from China?". After looking at the research question from various perspective, it can be concluded that Hong Kong does not possess the essential conditions to become independent from China; thus, it is not possible for Hong Kong to be separated from China and become an independent country. Since a detail comparison of the situation of Hong Kong with various theories and examples has already done in each section of the thesis, this analysis section will give a summary of the detail comparison written in each part of the thesis.

According to Krasner (1999), Hong Kong does not satisfy the condition of Westphailain sovereignty because the Hong Kong Government is under the influence of the Beijing Government. Since Hong Kong cannot exercise it powers on its citizens and territory without the influence from China, Hong Kong cannot be considered to have Westphailain sovereignty. In addition to the Westphailain concepts, according to the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, there are four conditions a place need meet in order to be considered to be a state. The four conditions are "(a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) government; and (d) capacity to enter into relations with other States" Ijalaye (1971, p.551). Hong Kong has a permanent population, a defined territory and a government. However, Hong Kong does not have the capacity to enter into relations with other States. The last requirement can also be reinterpreted as being recognized by other states. According to the Government of Hong Kong (2017a), Hong Kong is not allowed to have control over defense and foreign affairs. Since there can only be one China in the world, recognizing Hong Kong as a country will mean not recognizing China as a country. Therefore, it is not likely that other countries will recognize Hong Kong as a country because, by doing so, they will risk damaging their relations with China. Since Hong Kong will not get recognized by other countries, Hong Kong does not fulfill the last requirement due to lack of recognition. As Hong Kong fails to meet all the conditions listed in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, Hong Kong does not possess the essential conditions to become independent from China.

In general, how other countries became independent can be categorized into four main reasons: decolonization, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the end of a civil war and peaceful separation of a country. Hong Kong was able to become independent in the decolonization

process. However, after China had replaced Taiwan in the United Nations, China had requested that to have Hong Kong removed from the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. China's request was approved by the United Nations; therefore, Hong Kong cannot become independent from decolonization. In addition, since there is no indications showing that the Communist regime will collapse in the near future, it is not likely that Hong Kong can become independent from the dissolution of China either. Also, since Hong Kong does not have any military personnel, fighting a civil war with china is not an option. The final option for Hong Kong to become independent is a peaceful separation approved by China. However, the Beijing Government has already pointed out that China will not allow Hong Kong to be separated from China. Since the situation in Hong Kong does not match any of the successful examples from other countries, Hong Kong does not have the essential conditions to become independent.

On the other hand, the reasons why a place failed to become independent can be categorized into three reasons: the yes side failed to achieve the majority of vote in the referendum, the result of the referendum was annulled by the mother country and the independence movement did not gain enough support and remained at small scale. According to a survey conducted the Chinese University of Hong Kong (Hong Kong Free Press, 2016), only 17% of people agreed Hong Kong should become an independent country. Therefore, even if Hong Kong can hold an independence referendum, it is likely that the yes side will not have the majority of votes. In addition, even if the yes side had the majority of votes, China will annul the result and Hong Kong does not have to any military power to fight it. The situation in Hong Kong is similar to the last point where the independence movement did not gain enough support and remained at small scale.

In addition to matching all the conditions of failed example from other countries, Hong Kong also has a high dependency on China on food, water and tourist source. China can use Hong Kong's dependency as leverage to put a stop to the independence movement because a sanction on food, water or a travel ban will cause food and economic crisis in Hong Kong.

On the other hand, Hong Kong does possess some conditions that allow Hong Kong to function as if it is an independent country. For example, Hong Kong has its own government, own currency, own financial reserve, own passport and special status in the international arena.

However, since the Beijing Government does not allow Hong Kong to be separate from China, having the above mentioned conditions is not enough for Hong Kong to become a country.

Furthermore, pro-Beijing politician Wang Zhenmin repeated that China will not tolerate any independence movement in Hong Kong. Former Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten said seeking independence is the wrong choice for Hong Kong democracy movement. Pro-democracy scholar suggested Dr. Horace Chin Wan-kan Hong Kong should fight for the status of city-state. However, Dr. Chin did not mention any method for Hong Kong to achieve such status in real life.

Moreover, Hong Kong cannot be compared with Taiwan because Hong Kong does not have any military forces.

To conclude, Hong Kong does process some of the conditions to function as an independent country. However, since the Beijing Government does not allow Hong Kong to be separated from China and Hong Kong does not have any military power or leverage to fight it, it is not possible for Hong Kong to become independent. Therefore, it can be concluded that Hong Kong does not possess all the essential conditions to become independent from China.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

In conclusion, the independence movement in Hong Kong had become a popular social issues in the past two years. This topic was chosen because only a limited amount of researches on this topic have been done by other scholars. Since it is not possible to conduct any experiment on this research question, this thesis relied on comparing the situation in Hong Kong with real life example of other countries. After looking at the research question from various perspective, it can be concluded that despite Hong Kong has some conditions that allows it to function as an independent country, Hong Kong does not possess all the essential conditions to become independent from China.

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