ABSTRACTS

Ng Ka Shing, “Is Religion related to Political Participation in Hong Kong: Analysis of World Value Survey 2013”

The umbrella movement broken out in Hong Kong in 2014 has once again drawn scholarly attention to the social and political changes occurring in post-colonial Hong Kong. From the perspective of religion, the movement is considered to have received much influence from Christianity. For instance, many organizers are Christians and ‘Christianity has been a visible element of the demonstrations, with prayer groups, crosses, and protesters reading Bibles in the street’ (Levin 2014). In fact, Christian organizations have a long history of political participations in Hong Kong but most studies have put their focus on particular Christian groups or church leaders (e.g. Butenhoff 1999, Pavey 2011). While classical theories tend to suggest that religious faiths provide motivations for social actions (Weber [1920] 1963) and religious organizations promote network ties for political participations (Putnam 2000), less is concerned about this question: are Christians in general more politically engaged compared to people with no religion/other religions in Hong Kong? Using data from the World Value Survey 2013, this paper attempts to re-examine the relationships between religion and political participation in Hong Kong from a quantitative viewpoint. The preliminary results showed that Christians are associated with a higher level of political participation (e.g. petition, boycott, strike, and peaceful demonstration) after controlling important demographic factors (i.e. age, gender, education level, income) and interest in politics. It supports the general perception and long-standing academic debate that Christianity has an active role in political participation in Hong Kong.

Leung Ho-man, “The Exploratory Study on the Localist Tendency in Hong Kong”

Localism is a rising political faction in Hong Kong in recent years. Positioning itself against the pan-democracy parties and social movement organizations, localism is gaining momentum and spreading influences in contentious politics in a spectacular fashion. Based upon in-depth interviews with its leaders and members, this paper seeks to chart the localist movement in Hong Kong and pinpoint the conditions of its dramatic growth. Of the localist groups, Civic Passion and Hong Kong Indigenous are the most renowned thanks to their controversial stands on social issues and radical engagement in collective action such as the Occupy Movement and the Anti-smuggling Campaign. My argument is that the rise of localism is deeply rooted in the pathos of Hong Kong political history, specifically its protracted
democratization process. Under this historical configuration, the localists can exploit and articulate the confrontational, populist sentiments against the Chinese Communist Party, and the growing dissatisfaction with the mild and peaceful means of demonstration long adopted by traditional political parties and social activists. Their spectacular success in mobilizing popular support hinges upon the innovative uses of social network and various entertaining products such as comics and novel. As localist force takes hold in local politics, it attenuates the divisions within the pan-democracy camp and hinders the building of civil society in Hong Kong.

Keywords: localism, popular mobilization, democratization in Hong Kong, political party and social movement, civil society

Simon K. Li, “Undermining Hong Kong's Core Values? Scandals of the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Neglected Aspects”

As Hong Kong continues to seek its own identity that can reflect the territory’s attributes, different survey findings repeatedly show that Hong Kong people choose probity as one of their top core values. Meanwhile, many in the city regard the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the four-decade-old graft-buster, as the best public body to uphold these core values of probity which are contributing to Hong Kong’s identity building. However, scandal knows no boundaries and the ICAC is not immune to it, especially when its former chief Timothy Tong’s latest scandal came as an alarming shock for many who viewed the agency that he headed as a “whiter than white” graft-fighting organization.

Adding to one’s disappointment was the fact that it was not the first time that the ICAC, the most reputable protector and promoter of probity values, was criticized for its destruction of records which might include revealing evidence of the ways the ICAC and its chief misspent. In another occasion, Justice K.H. Woo criticized that four of the ICAC’s cases of interception operation were actually not authorized in 2007, which means that it was illegal for the anti-corruption agency to do so. While the judge demanded the related files for further investigation, the ICAC said that they had already been destroyed. While the lack of an archives law in the territory means that the graft-busting agency would face no serious consequences if they continue to keep the important files to themselves or even have them shredded, this paper argues that a proper preservation of records is a crucial constituent for integrity and the basis for accountability. After all, as an agency which should protect the core value of probity, not only did the ICAC not set a good example itself, but rather took part in damaging its tradition of integrity.
Chan Moon Tong, “Hong Kong NEET Index Series and Their Findings”
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) is a knotty issue perplexing many countries and regions, and is a heated area of research nowadays. International organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development as well as the International Labor Organization, currently employ the NEET rates as an attempt to substitute the youth unemployment rates for a better measure to reflect the problems with youth development at the times the NEET rates are released. However, it informs little about the secular trend of youth development over a span of time.

The HKCT NEET Index Series is expected to do better than the widely used NEET rates in revealing the youth problem in a longer time frame. The Indices drawn the data from the official statistics dated back to 2000 that enabled it to make a good prediction of the NEET population in the past two years when it was put into test. Moreover, the indices, with the aid of other data, such as those about education, also serve to reveal if the right kind of social investment has been located for youth development. This paper recounts the methodology of establishing NEET Index Series and explicates its would-be contributions to further research of youth.