Matthew Yackiel

Professor Ding

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Hong Kong’s Struggle to Maintain Democracy

The documentary follows 5 young protesters through the most intense clashes of the Hong Kong protests against occupation by mainland China. They are hiding their identities for their safety and the safety of their families. They view themselves as freedom fighters while the Chinese government has labeled them as separatists and thugs. This group rose out of the United Kingdom’s decision to release its colony back to China in 1997. In this agreement Hong Kong would be given special privileges for 50 years. However, the Hong Kong government would have to be loyal to the Communist government in mainland China. The 5 protesters followed are part of a larger group of thousands of Hong Kong residents began peacefully protesting the rule of the Chinese mainland government. However, the police turned violent and the once peaceful protests progressed towards violence. This culminated in the occupying of two university campuses in Hong Kong by protesters.

I will begin by analyzing the human rights violations by the police and the Hong Kong government and the Chinese Communist government by proxy. The Hong Kong government, acting as a puppet of mainland China, is denying their citizens rights to protest. In response to protests, they are going so far as to take prisoners of conscience. Asia matured differently to the West in terms of their views on human rights in that they developed their beliefs under Confucianism as opposed to Western philosophy. While the traditional obedience to power that Asia shows because of this history has many benefits for the states within the continent, it is certainly the case here that the Hong Kong government has overstepped it’s powers and become an enemy to a significant portion of its constituents.

The protesters in Hong Kong seem to truly want Hong Kong to become its own city-state outside of mainland China’s jurisdiction headed by a Democratically-elected government. They feel that their rights will be taken slowly until Hong Kong loses it’s special status and becomes just another part of the Chinese totalitarian nation. This desire is not shocking given Hong Kong’s unique history as the colony of a democratic state and its thriving economy. Since many Hong Kongers aren’t worried where their daily bread and health care will come from, they are now looking to expand their political influence within the Hong Kong government in the form of maintaining and growing the stability of their current democracy. This progress, which was ground to a halt upon the transfer of power to Leung Chun-Ling in 2012, was marked by corruption and ineffectiveness from the very beginning.

I personally believe that every person in every nation has the universal right to seek freedom. Any group that seeks to construct its own democracy should be supported by the international community, and any oppressors that attempt to stop their attempts at independence should be punished financially with sanctions or in rare extreme cases, usually of genocide or other such crimes, with military intervention by the international community at large. Sadly, Hong Kong protesters will almost certainly fail as seen by their flight from Hong Kong and the mass arrests made at the University incident. Hong Kong has no hope of escaping the Communist Chinese government as they are tiny and comparatively powerless. 2047 will come and go and soon Hong Kong will be viewed as just another part of the Chinese dictatorship. There will be some who still fight this oppression, but due to the cultural history of China, I have a hard time seeing any mass rebellions or over-throwing of the Communist party within our lifetimes. I sincerely hope that the protesters can find safety until such a time comes when they can take their freedom and build a proper democratic state.