

# Chapter 25

**Tuesday 26 May 2020**

For Whom is Hong Kong Home? “One Country-Two Systems,” the National Security Law and the Development of a Patriotic Front

"You are too irritating." We are talking about how to deal with domestic and foreign reactionaries, the imperialists and their running dogs, not about how to deal with anyone else. With regard to such reactionaries, the question of irritating them or not does not arise. Irritated or not irritated, they will remain the same because they are reactionaries. Only if we draw a clear line between reactionaries and revolutionaries, expose the intrigues and plots of the reactionaries, arouse the vigilance and attention of the revolutionary ranks, heighten our will to fight and crush the enemy's arrogance can we isolate the reactionaries, vanquish them or supersede them. We must not show the slightest timidity before a wild beast.<sup>1</sup>

Over the course of the last year, I have been closely following some of the writing of Chen Hong-yee (陳弘毅), an eminent global academic and constitutional scholar as he has undertaken a difficult role, to publicly take a middle path guided almost entirely by the relevant principles and ideology expressed through law and exercised through political decisions.<sup>2</sup>

This Olympian view is both profound and distancing. And that reflects the contradiction of the political situation in Hong Kong now-the time for considered discourse, for considered stock taking guided by reason, may well be over. Professor Chen represents Nietzsche's Apollonian voice;<sup>3</sup> “[f]or Apollo wants to grant repose to individual beings precisely by drawing boundaries between them and by again and again calling these to mind as the most sacred laws of the world, with his demands for self-knowledge and measure.”<sup>4</sup> He serves as an

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<sup>1</sup> Mao Zedong, “On the People's Democratic Dictatorship” (30 June 1949); Selected Works Vol. 4, reprinted in Marxists.org; available [[https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-4/mswv4\\_65.htm](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-4/mswv4_65.htm)].

<sup>2</sup> Considered in the essays Chapters 6, 9, supra.

<sup>3</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, “The Birth of Tragedy” (1886) in *The Birth of Tragedy and the Case of Wagner* (Walter Kaufmann (trans); NY: Vintage Book, 1967), pp. 30-144 (“For Apollo wants to grant repose to individual beings precisely by drawing boundaries between them and by again and again calling these to mind as the most sacred laws of the world” Ibid., §9, p. 72).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., ¶9, p. 72.

incarnation of the Aeschylean tragic chorus, and in that role, incarnates the voice and guidance of the gods (in this context the central authorities who remain off stage but deeply engaged)<sup>5</sup> spiced with a deep concern of the fate that he foresees for tragic hero. That role of the tragic hero, of the Dionysian element of the tragedy that is Hong Kong, is assumed by that amorphous but coherent group that constitutes the Hong Kong protesters.<sup>6</sup>

The current situation in Hong Kong has moved toward the culmination of its Dionysian phase.<sup>7</sup> That dialectic which is the opposition of the Apollonian and the Dionysian,<sup>8</sup> and the contradiction it embodies, might well have been inevitable under the circumstances of the production of the national security law draft and its dramatic intervention, unbalancing what had been a year of tense equipoise between competing local factions whose objectives played out against the much greater stakes of the contest between Leninist nationalism (One Country) and sovereignty fracturing internationalism (Two Systems).<sup>9</sup> The rapture of the Dionysian state cannot last; once its passion is exhausted it is left to return to the realm of the gods--to the state of stability and prosperity and order, to an Olympian state now reenergized by the spent passion of the Dionysian element of its cultural (and in this case political) dialectic.

Perhaps it is in that role--as the chorus looking to pick up the pieces, to bury and preserve what can be preserved, of the spirit of the tragic hero under conditions of restoration, that Professor Chen has published his thoughts on the National Security Law for Hong Kong now being considered by the central authorities.<sup>10</sup> The essay is worth a careful reading as much for what it says as for the way it is said. Its most profound point is its orientation. That orientation is one that

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<sup>5</sup> It is in fear and awe of the gods that the chorus seeks to intervene, to seek mercy from the gods and prudence from the tragic hero--in both cases, ultimately, to no avail.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., ¶ 9 ("the high tide of the Dionysian destroyed from time to time all those little circles in which the one sidedly Apollonian 'will' had sought to confine the Hellenic spirit."; p. 72).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. "In this sense the Dionysian man may be said to resemble Hamlet: both have for once seen into the true nature of things, —they have perceived, but they are loath to act; for their action cannot change the eternal nature of things; they regard it as shameful or ridiculous that one should require of them to set aright the time which is out of joint." Ibid., ¶ 7pp. 60)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid ¶ 12 "the discordant and incommensurable elements in the nature of Aeschylean tragedy. Let s recall our surprise at the *chorus* and the *tragic hero* of that tragedy. . . til we rediscovered this duality itself as the origin and essence of Greek tragedy, as the expression of two interwoven artistic impulses, the *Apollonian* and the *Dionysian*. Ibid ¶12, p. 81).

<sup>9</sup> Discussed in the essay Chapter 24, *supra*.

<sup>10</sup> Chen Hongyi (陳弘毅)談國安法爭議：以香港為家的我們的心聲 [On the National Security Law Controversy: Views of those Who Consider Hong Kong Home] was published as part of the 215th issue of Hong Kong 01 Weekly News (May 25, 2020) "Disputes on National Security Law: Voices of Those Who Consider Hong Kong Home."

explicitly draws attention to the perspective of those who consider Hong Kong home--not matter what--from others resident in Hong Kong, particularly foreigners and residents who, when things don't go their way, may emigrate.

我們對於當前的局面，應如何思考呢？對於同一問題，當然可以有不同的觀點和角度。我寫這篇文章，就是想表達一種我相信是「以香港為家的我們」的觀點和角度，這很可能有別於正在準備移民的人的觀點和角度，也可能有別於在海外的華人或外國人的觀點和角度，當然也有別於中國內地居民的觀點和角度。[How should we think about the current situation? For the same problem, of course, there can be different views and angles. When I write this article, I want to express a point of view and angle that I believe is "we who use Hong Kong as our home". This may be different from the point of view of people who are preparing to emigrate, and may also be different from those overseas. The views and perspectives of Chinese or foreigners are of course different from those of mainland Chinese residents.]

It is the voices of those who will stay, rather than the others, that perhaps ought to be given greater weight by those with the power to make decisions about the issues. The voices of those that will stay ought to be reassured, they are told, by the marginal effect, the intended national security measures, will have on them. "A new national security law tailor-made for Hong Kong will only target "a small group of people" to plug a legal loophole exposed by violent anti-government protests in the city and will not affect the livelihood of ordinary citizens, Vice-Premier Han Zheng has assured local deputies to Beijing's top advisory body."<sup>11</sup>

And, indeed, the national security law draft fits nicely into the response developed by the central authorities since the start of the protests in June 2019, that sought to develop a taxonomy of Hong Kong people distinguishing between those who were committed to Hong Kong on its terms, and everyone else. National security offers a deeply developed taxonomic base founded on important notions of patriotism. And patriotism, in turn, could be managed in a way that welcomes patriots into the nation under the protection of the national security law, excludes others, and manages the rest as foreigners whose protection is dependent on the state of relations between state officials and their correspondents abroad. That "everyone else," then, could be marginalized, contained and appropriately managed, as

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<sup>11</sup> Natalie Wong , Gary Cheung and Lilian Cheng, "Two Sessions 2020: Hong Kong national security law will only target 'small group of people', Vice-Premier Han Zheng says as Beijing hits back at critics," *South China Morning Post* 23 May 2020; available [<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/3085791/two-sessions-2020-hong-kong-national-security-law-will-only>].

"China has dismissed other countries' complaints about the proposed legislation as "meddling," saying the proposed laws will not harm Hong Kong autonomy or foreign investors."<sup>12</sup>

And the foreign, the Dionysian element, continued to exhaust its passion against the gods, despite the good counsel of the chorus, ever fearful of the divine retribution that now looms in ever more concrete form. In the face of the inevitable, the protests continued, now re-impassioned by the very mechanisms that will likely destroy them. "One who identified herself by her last name, Lang, said: 'There is nothing else we can do really. We have to do something that is helpful instead of just giving up.'"<sup>13</sup>

One cannot help but recall the address by former Hong Kong leader Tung Chee-hwa, another member of the Apollonian chorus of which Professor Chen is a part, but possibly to a different effect.

In a 24-minute speech broadcast to Hongkongers on Monday, Tung warned that the city had become a weak link in the security of the nation . . . 'If you do not plan to engage in acts of secession, subversion, terrorism or conspiring with foreign influence in connection with Hong Kong affairs, you will have no reason to fear,' he said, a day after thousands took to the streets to oppose the impending law and radical protesters returned to violence and vandalism. \* \* \* "What's more worrying is how some anti-China forces in the West have distorted the truth and openly supported anti-China radicals in Hong Kong ... We can no longer tolerate how foreign forces have conspired with radicals in Hong Kong to put at risk China's sovereignty, its authority and the legitimacy of the Hong Kong Basic Law."<sup>14</sup>

Those who call Hong Kong home fear the gods. And the gods have made clear that acts of hubris--that the passion of Dionysus unconstrained, will not be tolerated for long. The gods have now revealed the instrument of correction. And still the Dionysia in Hong Kong cannot be contained.

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<sup>12</sup> Ed Flanagan and Justin Solomon, "Hong Kong police fire tear gas, water cannons at protest against proposed security law," NBC News (24 May 2020); available [<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/hong-kong-police-fire-tear-gas-water-cannons-protest-against-n1213951>].

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

'China wants to control us. We just want to be ourselves and live with our freedoms, so that's why we are here,' one protester told NBC News.

<sup>14</sup> Kimmy Chung and Ng Kang-chung, "Hong Kong needs national security law because it is 'easy target for hostile foreign opportunists': former leader Tung Chee-hwa" (26 May 2020); available [<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/3086015/hong-kong-needs-national-security-law-because-it-easy>].

And yet, like Tung, that urge toward a construction of a taxonomy that modernized the great taxonomic impulse of Mao Zedong "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship,"<sup>15</sup> with political consequences, weighs heavily in Professor Chen's essay. Not that this is wrong, in itself. And indeed, it is that commitment to Hong Kong that perhaps ought to weigh more for political discourse than that of those who may have a distinct commitment to Hong Kong, one measured by the likelihood that they might leave. The value of an opinion, then, might be weighed against the amount of risk one incurs in taking that opinion. Those with no exit (or who choose that option), then, take on a much greater risk than others. At the same time, it does suggest a hierarchy of perspective that aligns with that of the Central Authorities.

Here again, one encounters Nietzsche's Dionysian Hamlet. Yet for them, even among those who would call Hong Kong home, there appears value in the deceptions at the heart of 三十六计, the Thirty Six Stratagems.<sup>16</sup> The stratagem 打草驚蛇 / 打草惊蛇 (disturb the grass to scare the snake),<sup>17</sup> and once that is done 走为上計 / 走为上计 (if all else fails, retreat)<sup>18</sup> nicely embraces the passion and the ultimate outcome of the actions that have evolved since 2019. It also embraces the tragedy of that stratagem--for having scared the snake, the protesters are about to feel the poison in its bite--unless they can flee.

For Chen application of these stratagems produces a greater harm for those who call Hong Kong home, for those who will not (or cannot) flee. For him the stratagem 李代桃僵 (sacrifice the plum tree to preserve the peach)<sup>19</sup> appears the sounder strategy. For others, a field of only plum trees destroys the value of the orchard. Indeed, the stratagem of sacrificing the plum tree is sometimes understood as the stratagem for offering a sacrifice to appease the gods. In this case, the sacrifice is quite plain--the protesters, and the bulk of their position. And what does one preserve? That, indeed, will be put to the gods, though those offering up the sacrifice will surely hope that they--prudent and careful--will be among its beneficiaries. This stratagem of preservation is thus augmented by another, one with the promise of some reward. It is, perhaps then, best understood as propelled by the insights of the stratagem 順手牽羊 / 顺手牵羊 (take the

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<sup>15</sup> Mao Zedong, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship (30 June 1949), supra. and quote at note 1, supra.

<sup>16</sup> Peter Taylor, *The Thirty-Six Stratagems: A Modern Interpretation Of A Strategy Classic* (Oxford: Infinite Ideas Limited, 2013).

Thirty-Six Stratagems: Bilingual Edition, English and Chinese: The Art of War Companion, Chinese Strategy Classic, Includes Pinyin Paperback – June 7, 2016

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., Stratagems for attacking situations, No. 13, p. 56.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Stratagems for desperate situations, No. 36, p. 129.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Stratagems for opportunistic situations, No. 11, p. 49.

opportunity to pilfer the goat)<sup>20</sup> of seeking whatever advantage one can, however small, from a position of disadvantage. This a strategy of long term reduced expectation, of a moderately prosperous society, and of seizing what is not carried off by the greater powers. It embodies the power of the small.

Professor Chen's conclusion provides the perfect foundation for considering its quite nuanced arguments:

在去年反修例運動高潮時，我曾感覺到，香港「一國兩制」的路正走得愈來愈窄，看不到任何希望。所謂山窮水盡疑無路，柳暗花明又一村，但願「國安法事件」的危機可以成為一個轉機，在看來瀕臨失敗邊緣的「一國兩制」事業崩潰之前，力挽狂瀾。更希望曾誤入歧途的青少年能回頭是岸，回歸尊重他人權利和遵守體現社會成員共同利益的法律的正路，我相信這是以香港為家的我們的衷心盼望。  
[At the climax of the Anti-Amendment Movement last year, I once felt that the road of "one country, two systems" in Hong Kong is getting narrower and narrower, and I see no hope. The so-called mountains and rivers are full of doubts, and there is another village in the dark. I hope the crisis of the "national security law incident" can become a turning point. Before the collapse of the "one country, two systems" cause that seems to be on the verge of failure, it will turn the tide. I also hope that the young people who have gone astray can return to the shore and return to the right path of respecting the rights of others and complying with laws that reflect the common interests of members of society. I believe this is our sincere hope that Hong Kong is the home.]

And there it is. Not just an offering to the gods, but a chorus to remind us of the lessons that must be learned as one contemplates the body of the Dionysian tragic hero now brought low by the insatiable expression of heroic passion.

Beyond that, it might be argued that one is left with nothing--the Stratagem 無中生有.<sup>21</sup> Yet there is great substance within that space that appears ready to be filled with something. To those ends, there are nods to all key elements. *To the Central Authorities* there is an unswerving commitment to the fundamental principled vision of the vanguard: "我們同屬一個命運共同體 [We all belong to a community of shared destiny]" and the emphasis on peace, security and prosperity. As well, there is an echo of the key line of the Central

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., No. 12, p. 52.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., Stratagems for opportunistic situations, No. 7, p. 37.

Authorities--that the law is meant to target only a small number of unruly elements.<sup>22</sup>

*To the pan-democrats* there is the offer of the support for legalism, for a scrupulous attention to the forms and effects of the law thorough which the relationship between Hong Kong and the Central Government have been developed, and thus developed, applied: "In this regard, I hope that the drafters will be able to speak up and listen to the opinions of Hong Kong people. . . We also hope that this legislation can comply with the rule of law and the principle of non-retroactivity of criminal law."

And there is the warning in the form of a plea: "We hope that this National Security Law can reflect the spirit of "one country, two systems", respect the difference between the two systems, and will not directly apply the criminal regulations on national security in mainland China to Hong Kong, but take into account Hong Kong's common law system and the current The human rights standards applicable to Hong Kong seek to achieve an appropriate balance between safeguarding national security and individual rights and freedoms."<sup>23</sup>

The coverage of subversion under the new law was much wider than what was proposed in the local Article 23 bill back in 2003, according to Basic Law Committee member Albert Chen Hung-ye, a University of Hong Kong law professor. . . . Chen noted that the new law targeted subversive acts that were against the "state power", instead of only the "central government" as in the 2003 version. . . it covers many more administrations, including Hong Kong and other local authorities," he added."<sup>24</sup>

But in the end, it appears that "One country" is a legal basis for the relationship between Hong Kong and the Central Authorities, and "Two Systems" is the way that legal discretion is to be exercised "within a cage of regulation."<sup>25</sup> And yet that is not the ultimate object. For a West obsessed with human and political rights, that appears to be at the center of the current back and forth on the

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<sup>22</sup> See, Natalie Wong , Gary Cheung and Lilian Cheng, "Two Sessions 2020: Hong Kong national security law will only target 'small group of people', supra.

<sup>23</sup> 陳弘毅談國安法爭議, supra.

<sup>24</sup> Natalie Wong , Gary Cheung and Lilian Cheng, "Two Sessions 2020: Hong Kong national security law will only target 'small group of people', supra.

<sup>25</sup> An Baijie, "Xi Jinping vows 'power within cage of regulations' " *China Daily* (23 January 2013); available [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-01/23/content\_16157933.htm] ("Quoting an example from the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC), Xi said that officials should learn lessons from history. The Qin Dynasty was overthrown because the people rejected unpopular policies, including high taxes and extravagance at public expense.").

shaping of the One Country Two Systems framework. Yet it is likely that this is not the case from the side of the central authorities. They have made it quite clear that human rights for the collective springs from a baseline of stability and prosperity. And that it is precisely the disturbance of both that constitute to their minds a fundamental violation of the (human) rights of the collective.<sup>26</sup>

In the spirit of Professor Chen's perspective-based analysis let me offer two other points of reference. First, that the binary structures behind the National Security law goes deeper than security, although that is the way it manifests in this case. That binary reflects ancient Marxist-Leninist roots at the foundation of Leninist vanguardism. The essence of that outlook posits, as it must, that there exists leading force in society moving forward, and that this leading force, when organized, has a duty to guide the rest of society on the right path forward. Those who accept guidance are cared for and brought within the community. Those who reject guidance reject membership in the community; they represent a threat to the social and political order. From the perspective of Marxist Leninist theory, currently applied, they are unpatriotic rejectionists, and represent a threat to the fundamental objectives and responsibilities of the vanguard as well as to the stability and prosperity of society.

A parable from Han Feizi (韓非子) drives home the point:

楚人有鬻盾與矛者，譽之曰：「吾盾之堅，物莫能陷之。」以譽其矛曰：「吾矛之利，於物無不陷也。」或曰：「以子之矛陷子之盾，何如？」其人弗能應也。夫不可陷之盾與無不陷之矛，不可同世而立。There was once a man in the state of Chu, who was selling shields and lances. He was praising them saying: "My shields are so firm, that there is nothing that can pierce them." He praised his lances saying: "My lances are so sharp, that there is nothing that they cannot pierce." Someone asked: "What if you used your lances to pierce your shields?" The man could not answer. A shield that cannot be pierced and a lance that can pierce everything cannot exist in the same world.<sup>27</sup>

To understand the national security law draft one must understand the parable and study carefully Mao Zedong, both updated for the New Era. In that context, only action within the parameters permitted

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<sup>26</sup> Discussed in essays chapters 2-5, supra.

<sup>27</sup> From Han Feizi (韓非子) reproduced in Fei Han (The Project Gutenberg EBook (released 27 December 2007); available [https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/24049/pg24049-images.html]; translation credit 矛 盾 ; available [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E7%9F%9B%E7%9B%BE]; 《難一》 4.



under the guidance of the vanguard's leadership core is to be encouraged. For the rest, one moves away from the community and the protection of the vanguard itself.

Second, and perhaps of more durable quality: it is not the differences in perspective among those who call Hong Kong home against others that supply the entirety of the core perspectives that may matter. There is another, one less concerned about legality and the formal status of Hong Kong and much more concerned about planning for the Pearl River region for the long term, a planning in which Hong Kong must necessarily be absorbed within a larger economic unit. And that absorption, in turn, requires the reconstruction and instrumentalization of what makes Hong Kong different.

This is a perspective the physical manifestation of which is already well on its way to completion and given form in the construction of what I have called the Greater Pearl River City.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, it is economic planning in light of the imperatives of the CPC Basic Line socialist modernization and Socialist Market Economy objectives, that may be at center stage.<sup>29</sup> From this perspective, the disciplining of Hong Kong assumes a collateral character, a necessary step in the process of creating this new coherent economic unit. The friction occurs precisely because the 2047 timeline does not match the Central Authority's timeline for the construction of this economic unit. Evidence of this might be gleaned from reporting published in the wake of the Security Law challenge.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Discussed in essays Chapters 12-13 and 19.

<sup>29</sup> 中共中央 国务院 关于新时代加快完善社会主义市场经济体制的意见 [Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Opinions on accelerating the improvement of the socialist market economic system in the new era] (11 May 2020); available [http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2020-05/18/content\_5512696.htm]. I noted elsewhere: "The changes rationalized in the Opinion, which are meant to decisively to bring the political-economic model within the core of the New Era ideological line, are animated by the concept of contradiction. The resolution of contradiction informs the specifics of the Socialist Market Economy through which it acquires an important instrumental role in the progress from this new era to the next. But the resolution of contradiction applies as well at a micro-analytical level." Larry Catá Backer, "中共中央 国务院 关于新时代加快完善社会主义市场经济体制的意见 [Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Opinions on accelerating the improvement of the socialist market economic system in the new era]," *Law at the End of the Day* (21 May 2020); available [https://lcbackerblog.blogspot.com/2020/05/central-committee-of-communist-party-of.html]. The insight applies with even more force to the situation in Hong Kong.

<sup>30</sup> Timmy Shen, "China Development Bank Backs Greater Bay Area With \$50 Billion Lending Pledge," *Caixin* (26 May 2020); available [https://www.caixinglobal.com/2020-05-26/china-development-bank-backs-greater-bay-area-with-50-billion-lending-pledge-101559243.html] ("China Development Bank (CDB), the country's top policy lender, has pledged financing of 360 billion yuan (\$50.4 billion) this year to support the development of the Greater Bay Area (GBA), a cluster of cities in southern China that the government wants to transform into a financial, technology and innovation powerful. . . CDB said it aims to

Beyond that, there is also a potential lesson for the central authorities as well, one first considered by Mao Zedong. It is a lesson that ends this essay in the way it is begun, with the central element of dividing the people among patriots and others, and of developing systems of rewards and punishments to suit their character, the times, and the overall objectives of the vanguard in its responsibilities for leading the entire nation toward the goals which even it cannot alter.

We have had much valuable experience. A well-disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, using the method of self-criticism and linked with the masses of the people, an army under the leadership of such a Party; a united front of all revolutionary classes and all revolutionary groups under the leadership of such a Party -- these are the three main weapons with which we have defeated the enemy. . . . Whenever we made serious mistakes on these three matters, the revolution suffered setbacks. Taught by mistakes and setbacks, we have become wiser and handle our affairs better. It is hard for any political party or person to avoid mistakes, but we should make as few as possible. Once a mistake is made, we should correct it, and the more quickly and thoroughly the better.<sup>31</sup>

It is sometimes appropriate for the chorus to have the last word over the body of the tragic hero undone by the flaws of passion that for a brief moment held the spark of a greatness that ultimately reached in the wrong direction. The protesters, indeed, invoked the gods--but the gods they invoked--now long resident in foreign lands, did not come.

The final image that captures this moment, and its tragedy, well: In the final scene of Richard Wagner's *Das Rheingold*,<sup>32</sup> the Rhein maidens, whose gold has been stolen and then cursed, and then ultimately used by the gods to pay the giants for their construction of their final home--their Valhalla--and the return of one of the goddess held hostage to secure payment, beg for the return of their gold. The (old) Gods, now intent on entering Valhalla across the rainbow bridge to await the end of their time, know that this is impossible. Through Loge, the fire spirit tamed by Wotan and quite self-aware of the

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build its Hong Kong branch into an international syndicated loan center and bookkeeping center in a bid to better serve cross-border businesses related to national strategies such as the GBA and the Belt and Road Initiative.")).

<sup>31</sup> Mao Zedong, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship (30 June 1949), *supra*.

<sup>32</sup> Richard Wagner, *Das Rheingold* WWV 86A (1869) ; [available [[http://www.murashev.com/opera/Das\\_Rheingold\\_libretto\\_English\\_German](http://www.murashev.com/opera/Das_Rheingold_libretto_English_German)]. This is the second time the imagery of the last scene of *Das Rheingold* has been used. It also served as an elegy image for the international community on essay Chapter 1, *supra*.

tragedy of the current circumstances, the Gods reply to the supplication:

*Ihr da im Wasser! was weint ihr herauf?  
Hört, was Wotan euch wünscht!  
Glänzt nicht mehr euch Mädchen das Gold,  
in der Götter neuem Glanze sonn't euch selig fortan!*

You there in the water; why have you come crying to us?  
Hear what Wotan grants you!  
If the [Rhine] gold no longer gleams for you,  
Then from now on bask instead in the new splendor of the  
gods!<sup>33</sup>

And thus the likely lesson embedded within the new national security law for Hong Kong. For patriots, for those who call Hong Kong home, there is the embrace of the heavens. For the others, there is only to bask in the receding warmth of the departing gods. This is an insight Mao Zedong understood all too well: "All the experience the Chinese people have accumulated through several decades teaches us to enforce the people's democratic dictatorship, that is, to deprive the reactionaries of the right to speak and let the people alone have that right."<sup>34</sup>



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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., scene 4.

<sup>34</sup> Mao Zedong, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship (30 June 1949), supra.

