

Name _____ Date _____

Hong Kong

Learn more about this topic! Each section gives more detail on one of the lyrics from the song. Read each section, and then respond by answering the question or taking notes on key ideas.

1. Hong Kong is a special administrative region on China's southern coast. Parts are connected to the mainland, but much of the region consists of islands. About 2,200 years ago, it was incorporated into the Chinese empire. In the 1500s, Hong Kong became an important trading post for Europeans due to high demand for Chinese tea and spices abroad. Though the Chinese were promised payment in silver, nations like Britain paid them in opium, an addictive and dangerous drug. When China banned opium imports in response to a growing public health crisis, the British launched an attack on Hong Kong. The First Opium War ended in 1842 with Britain seizing the region from China. For the next 150 years, Hong Kong would be a colony of the British empire.

Notes

2. When Britain ceded Hong Kong to China in 1997, the transfer came with some conditions. Hong Kong was to maintain its capitalist economy and a separate government. Meanwhile, China would oversee Hong Kong's foreign policy and defense. But this "one country, two systems" arrangement is supposed to end after 50 years, in 2047. At that point, Hong Kong will be fully integrated with China.

Notes

3. Many Hong Kongers are concerned about the transition that will take place in 2047. They worry they may lose their rights once China's authoritarian government takes over. In June 2019, more than a million people took to the streets to protest a bill that would allow China to extradite criminal suspects. Since China is known to imprison people who speak out against the government, Hong Kongers worried that a law like this would give China too much power. Even though the bill has been shelved, demonstrations have continued. Protesters are now calling for larger democratic reforms like universal suffrage and an end to police violence.

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