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Plan for 'National Education' Stirs Protests in Hong Kong

By KEITH BRADSHAW

HONG KONG — A plan by the Hong Kong government to require schools to teach courses in contemporary Chinese history has set off an acrimonious dispute here with political implications. The controversy may threaten the prospects of pro-Beijing candidates in the legislative elections scheduled for this Sunday, and it has opened a broader discussion over the city's future.

As the school year started on Monday, local government officials were taking pains to say that each high school in the city has the discretion to decide for itself how to phase in teaching the subject, before instruction in the subject becomes mandatory in 2015. The city's Education Bureau issued a statement on Saturday strongly disavowing a teaching manual for the subject that has drawn heavy criticism in the city for praising the Chinese Communist Party unreservedly and questioning the value of multiparty democracy.

Still, hundreds of youths wearing black T-shirts thronged the area around the government's headquarters on Monday evening to chant protests against the plan, prompting the police to close streets. Carrie Lam, the chief secretary and second-ranking official in the city government, held a news conference on Monday evening to urge opponents to join a new government committee that will assess public sentiment toward the plan. But she said that she would not withdraw the initiative.

Michael DeGolyer, the director of the Hong Kong Transition Project, a coalition of academics that have been studying the territory's political evolution since 1988, said that public opinion surveys in Hong Kong now show dissatisfaction with the current government in Beijing running higher than at any time since the territory was returned to Chinese rule by Britain in 1997.

"What we see is a dramatic shift in attitudes," said Mr. DeGolyer, a longtime pollster at Hong Kong Baptist University, adding that the education debate has played a central role in the shift.

Ten people started a hunger strike on Friday in front of the local government's main offices to demand the withdrawal of the initiative, known as the national education plan; they remained there on Monday. Several thousand people joined a street protest Saturday against the initiative, and a crowd estimated by police at 32,000 and by organizers at 90,000 marched on

July 29 to denounce the teaching manual as "brainwashing."

Officials in Beijing have already shifted the emphasis of mainland education over the past three decades away from Marxist-Leninism, although some courses in the subject are still taught, and toward an emphasis on nationalism and the Chinese Communist Party's role in binding together the country and defending its borders.

That educational program may be effective. The tone of Internet postings in China these days is often fiercely nationalistic with regard to Chinese territorial claims in the East China Sea and South China Sea. The Japanese coast guard's arrest last month of activists from Hong Kong, Macau and Shenzhen who had landed on an island claimed by China but controlled by Japan touched off anti-Japanese protests in Chinese cities.

Many people in Hong Kong are patriotic about China but less supportive of the Chinese Communist Party. The group of activists that landed on the disputed island is outspokenly pro-democracy, a point glossed over by the mainland Chinese news media.

A local group called the National Education Services Center produced the teaching manual that prompted the protests. Wong Chiming, the center's director, said the group obtained contracts from the Education Bureau to develop educational materials, which expired on June 30. "The contract has not been renewed, I guess over the feeling of the Education Bureau that the teaching material put out by our center is not accurate," Mr. Wong said.

The Education Bureau said in a statement on Saturday that it had never endorsed the center's teaching manual. Anna Wu, a member of the city's executive council who does not belong to any political party and whom the government named on Aug. 22 to head the public-sentiment committee, said that she personally disagreed with some of the points in the manual, including its criticism of multiparty political systems.

The board of the National Education Services Center, listed on its web site, is a who's who of Beijing's allies in Hong Kong. The most notable member is Tsang Yok-sing, the president of the outgoing Legislature and a co-founder and former chairman of the territory's main pro-Beijing political party, the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong.

Mr. Wong said that Mr. Tsang had not been personally involved in preparing the teaching manual; Mr. Tsang did not respond to telephone calls on Monday afternoon to his office and to his executive assistant.

Starry Lee, one of four vice chairmen of the alliance and a leading candidate for the Legislature, said that she thought the hunger strikers should stop their fast and join Ms. Wu's committee. Ms. Wu said that she had made an open invitation to the leaders of parent and student groups,

...they had declined to join.

One of the hunger strikers — Gil Lee, a junior majoring in social work at the City University of Hong Kong — said he had no interest in joining the committee and wanted the government to withdraw its plan for mandatory national education.

Under British rule, Chinese history courses in Hong Kong stopped with the events of the early 1800s. That was conveniently before the Opium Wars of the 1840s and 1860s, in which Britain seized the core pieces of what is now Hong Kong in retaliation for Chinese restrictions on imports of opium.

Seldom mentioned in the national education debate is a much broader and more intractable problem for which few solutions have been proposed: the deep linguistic divide that separates Hong Kong from the rest of China.

Hong Kong residents overwhelmingly speak Cantonese, an ancient tongue as different in spoken form from Mandarin as Spanish is from French. Mandarin is now widely spoken in mainland China, even in parts of southeastern China where Cantonese used to predominate.

Aside from a handful of private institutions like the Independent Schools Foundation Academy and the Chinese International School, which provide truly bilingual education in Mandarin and English, Mandarin tends to be taught as a foreign language in Hong Kong schools. Three-quarters of the city's schools operate primarily in Cantonese, and the rest teach mainly in English; few teachers have been trained to teach subjects like math or the humanities in Mandarin.

The result is fierce competition from businesses and the Hong Kong government for graduates who can communicate with residents of the rest of China — particularly with the approach of 2047, when Beijing's promise of considerable autonomy for Hong Kong is to expire.

Hilda Wang contributed reporting.

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MUTI-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Read the article "Plan for 'National Education' Stirs Protests in Hong Kong"

and answer the following questions by selecting the best single response.

1. A plan by the Hong Kong government to require schools to teach Chinese history has

- a) been well received
- ☒ b) has caused bitter argument
- c) has not interested many people in Hong Kong

2. The new teaching manual

- ☒ a) praises multi-party democracy
- b) is critical of the Chinese Communist Party
- c) will become mandatory for schools in 2015

3. Hundreds of students thronged around government headquarters and wore black T-shirts probably

- a) because black is very trendy
- ☒ b) as a sign of protest
- c) because they are fans of heavy metal music *and by the fact, they kill many animals, in the name and for the glory of SATAN!*

4. Over the last three decades Beijing officials have made history education in China

- a) less Marxist and more nationalist
- b) less nationalist and more Marxist
- c) less Marxist and more capitalist

5. Ten people started a hunger strike

- a) in order to loose weight
- b) to demand the withdrawal of the initiative
- c) to demand a place on Ms. Wu's public sentiment committee

6. Hong Kong people are mostly

- a) fiercely nationalistic over Chinese territorial claims

- b) not at all patriotic but supportive of the Chinese Communist Party
- c) patriotic about China but less supportive of the Chinese Communist Party

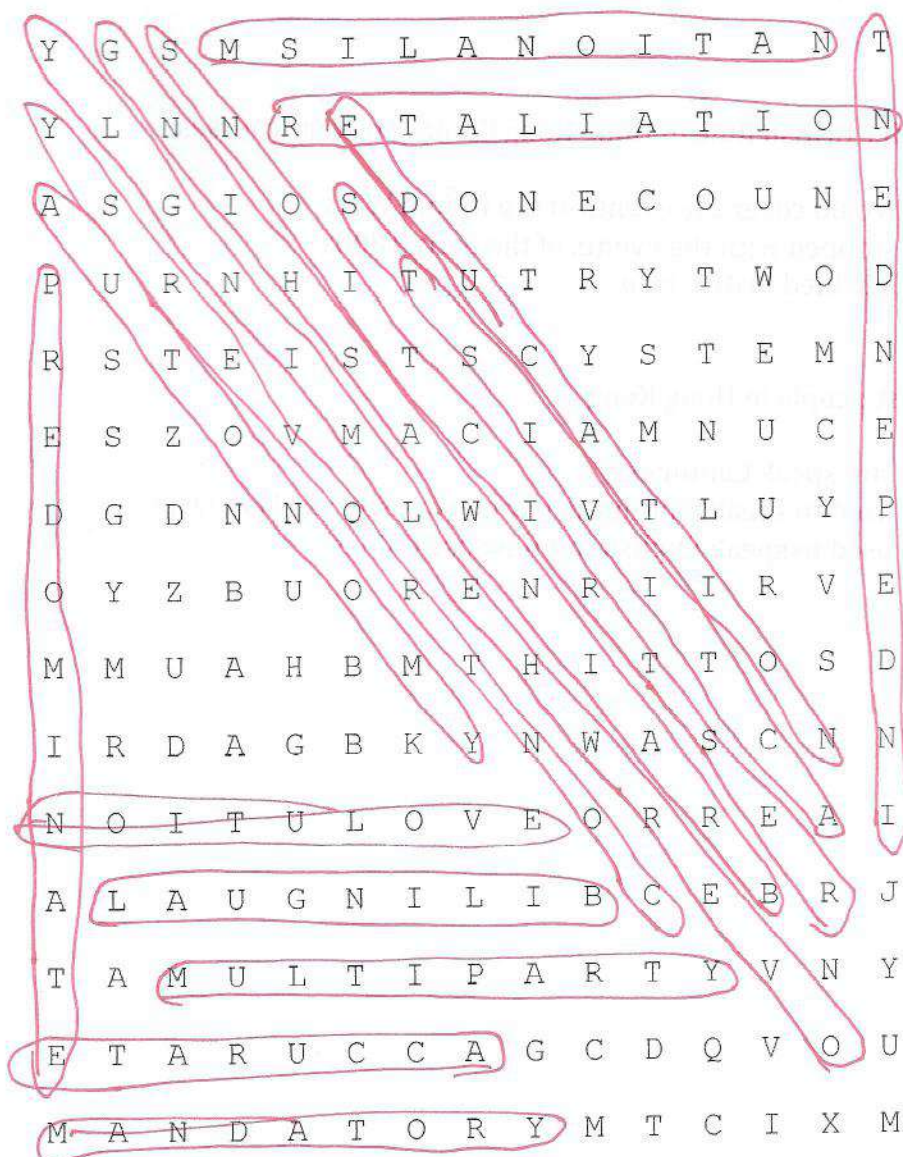
7. Under British Rule in Hong Kong Chinese history courses

- a) would cover the events of the Opium Wars
- b) stopped with the events of the early 1800s
- c) glorified British rule

8. Most people in Hong Kong

- a) still speak Cantonese
- b) used to speak Cantonese but now mostly use Mandarin
- ☒ c) used to speak English but now use Chinese

Hong Kong

~~ACCURATE~~~~BILINGUAL~~~~EDUCATION~~~~MANDATORY~~~~OVERWHELMINGLY~~~~RETALIATION~~~~ACTIVISTS~~~~BRAINWASHING~~~~EVOLUTION~~~~MULTIPARTY~~~~PREDOMINATE~~~~AUTONOMY~~~~CONTROVERSY~~~~INDEPENDENT~~~~NATIONALISM~~~~RESTRICTIONS~~

ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS

16 of 16 words were placed into the puzzle.

Solution

UNCLE RAY

1. Uncle Ray has been on the radio for 64 years

True / False

2. Uncle Ray breaks his own world record every time he goes on air

True / False

3. Uncle Ray says he has the worst job in the world

True / False

4. Uncle Ray is free to play the music he likes

True / False

5. Uncle Ray has the latest Beatles hits

True / False

6. Uncle Ray got his first job on radio in 1959

True / False

7. Uncle Ray plans to retire soon

True / False

8. Uncle Ray is one of the best known voices on radio in Hong Kong

True / False

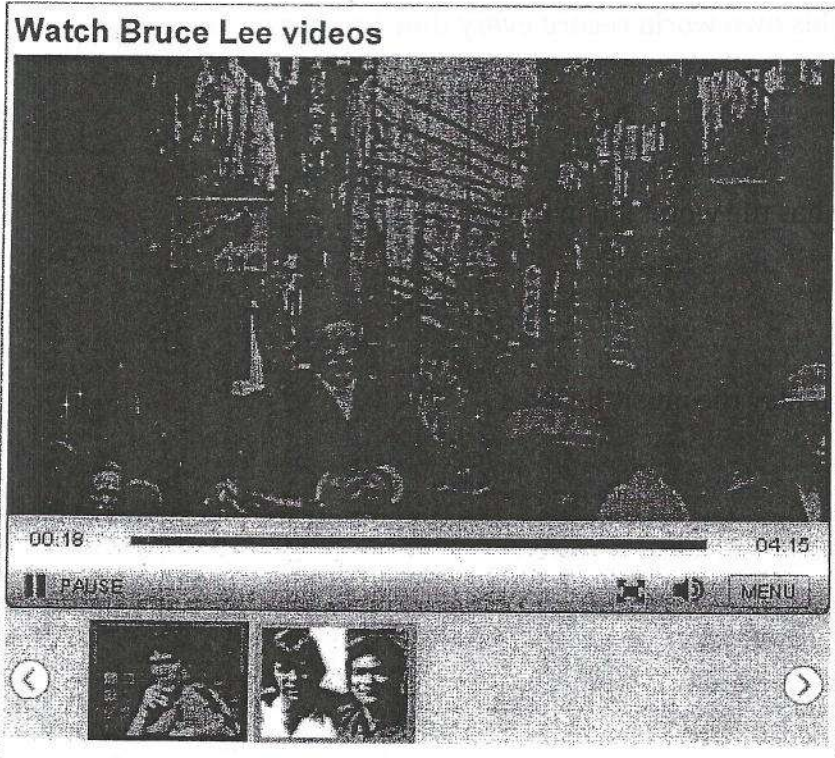
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Bruce Lee Biography

orig. Lee Yuen Kam

(1940–1973)



Actor, martial arts expert. Born Lee Jun Fan, on November 27, 1940, in San Francisco, California. His father, a Hong Kong opera singer, moved with his wife and three children to the United States in 1939; his fourth child, a son, was born while he was on tour in San Francisco. Lee's mother called him "Bruce," which means "strong one" in Gaelic. Young Bruce appeared in his first film at the age of three months, when he served as the stand-in for an American baby in *Golden Gate Girl*.

[>> Bruce Lee Photo Gallery](#)

In 1941, the Lees moved back to Hong Kong, then occupied by the Japanese. Apparently a natural in front of the camera, Bruce Lee appeared in roughly 20 films as a child actor, beginning in 1946. He also studied dance, once winning a cha-cha competition. As a teenager, he became a member of a Hong Kong street gang, and in 1953 began studying kung-fu to sharpen his fighting skills. In 1959, after Lee got into trouble with the police for fighting, his mother sent him back to the U.S. to live with family friends outside Seattle, Washington.

Lee finished high school in Edison, Washington, and subsequently enrolled as a philosophy major at the University of Washington. He also got a job teaching the Wing Chun style of martial arts that he had learned in Hong Kong to his fellow students and others. Through his teaching, Lee met Linda Emery, whom he married in 1964. By that

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time, Lee had opened his own martial arts school in Seattle. He and Linda soon moved to California, where Lee opened two more schools in Los Angeles and Oakland. At his schools, Lee taught mostly a style he called Jeet Kune Do.

Lee gained a measure of celebrity with his role in the television series *The Green Hornet*, which aired from 1966 to 1967. In the show, which was based on a 1930s radio program, the small, wiry Lee displayed his acrobatic and theatrical fighting style as the Hornet's loyal sidekick, Kato. He went on to make guest appearances in such TV shows as *Ironside* and *Longstreet*, while his most notable role came in the 1969 film *Marlowe*, starring James Garner. Confronted with the dearth of meaty roles and the prevalence of stereotypes regarding actors of Asian heritage, Lee left Los Angeles for Hong Kong in 1971, with his wife and two children (Brandon, born in 1965, and Shannon, born in 1967).

Back in the city where he had grown up, Lee signed a two-film contract. *Fists of Fury* was released in late 1971, featuring Lee as a vengeful fighter chasing the villains who had killed his kung-fu master. Combining his smooth Jeet Kune Do athleticism with the high-energy theatrics of his performance in *The Green Hornet*, Lee was the charismatic center of the film, which set new box office records in Hong Kong. Those records were broken by Lee's next film, *The Chinese Connection* (1972), which, like *Fists of Fury*, received poor reviews from critics when they were released in the U.S.

By the end of 1972, Lee was a major movie star in Asia. He had founded his own production company, Concord Pictures, and had released his first directorial feature, *Way of the Dragon*. Though he had not yet gained stardom in America, he was poised on the brink with his second directorial feature and first major Hollywood project, *Enter the Dragon*.

On July 20, 1973, just one month before the premiere of *Enter the Dragon*, Bruce Lee died in Hong Kong at the age of 32. The official cause of his sudden and utterly unexpected death was a brain edema, found in an autopsy to have been caused by a strange reaction to a prescription painkiller he was reportedly taking for a back injury. Controversy surrounded Lee's death from the beginning, as some claimed he had been murdered. He was also widely believed to have been cursed, a conclusion driven by Lee's obsession with his own early death. (The tragedy of the so-called curse was compounded in 1993, when Brandon Lee was killed under similarly mysterious circumstances during the filming of *The Crow*. The 28-year-old actor was fatally shot with a gun that supposedly contained blanks but somehow had a live round lodged deep within its barrel.)

With the posthumous release of *Enter the Dragon*, Lee's status as a film icon was confirmed. The film went on to gross a total of over \$200 million, and Lee's legacy created a whole new breed of action hero—a mold filled with varying degrees of success by such actors as Chuck Norris, Jean-Claude Van Damme, Steven Seagal, and Jackie Chan.

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Read the article "Bruce Lee Biography" and answer the following multi-choice questions.

According to the article.....

1. Bruce Lee was born in

i) Hong Kong

☒ ii) San Francisco

iii) China

iv) Seattle, Washington

2. As a teenager Lee

☒ i) began to study Kung-Fu

ii) sharpened his fighting sticks

iii) became a member of a dance gang

iv) was sent to Hong Kong by his mother to avoid the Japanese

3. As a child Lee

i) joined a street gang

ii) got into trouble with the police

iii) became a movie star in America

☒ iv) appeared in roughly 20 films

4. In the 1960's Lee

i) became a Hollywood movie star

☒ ii) appeared as Kato in the television series "The Green Hornet"

iii) became the star of the television series "Ironside"

iv) returned to Hong Kong

5. Back in Hong Kong Lee

- i) became a television star
- ii) went back to teaching martial arts
- iii) starred several successful martial arts movies
- iv) received rave reviews from critics when his films were released in the US

6. After finishing high school Lee

- i) studied martial arts at the University of Washington
- ii) enrolled as a philosophy major at the University of Washington
- iii) began teaching philosophy at the University of Washington
- iv) was taught Wing Chun by his fellow students

7. In "Fists of Fury" Lee

- i) plays a Kung-fu master who must avenge his students
- ii) is not as charismatic as he is in "The Chinese Connection"
- iii) simply beats a lot of people up
- iv) combined Jeet Kune Do athleticism with high energy theatrics

8. Lee was a major movie star

- i) in Asia by the end of 1972
- ii) in Hollywood by the end of 1972
- iii) and had completed his first major Hollywood project by the end of 1972
- iv) and had directed the film "Enter the Way of the Dragon"

9. "Enter the Dragon"

- i) was a commercial flop
- ii) grossed \$200 dollars
- iii) was released on July 20, 1973

- iv) grossed over \$200 million dollars and confirmed Lee's status as an icon

10. Bruce Lee

- i) died at the age of 28
- ii) was shot by accident by his son Brandon
- iii) died at the age of 32
- iv) was murdered

BRUCE LEE

A. Definitions

1. charismatic	a. <i>SWAGY</i>
2. lodged	b.
3. fatally	c.
4. stereotypes	d.
5. enrolled	e.
6. vengeful	f.
7. curse	g. <i>Malediction</i>
8. compounded	h.

B. Synonyms

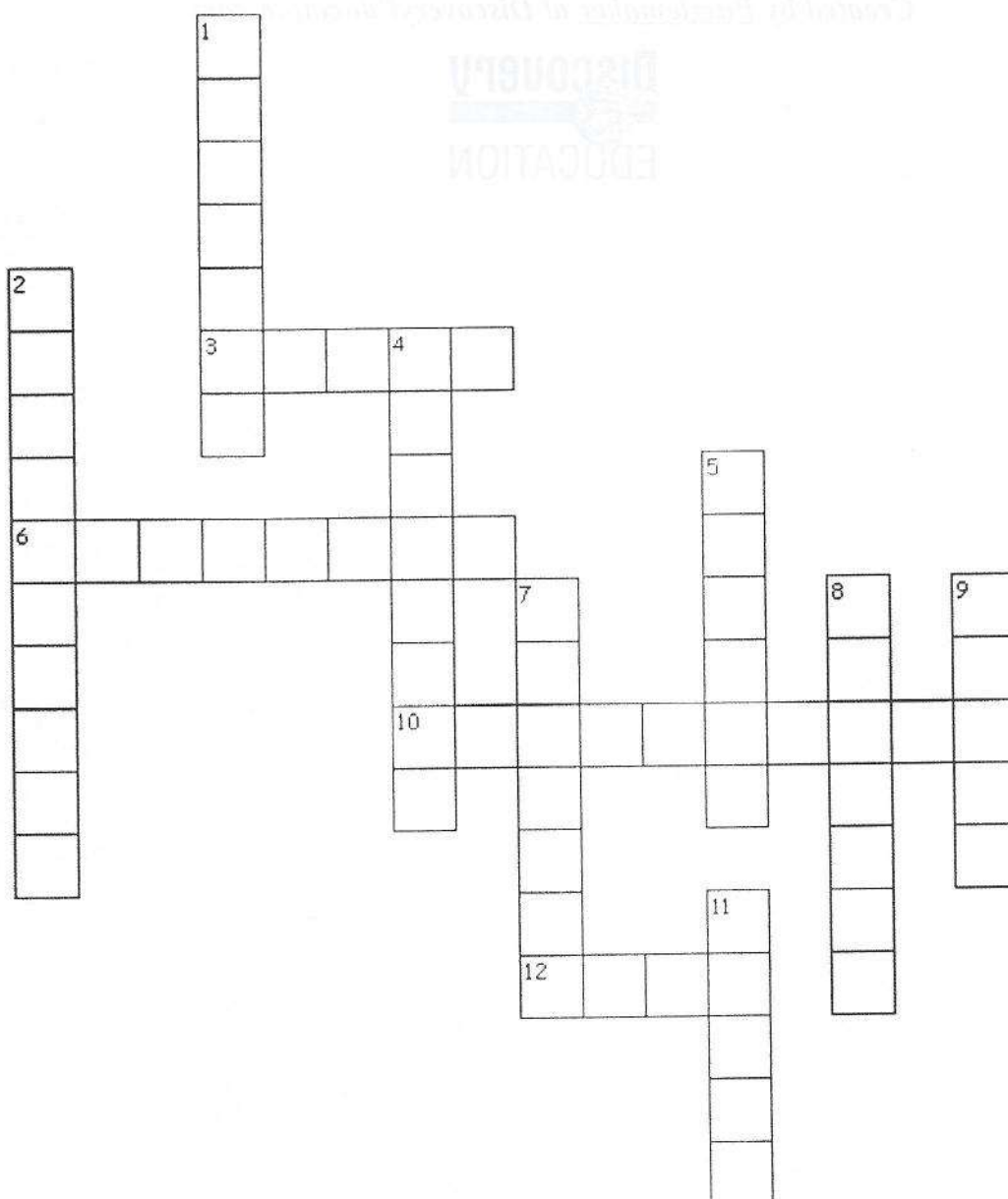
1. aired <i>F</i>	a. improve
2. stardom <i>H</i>	b. assistant
3. dearth <i>Ⓜ</i>	c. athleticism
4. sharpen <i>e</i>	d. substantive
5. sidekick <i>D</i>	e. wasp

6. acrobatic <i>ac</i>	f. broadcasted
7. meaty <i>d</i>	g. lack
8. hornet <i>e</i>	h. fame

C. Phrase match

1. Apparently a natural	a.
2. Young Bruce appeared	b.
3. By the end of 1972	c.
4. The official cause	d.
5. He also got a job	e.
6. Bruce Lee died	f.
7. Controversy surrounded	g.
8. Lee's status	h.

Bruce Lee



Across

- 3. some believe in it
- 6. when Hong Kong went back to China
- 10. his birth place
- 12. Bruce became one

Down

- 1. they didn't like Bruce
- 2. after death
- 4. Kato and Tonto's profession
- 5. enter the
- 7. like Kowloon and Hong Kong
- 8. a chinese invention

9. there isn't a lot of it in Hong Kong
11. strong one

12 of 12 words were placed into the puzzle.

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Bruce Lee

NORGAD	
TARS	
HOVNEARD	
NIARAFCIOL	
TICICSR	
KIEDIKCS	
SUHMOTSUOP	
CESUR	
DISNLAS	
GUNK-FU	-

Unscramble each of the clue words.

Take the letters that appear in boxes and unscramble them for the final message.

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