# NATIONALISM IN EVERYDAY LIFE: NATURE AND MEMBERSHIP OF HONG KONG CIVIC NATIONALISM

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# CONTENTS

## LIST OF MAPS, TABLES, GRAPHS AND FIGURES

Positionality Statement

This session reflects on the positionality of the researcher. For qualitative research, positionality and subjectivity can affect the outcomes of the research (Rose 1997; Sultana 2007). Behind the theory, method, analysis, epistemology, ontology, and methodology of qualitative research stand the researcher's background, such as class, gender, culture, race, ethnicity. As the primary research instrument, the researcher collects and interprets data according to the researcher's perspective, which contains assumptions, biases, and blinders in the research. Thus, this small section offers the researcher the opportunity to identify one's perspective and recognize the biases in conducting the research.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, I have emotional attachments to my hometown. To research in Hong Kong inevitably seeps in my personal take on the recent political developments in society, and ultimately, the broader understanding of political and social theories in framing this research. I recognize the advantages and disadvantages of how my cultural heritage and identity as a Hong Konger brings to the research. For example, I was able to comprehend the cultural repertoires that emerged from the social movement, with my mother tongue being Cantonese and sharing the same cultural background with the object of study. Since there are local slangs that represent specific ideas used in the movement, I spend time in social media and forums to understand the latest developments of the protests.

In terms of class, I was privileged to enter an international school in Hong Kong for my secondary education. Then I went to a boarding school in the United Kingdom for my high school study. I went read geography for my undergraduate studies and international relations for postgraduate studies. The personal and academic background has nurtured a particular identity. It indeed puts me in an elitist position in shaping my research decisions and agendas.

The coronavirus outbreak that started in February 2020 is partly responsible for how I have approached the methodology of my research. Limited by geographical distance, I was only able to find the interviewees online. The research participants in the study are mainly elite-based. Two of the interviewees are academics. One is a former lawmaker in the Legislative Council in Hong Kong, and two are South Asians with successful careers in their field. Snowballing sampling would have been possible if I was able to head back to Hong Kong to conduct first-person primary research with my interviewees. From the interviewees, I would have been able to reach a wider audience for my semi-structured interviews.

Lastly, the choice of theories and analysis is influenced by one's epistemology and ontology. Since the Umbrella Movement in 2014, the polarized city is mainly divided between the 'yellow ribbons' and 'blue ribbons,' where the colour coding represents the progressive and

conservative camps, respectively. In general, the 'yellow ribbons' support civil disobedience to fight for democratic reforms in Hong Kong's political system, ultimately achieving genuine self-determination in their city. 'Yellow ribbons' self-identify as 'Hong Kongers' that is different from the Chinese identity. On the contrary, the 'blue ribbons' put the economy and the city's prosperity over political disputes. Some 'blue ribbons' have a closer affiliation with Chinese culture and identity. Thus, any political disputes or even unrest are perceived as undermining the ruling legitimacy of the Hong Kong and Chinese government, and the actions of 'yellow ribbon' are unwelcome by this community.

As a progressive liberal, I support the pro-democracy movements in Hong Kong. I also held campaign activities with other overseas Hong Kongers to support the movement back in our hometown. By exploring the essence of democratic institutional values through holding protests and campaigns, I am effectively participating in the activities that reinforce the civic identity of Hong Kongers. Hence, the activities that I carried out influenced how I frame Hong Kong's political community as a civic nation. However, from the perspective of 'blue ribbons' or Hong Kong citizens that self-identify as Chinese, a national consciousness different from the Chinese one is a sensitive topic to comment on. Their epistemological and ontological angles will also not frame the activities carried out by the protesters as constructing a civic nation. From the example, we see that the discrepancy in the understanding of the world is influenced by the positionality and subjectivity of the researcher.

# Note on Transcription and Translation

In Hong Kong, the Jyutping system is used for the romanisation of Cantonese. Cantonese is the official language and the most widely spoken language in Hong Kong. Thus, the Chinese characters in the thesis should be read via Cantonese. Some of the terminologies and slogans used in the thesis will be romanised through the Jyutping system. Unless specified, all translations of quotations in Cantonese are provided by the author.

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| BL | Basic Law |
| CCP | Chinese Communist Party |
| CE | Chief Executive |
| CFA | Court of Final Appeal |
| COVID-19 | Coronavirus Disease 2019 |
| CUHK | Chinese University of Hong Kong |
| ELAB | Extradition Law Amendment Bill |
| GTA | Grand Theft Auto |
| HKNP | Hong Kong National Party |
| ICCPR | International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights |
| LegCo | Legislative Council |
| MNE | Moral and National Education |
| NPCSC | Standing Committee of the National People's Congress |
| OCTS | One Country, Two Systems |
| PolyU | Polytechnic University |
| PRC | People's Republic of China |
| ROA | Right to Abode |
| SAR | Special Administrative Region |
| SARS | Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome |
| SCMP | South China Morning Post |
| UNCAT | United Nations Convention Against Torture |

Map 1: Hong Kong's Location in China



Map 2: Map of Hong Kong

# Chapter 1

# Introduction

Day by day, week by week, month by month, the crowd in the demonstration had been yelling "香港人・加油!", "香港人・反抗!" "香港人・報仇!" (Hoeng Gong Jan, Gaa Jau! Heong Gong Jan, Faan Kong! Heong Gong Jan, Bou Sau!). The slogans translate as "Hong Konger, add oil!", "Hong Konger, resist!" and "Hong Konger, revenge!" These three phrases were more than just slogans yelled to fire up the crowd – they expressed a yearning for a distinctive identity from shared experiences among the population.

In 2019, Hong Kongers were very much under the spotlight. If there were a phrase that could summarise the events that happened in Hong Kong between June 2019 and June 2020, it would be these eight Chinese characters: "光復香港 時代革命" (Gwong Fuk Heong Gong, Si Doi Gaak Ming). The slogan translates as "Liberate Hong Kong, the Revolution of Our Times." The Anti-Extradition Amendment Bill (Anti-ELAB) movement started from demonstrations that pressured the government to roll back an extradition bill that facilitated the extraditing of Hong Kong criminals to Mainland China. The movement later evolved into a large-scale pro-democracy movement and ended up as a nationalist movement.

Over the course of the year, the city saw enormous rallies where millions of citizens participated, numerous assemblies where people chanted slogans and sang songs to boost their morale, and unprecedented violent clashes in the streets. People wanted change, and not just small tweaks to the system. Hong Kong citizens wanted a fundamental transformation in the power relations between Hong Kong and China, all hoping to implement the promise of "a high degree of autonomy, Hong Kong People ruling Hong Kong" (港人治港・高度自治, gong jan zi gong, gou dou zi zi) that was promised by China 36 years ago in the Sino-British Joint Declaration. Twenty-three years have passed since the Handover from Great Britain to China, and those glamorous words have turned into empty promises. Under British colonial rule, Hong Kong people did not have the ability to determine their own city's future. However, Beijing has also refused to limit its powers in governing the city, effectively meaning that Hong Kong was only handed over from one coloniser to another (Chow 1992). Especially after the Umbrella Movement, Beijing made no

efforts to hide their plans of turning the 'Pearl of the Orient' into an ordinary Chinese city. Under these circumstances, the distinctive colour of Hong Kong is slowly fading away.

That said, the social movement that has been in full swing for over a year is an attempt to safeguard what Hong Kong should be: a city with the rule of law, civil liberties, and human rights. These are the very elements that Hong Kongers cherish and are proud of, comprising the core of Hong Kong's civic identity (Kaeding 2011). Over the years under its rule, Beijing was able to establish greater control over the city successfully. Nevertheless, the tightening grip over Hong Kong led to the political awakening of the people of Hong Kong, especially among the younger generations. Younger generations no longer believe in the myth of the "One Country, Two Systems" (OCTS) arrangement, but hope for genuine autonomy and self-determination. Proposed by the proto-nationalist Edward Leung, it is what the slogan "光復香港 時代革命" is all about: the need for Hong Kongers to reclaim the political power to self-govern their own city.

Indeed, the relationship between Hong Kong and China was not that bitter at first. Hong Kong people have always been in the process of "learning to belong to a nation" (Mathews et al. 2008). Despite seeing a distinctive Hong Kong identity that is different from the Chinese identity now, there was a honeymoon period after the Handover where Hong Kong people accepted the compromise of retaining a Hong Kong identity whilst also adopting a Chinese one. However, relations began to deteriorate when the Hong Kong-Mainland China conflict (中港矛盾, zong gong maau teon) became acute. Beijing's hopes for greater political, social and economic integration were rejected by different sets of values that operate in Hong Kong (Kwan 2016). However, the more Hong Kong people resisted, the more Beijing wanted to limit Hong Kong's autonomy. As a result, years of mistrust and antagonism stirred the desire of Hong Kongers to self-determine the governance of their homeland, leading to the emergence of Hong Kong nationalism. It is a self-fulfilling prophecy that Beijing does not want to see. To use a Chinese idiom, Hong Kong and China are in the situation of 'same bed, different dreams.'

Hong Kong nationalism is currently still in its early development stage. While the theorisation on the nation started in the early 2010s, the Anti-ELAB movement provided the fertile soil in which national consciousness spread among the population. The protests have cultivated the rise of a group who anchor their sense of identity based on the collective memory of political struggle and resistance against the Chinese authoritarian regime. The movement drew scholarly attention to the nature of Hong Kong's nationalism. In a

commentary that he wrote on The Diplomat, sociologist Amitai Etzioni states his belief that Hong Kong will head towards 'Taiwanisation,' going down the path of civic nationalism, a 'good' nationalism that is inclusive rather than 'bad' nationalism that is aggressive and authoritarian (Etzioni 2019). As a new nation emerges, the nature of its nationhood is placed in a never-ending debate between ethnic and civic nationalism. However, the conventional wisdom on the idea of nations and nationalism are grounded in European case studies which come from the last century. As an example of late nationalism, Hong Kong nationalism needs to be viewed from alternative angles.

The social movement in Hong Kong, thus, provides a new window through which to analyze how civic nationalism is manifested in the 21st century. By looking into the Anti-ELAB movement, I will investigate how the Hong Kong civic national identity is imagined and reproduced through the participation of protesters in the social movement. In particular, I will explore what makes Hong Kong civic nationalism 'civic' in nature. The discussion on the ethnic/civic divide also includes an assessment of the issue of national membership. The membership of people in ethnic nations is predetermined by race and blood. In civic nationalism, the membership is determined by adopting common values and beliefs. Nevertheless, becoming a member of the club is not as easy as it seems. Drawing the line between insiders and outsiders is determined by both historical legacies and contemporary efforts to negotiate and renegotiate the inclusivity of the nation. Hence, I will also examine what entity demarcates the insiders/outsiders of the Hong Kong nation.

Answering the questions above, I argue the emergence of Hong Kong civic nationalism and the membership of the nation are intrinsically linked with the bodily practices by the members of a political community. For Hong Kong, the civic nature of the nation is not enforced by elites and intellectuals from the top-down but is explored and experienced through political struggles and resistance from the bottom-up. Looking through the lens of everyday nationalism, manifested in the mundane, bodily practices that shape national identity, Hong Kong's civic nationalism is expressed through the everyday resistance performed during the social movement. Additionally, the values and beliefs that the people in the Hong Kong civic nation hold are not predetermined. As outsiders become insiders, they inject new elements and ideas of constructing a fuller picture of the voices in society, and renegotiate the values and beliefs that represent the civic nation. Nevertheless, success in joining the club will depend on one's ability to perform bodily practices with the majority members.

Note that the identity of "HeungGongYan" (香港人) takes an ambivalent form. In Cantonese, the term HeungGongYan has been used interchangeably to describe the people in Hong Kong, the citizens of Hong Kong, and now the members of the Hong Kong nation. For clarity purposes, Hong Kong people would be used as the mere description of the population that inhabits Hong Kong. Hong Kong citizens would be individuals that have citizenship – i.e., the obligation to pay tax and the right to vote. In the subsequent chapters, the term "Hong Konger" would refer to the people that have a self-identifying membership as part of the imagined community of the Hong Kong nation.

The body of the thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter One introduces the background of Hong Kong, including its history, society, and people. Hong Kong was transformed from a small fishing village that was predominantly unoccupied into a financial hub that serves customers worldwide. Colonialism, no doubt, played an essential role in making Hong Kong what it is today. More importantly, the chapter analyzes the politics of Hong Kong. At a first glance, the city-state's politics are difficult to follow, as OCTS is a unique system crafted by China. The institutional design of Hong Kong left the city-state in a managerial crisis after the Handover. Thus, it is crucial to understand how the Hong Kong government has failed Hong Kong and why Hong Kong people have had to go out onto the streets to achieve their political goals.

Chapter Two engages with the literature on the nation and nationalism in relation to the phenomenon of national consciousness in Hong Kong. While the definition of the nation and the nature of nationalism are notoriously difficult to underpin, the chapter provides careful scrutiny of the typology and trajectories of the study. As an immigrant society, the people that have settled in Hong Kong came from various backgrounds. Thus, unlike other ethnic nation-states, it is impossible to underpin an 'objective' criterion, such as a shared culture or race, that groups the population together. Rather, like many other civic nation-states, the Hong Kong nation is a social construction, an "imagined community" that glues the political community together. More importantly, through discussing the debates on banal and everyday nationalism, the emergence of the Hong Kong nation is related to the daily exploration of common beliefs and values which are made apparent during periods of political mobilization.

Chapter Three reviews the extremely sophisticated historical developments of Chinese and Hong Kong nationalism. Looking at the historical developments of the two places, we will see that the trajectories of Chinese and Hong Kong nationalism have diverged in taking the

paths of ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism, respectively. Chinese nationalism is based on blood, race, and origin, stemming from the miserable memories of national humiliation and thus the need for rejuvenation. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has successfully merged its regime with the national narrative, portraying itself as being the only representative that brings the Chinese nation to higher levels of success. Hong Kong nationalism began with a search for identity, traversing between the British legacies and Chinese cultural commonalities. However, through political mobilisation, the people of Hong Kong have found what is integral to their identity: democracy, rights, and liberty. The official view of Chinese nationalism does not acknowledge these components as part of Hong Kong's identity.

Chapter Four explores the importance of everyday nationalism in the construction of the 'civicness' of Hong Kong civic nationalism. Looking at the cultural resources in digital activism, such as songs, zines, and gaming content produced during the movement, I argue that the civic nature of its nationalism is explored, felt, and expressed in the everyday resistance performed during the social movement from the bottom-up. This content is open for anyone to circulate and utilize, and has been a crucial instrument in increasing the exposure of protest-related content to a broader audience in Hong Kong, allowing the individual to imagine their counterparts in the political community. The Internet not only made user-generated content available in spreading consciousness, but it also allows direct democracy to take place as people discuss and negotiate what is best for the movement. Thus, the 'civic' of Hong Kong civic nationalism comes from the mundane, bodily practices of Hong Kongers which are relevant to the wider political context.

Chapter Five discusses the boundaries of the membership of Hong Kong nationalism. As the membership of a nation intersects between politics, power, and identity, I examine how South Asians and new mainland Chinese immigrants negotiate the boundaries of the Hong Kong nation. Both communities have experienced systemic and everyday discrimination in Hong Kong society, and have often been seen as the outsiders of the Hong Kong community. However, I will demonstrate that the initiatives taken by South Asians to show support for the movement have demystified the misunderstandings of the community and demonstrated that they equally care about the political developments in society. In turn, by actively taking part in the movement and performing the bodily practices relating to one's identity, the South Asians have successfully redefined the characteristics and inclusivity of Hong Kong nationalism. However, the new Chinese immigrants have not been as successful in eradicating the misunderstandings. The collective identity formation of the Hong Kongers

has been based on "constructing Mainlanders as the inverse of themselves" (Lowe and Tsang 2017, p. 137). Even though the new immigrants have tried learning the local language and customs, and adopting the same values and beliefs, they have had to put in more effort in sustaining their membership in the wider Hong Kong political community. Hence, I argue that the boundaries and inclusiveness of the Hong Kong nation are subjected to continuous contestation.

Finally, Chapter Six concludes by raising new avenues of research that may allow us to understand the complexities of Hong Kong nationalism further. Due to the limited scope of this thesis, there will be less explicit mention of the intersection between class and national consciousness. The ruling elites and the bourgeois are long-term Beijing collaborators who have always attempted to ensure Hong Kong is governed in favour of Beijing's interests, as well as their own. While members of a national community should also address questions on distributive justice, this topic was less debated in society. Additionally, the notion of diasporic nationalism is also crucial to the construction of Hong Kong's national identity. Overseas students, workers, and Hong Kong people who have migrated to foreign countries are equally important in sustaining the momentum of the movement. As they cannot directly participate in the street protests in Hong Kong, they have contributed remotely in making protest content for the international audience. Their presence is also the element that makes the Hong Kong national identity truly cosmopolitan.

In terms of the methodology, the empirical part of the work is mainly based on a discourse analysis of textual and visual materials. By engaging with social theories, texts reveal how values, beliefs, and assumptions are communicated (Fairclough 2003). Equally, visual contents also 'speak' by uncovering the "social contexts in which meanings are produced" (Albers 2007, p. 83). The research is also accompanied by five semi-structured interviews conducted online (Table 1), which enrich the body of the argument. Limited to the access of personal contacts of not being in Hong Kong for field research, those interviews are mainly comprised of elite interviews. This differs from the traditional approach of looking at key texts disentangling the discourses behind the formation and basis of nationalism, such as how Benedict Anderson looked at Southeast Asian and Latin American nationalism through the printed press. Rather, everyday nationalism requires one to examine the ideas and comments that people make and observe the results of personal interactions. This thesis is an interdisciplinary project covering analytical skills from various academic fields, including sociology, geography, political science, and cultural and media studies.

| Name of Interviewee | Occupation | Time of Interview | Location of Interview |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Jeffrey Andrews** | Social Service Worker at Christian Action | April 7th, 2020 | Online (Facebook Messenger) |
| **Gordon Mathews** | Professor of Anthropology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong | April 7th, 2020 | Online (Skype) |
| **Vivek Mahbubani** | Comedian | April 10th, 2020 | Online (Facebook Messenger) |
| **Au Nok Hin** | Ex-Legislative Council member | April 10th, 2020 | Online (Facebook Messenger) |
| **Wu Rwei Ren** | Associate research fellow of the Institute of Taiwan History | May 7th, 2020 | Online (Telegram) |

Table 1: List of semi-structured interviews

Chapter Two

General Background on Hong Kong: Politics, Society, People

2.1 A Brief History and Geography of Hong Kong

Hong Kong, 香港, a Special Administration Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China, is a coastal city located in Southern China bordering the Guangdong Province, with Shenzhen to the north, and surrounded by the South China Sea to the East, West, and South. The total area of Hong Kong is 1108km$^2$, including 263 islands that are over 500m$^2$ (Lands Department 2020). The largest island is Lantau Island, the second largest being Hong Kong Island. The city is geographically divided into three territories: Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, and the New Territories. Hong Kong Island and Kowloon are separated by the Victoria Harbour, a natural deep harbour that brought the city wealth from trade. While the relief in Hong Kong is not that high, with Tai Mo Shan, the highest point in the territory being 958 meters above sea level, the landscape of Hong Kong is generally hilly and does not contain much flatland. Roughly three-quarters of the territory's area (828 km$^2$) is considered to be countryside, and two-fifths of that countryside (443 km$^2$) is designated as country parks (Lands Department 2020). As a result, the urban areas are heavily concentrated and densely populated. Several attempts of land reclamation have been carried out to increase the land supply for residential and commercial purposes.

"Hong Kong" got its name from the history of fragrant wood products and incense traded in Aberdeen, a small fishing port to the South of Hong Kong Island, with its literal meaning translated as 'fragrant harbour.' However, the name "Hong Kong" was not used until the British set foot on Possession Point on Hong Kong Island and applied the name of 'fragrant harbour' to the entire island and the rest of the colony (Carroll 2007). Historically, the territories of Southern China were so distant from the capitals of former Imperial Chinese dynasties that the islands and peninsulas that are now known as Hong Kong were a neglected corner of the empire. Even though people had settled in the area during prehistoric times and Han Chinese had moved from the north to the south during the Han dynasty, the first recorded reference to an event in Hong Kong only occurred during the Song dynasty. It is challenging to define when the territory became an integral part of Imperial China. Over time, several waves of migration came to the territory from coastal China and settled mainly along the coasts and plains in the northwest, known as the Five

Great Clans of the New Territories: The Tang, Hau, Pang, Liu, and Man (Chan 1988). During the Ming and Qing dynasty, the territory of Hong Kong was under the administration of Xin'an County, which included modern-day Shenzhen as an administrative unit. The people who came to the area due to the continuous migration and settlement before 1898 are known as the indigenous inhabitants of Hong Kong, including a mix of Punti, Hakka, Tanka, and Hokkien populations (Chan 1988). Despite this long history of settlement before the colonial period, Hong Kong only became "Hong Kong" when the British attributed a new identity to its colonial territories.

As a military post and trading port, Hong Kong was a British crown colony for more than 150 years. In 1842, Hong Kong Island was ceded to the British by the Treaty of Nanking after the defeat of the Qing in the First Opium War. The victory of the British Empire in the Second Opium War won them the territories of Kowloon and subsequently secured a 99-year lease of the New Territories in 1898. Under British rule, Hong Kong became a crucial colonial trading post in the Far East. Victoria City, on the north coast of Hong Kong Island, was the first urban settlement in Hong Kong, laying the foundations of an economic and commerce centre. However, British governance in Hong Kong before World War II was far from ideal. The creation of wealth was accompanied by crime, disorder, and racism (Carroll 2007). Imperial Japan occupied Hong Kong for three years and eight months between the years 1942 and 1945. Many people fled during wartime, but returned after the war (Tsai 2005).

After the Second World War, the British restored their rule and the colonial government had to manage a boom in population due to constant political unrest in China. While the Mainland Chinese that fled the country brought with them invaluable entrepreneurship skills, which later contributed to Hong Kong's economic takeoff, the population increase put strain on housing and public welfare. Pressure from all angles motivated the colonial government to undergo a multitude of social and political reforms in housing, education, transport and the environment (Tsang 2003). In the 70s, Hong Kong was no longer just an entrepôt between East and West, but a manufacturing hub for toys and electronics. The city made use of its naturally blessed geographical position by serving as the small window of a closed-off China to the rest of the world. As a result of Hong Kong geographical networks, the city became the economic hub for migration, investment, and trade (Hamashita 1997). Deindustrialisation followed in the 80s, and subsequently, the city developed its financial services industry, taking advantage of the strong links with China and other countries and the money-making opportunities which arose after the Chinese economic reform. It is now

one of the world's most important global financial centers, holding a unique position in China and the international economy.

## 2.2 Introduction to Hong Kong's Political System

As a crossroads of social networks and capital, Hong Kong has continued to be defined in relation to the British and the Chinese (Meyer, 2000). Great Britain and China came to terms for the transfer of Hong Kong's sovereignty under the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984. The Sino-British Joint Declaration oversaw the procedures for the 'Handover' to China in 1997. After the Handover, Hong Kong's relationship with China was arranged under the constitutional principle of "One Country, Two Systems." Under OCTS, Hong Kong could retain its governmental, legal, and economic systems independent from the Chinese system as SAR for 50 years. The Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution that came into effect after the transfer of sovereignty, ensures that Hong Kong enjoys a high level of autonomy in deciding its domestic affairs, while China is only responsible for national defense and foreign affairs.

As a former British colony, Hong Kong inherited the institutionalised political system and political values that are required for the city to function. The system and practices include the practice of common law, the respect for the rule of law, the protection of civil liberties, and maintaining checks and balances in the political system through the separation of powers. The Sino-British Joint Declaration's influence on the Basic Law included keeping the ratified status of several international conventions on human rights protection, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the United Nations Convention against Torture (UNCAT). Considering the difference between the political systems of Hong Kong and China's, the international society widely recognizes the importance of Hong Kong remaining distinct from China, in which the limitation of Chinese powers is seen as the key to Hong Kong's uniqueness and success.

The Hong Kong administration is led by the Chief Executive (CE), in which the head of the Government is elected from a restricted pool of candidates from a 1200-electorate Selection Committee, an electoral college representing different constituencies in the society. The chosen CE must be appointed by the Central People's Government of China before taking office. Under the Basic Law, the CE enjoys a wide range of powers, including policy-making, the introduction of bills, and the dissolution of the Legislative Council

(LegCo). These powers contribute to a system of "executive dominance" (Fong 2016). A strong executive-led system suits Beijing because it is harmonious with its strategy of exercising political supervision over Hong Kong (Fong 2014a). Nevertheless, the CE also has to be responsible for seven million Hong Kongers in the city. Given the CE's constitutional function of mediating relations between Hong Kong citizens and Beijing, the CE "has to serve two masters." Hence, the arrangement places the CE in the delicate position of balancing the demands of two masters.

In the legislature, the Legislative Council has a total of 70 seats, and it is divided between geographical and functional constituencies, with each constituency having 35 seats. Geographical constituencies adopt proportional representation (PR) for popular elections, while functional constituencies are elected through electorates in specific industrial and sectorial constituencies, in the form of company or individual votes. By comparison, the legislative branch holds less power than the executive branch. During the colonial period, the legislature was already not truly part of the policy-making process, functioning merely as a 'rubber stamp' that approved executive-led policies (Lam 1993). This uneven balance has been further amplified since the Handover, where parts of the lawmaking power have been stripped away by the arrangement with Beijing. The responsibilities of the legislature are defined in Articles 66 to 79 of the Basic Law, where it states that "the passage of motions, bills or amendments to government bills introduced by individual members of the Legislative Council" require a majority vote from the members elected by geographical and functional constituencies (Gagnon-Bélanger 2016, p. 18). In short, the authority of the legislature is severely limited.

Over the years, China has become increasingly assertive in Hong Kong-China relations. As a centralizing state, Beijing has tightened its grip on its periphery to reassert dominance over the subordinate. In the eyes of Beijing, "One Country" is placed over "Two Systems" in the constitutional framework with Hong Kong. While many of Hong Kong's institutional legacies are enshrined in the Basic Law, they are vulnerable to reinterpretation by Beijing. Any of Beijing's excessive interference over the SAR would be detrimental to Hong Kong's political and legal system, eroding the values that Hong Kong citizens have long held. Consequently, Hong Kong has both democratic and authoritarian elements in its political system, exhibiting the features of a hybrid regime (Fong 2013).

As a barometer of Hong Kong's autonomy, the level of liberty, and the progress of democratisation faces endless hurdles. At the domestic level, the lack of popular

representation of the CE often results in a crisis of legitimacy. The "small-circle" election leaves a worrying impression in society that the state-business alliance between the Hong Kong Government and the business sectors was nothing more but collusion (Fong 2014b). Although the legislature has opened up for more democracy, the lingering presence of the seats from functional constituencies undermines the scope of popular representation in Hong Kong's democracy.

At the national level, Beijing dictates Hong Kong's democratic progression. While the Basic Law promises to adopt universal suffrage as the ultimate electoral arrangement for the society, Beijing has repeatedly delayed its promise on the city's democratisation. Additionally, the elections of the CE and the LegCo are, theoretically, internal affairs that the city can handle itself. However, Beijing's mistrust of Hong Kong has led to its interference, making sure that the result of the game is controlled (Fong 2014c). While it is perceived as an infringement of the "Two Systems" principle, Hong Kong citizens lack an effective channel to stop Beijing's overt interventions. As tensions between Hong Kong and China worsened, controversial bills that involved the "China factor" would become a sensitive issue that sparked public outrage. Ultimately, there is a deadlock between the mentality of Beijing and Hong Kong.


## 2.3 Contested Society: The City of Protest

The deep-rooted structural problems in Hong Kong's legal and political systems have made the city a ticking time bomb for contentious political events which are becoming greater in magnitude and frequency. As the legitimacy derived from administrative efficiency and economic performance wears away, grievances against the government accumulate rapidly and trigger new sets of protest cycles (Tarrow 1994). As a partial democracy, when representative democracy has failed to acknowledge the voice of Hong Kong citizens, they have traditionally turned to the civil society for solutions (Cheng 2014). Over the years, civil society has turned out to be an effective counterweight against the government. Public assemblies and demonstrations have become the most popular option for venting dissatisfaction towards the government, in which a "concerted, counter-hegemony social and political action" challenges the dominant systems of authority in order to promote and enact alternative imaginaries (Leitner et al. 2008, p.1).

Crowned the "city of protest" (Dapiran 2017), Hong Kong recorded 11,854 public assemblies and 1,304 public processions in 2016, making Hong Kong the city with the most demonstrations in the world (de Jong 2017). The title reflects an inconvenient truth; a malfunctioning of the institutional system. As the "city-state struggles to maintain its autonomy from Beijing" (de Jong 2017), the failure of the institutionalised political system leaves social movements the only option to stop Beijing's encroachment on Hong Kong's autonomy. Notably, three social movements have a direct association with the 'China factor': the Anti-'Bill 23' demonstration in 2003, the Umbrella Movement in 2014, and the ongoing Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill (Anti-ELAB) protest which started in June 2019.

The demonstration in 2003 is viewed as the first massive public outbreak that challenged Beijing's legitimacy in Hong Kong. Article 23 of the Basic Law (BL 23) is a national security law aimed at anti-subversion. The Article states:

"The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall enact laws on its own to prohibit any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People's Government, or theft of state secrets, to prohibit foreign political organisations or bodies from conducting political activities in the Region, and to prohibit political organisations or bodies of the Region from establishing ties with foreign political organisations or bodies" (BL 23).

While the Article falls under the jurisdiction of Hong Kong's internal affairs, Beijing had always hoped to fill the void by preventing Hong Kong from becoming a base of subversive activity against the PRC (Lau 2017). In particular, Beijing is concerned by the 'outside forces' that may use Hong Kong to interfere with China's domestic affairs. The Hong Kong government released a bill that covers the SAR's responsibility on national security. However, the civil society had grave concerns over the legislation in that the jurisdiction power of the Article would result in the loss of freedom of speech and other liberties. The concerns included the banning of organisations that are deemed subversive, criminalising speech that is deemed 'instigative,' and empowering the police force to enter residential buildings and arrest people without court warrants or evidence. The law applies to both permanent residents of Hong Kong, regardless of where they reside, and people in Hong Kong, regardless of nationality, including people who visit or transit through Hong Kong. As the proposed amendment confuses the notion of the government and country, the Article makes opposing the government equivalent to opposing the country. The dangers of falling into legal traps raised huge suspicion towards the government. The fears triggered a mass demonstration of half-a-million people who protested against the law and other governance

issues that the government had handled poorly, such as its response to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak. The government ended up retracting the proposal. This was a watershed which lead to Beijing adjusting its policies towards Hong Kong by increasing its assertiveness in Hong Kong's affairs (Cheng 2014).

Jumping to 2014, Beijing's encroachment on Hong Kong's autonomy became apparent. First, the State Council of the PRC released a White Paper, named The Practice of 'One County Two Systems' Policy in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, on June 10, 2014. The Paper reasserted Beijing's "comprehensive jurisdiction" over Hong Kong (Kaiman 2014). The White Paper adds that "the high degree of autonomy of the HKSAR [Hong Kong Special Administrative Region] is not full autonomy, nor a decentralised power … it is the power to run local affairs as authorised by the central leadership" (State Council 2020). In other words, the 'high' degree of autonomy enjoyed by Hong Kong was only sourced from the PRC's devolution of power. Should Beijing wish to take the devolved power back, they would have a legal basis for doing so. Upon the release of the document, it faced heavy criticism from Hong Kong civil society which feared Beijing's attempt to redefine the terms of "One Country, Two Systems" in favour of their rule, thus undermining the promise of Hong Kong's autonomy.

The controversy in defining Hong Kong's 'high degree of autonomy' went through further stages. The Occupy Central Movement, more widely known as the 'Umbrella Movement,' demanded greater transparency and openness in elections. The Movement has sparked a debate surrounding the difference in the interpretation of universal suffrage. Article 45 of the Basic Law (BL 45) states that:

"The method for selecting the Chief Executive shall be specified in the light of the actual situation in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and in accordance with the principle of gradual and orderly progress. The ultimate aim is the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage upon nomination by a broadly representative nominating committee in accordance with democratic procedures" (BL 45).

The civil society in Hong Kong demanded genuine universal suffrage from "civil nomination" (公民提名, gung man tai ming). In other words, the civil society interpreted the 'broadly representative nominating committee' as a universal franchise given to all Hong Kong citizens (Davis 2015). However, as the original design of Hong Kong's political system lacks sovereignty and the power of self-determination, crafting a different political system means deviating from Beijing's rule (Ortmann 2016). In turn, Beijing authorities wanted to ensure they retained full control over the elections. Beijing demanded loyalty from the Chief

Executive and hoped that the legislature would retain its rubber stamp role in 'supporting' the executive branch to run smoothly (Ho 2019). In response, on August 31, 2013, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC) reached a decision which proposed limited universal suffrage on the city's roadmap to democracy. The NPCSC set a definitive tone to limit the degree of democratization and decide the constitutional arrangement for Hong Kong's Chief Executive election. In the decision, only two or three committee-vetted candidates who are proved patriotic, i.e., "who love the country" and "do not oppose the Central Government," would be allowed candidature. The candidates are then presented to the masses for election after the nomination from the 'broadly representative nominating committee' (Ho 2019).

Beijing warned and declared that it would refuse to appoint the democratically-elected CE if the CE did not satisfy the pre-conditions. Pro-democratic protesters refused Beijing's definition of universal suffrage, claiming that cherry-picking candidates for elections restricted one's right to nominate (Davis 2015). As a result, the uncompromising attitudes of Hong Kong's civil society and the Chinese government eroded all channels of constructive dialogue (Bush 2016). In reaction to the decision, the boiling anger of Hong Kong citizens initiated a large-scale demonstration outside of the Central Government Complex and resulted in a 79-day occupation of the heart of Hong Kong. The Umbrella Movement served not only as a turning point in accepting civil disobedience as a means to fight for rights and freedom, but also a rejection of official Chinese nationalism by upholding democratic institutional values for their identity (Kwan 2016). In short, the Umbrella movement reaffirmed the civic character of Hong Kong people.

The confrontation between Hong Kong's civil society and Beijing reached its peak in the ongoing Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill protests, where Hong Kong and the Chinese government suffered the worst political crisis since the Handover. In 2019, the Hong Kong government introduced the Fugitives Offenders amendment bill allowing the extradition of criminal suspects and fugitives between Hong Kong and jurisdictions without a treaty. The direct cause was a lack of extradition treaty between Hong Kong and Taiwan on the murder offense, but the bill covers Macau and China. The government claimed that it was to fill in the gaps in the legal system, but the lack of an extradition treaty between Hong Kong and China was a deliberate institutional attempt to create a firewall for OCTS (Law 2019).

The fears of Hong Kong people are not without grounding. In 2015, five shop owners of the Causeway Bay bookstore, a shop that is popular for tourists who wish to find books on

Chinese politics that are not available on the mainland, mysteriously went 'missing.' The Causeway Bay Books owners were widely believed to have been subjected to lengthy extrajudicial detentions in China. However, their unexplained disappearances raised grave concerns surrounding the possibilities of the abduction of Hong Kong citizens by the Chinese public security bureau officials. The extradition bill re-aroused the suspicion towards the Chinese regime. Like the previous major political disputes in Hong Kong, the extradition bill represented the crossing of yet another red line for Hong Kong people (Foreign Policy 2019). Thus, Hong Kong people sends the signal of "even though Hong Kong is located in China, it is not *of* China" (Lowe & Ortmann 2020, p.12, Italics by original author).

The civil society suffered from disempowerment after the Umbrella Movement. Between the Umbrella Movement and the Anti-ELAB protests, Beijing's intervention in Hong Kong's affairs was unprecedentedly assertive, including the re-interpretation of the Basic Law to disqualify popularly-elected lawmakers, banning the Hong Kong National Party, and accelerating integration from all angles. Catalyzed by the political disputes which arose from the bill, the mounting discontent towards the Hong Kong government as well as the Chinese regime was unleashed during the Anti-ELAB protests. Despite the fact that one million citizens participated in the rally on June 9, and two million on June 16, the government still refused to withdraw the bill. The defiance of public opinion eventually led to the escalation of the protest. The protesters formulated five demands as the final objective of the protests: complete withdrawal of the bill from the legislative process, retraction of the characterization of the protests as 'riots', release and exoneration of arrested protesters, the establishment of an Independent Commission on police conduct and the use of force, and the resignation of the Chief Executive. Under the slogan "Five demands, not one less" (五大訴求，缺一不可, "ng daai sou kau, kyut yat but ho"),  the protesters put intense pressure on the Hong Kong government. Finally, on October 23, the Chief Executive withdrew the bill but refused to concede to the other demands (BBC 2019).

The efforts at reconciliation by the government were 'too little, too late.' While some continued to protest for the remaining demands, the fifth demand of making the city's leader Carrie Lam step down was replaced by the demand of implementing genuine universal suffrage - the unfinished business of the Umbrella Movement. Protesters also realised that the widespread police brutality towards the movement was an extension of political power from an authoritarian state. Eventually, the Anti-ELAB movement evolved into a pro-democracy, anti-authoritarian movement. Building on the civil disobedience tactics used in the Umbrella Movement, the demonstration was coupled with

noncooperation movements and general strikes. The intensification of the protests reached its climax when two of Hong Kong's universities, the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and the Polytechnic University (PolyU), became the scene of ferocious confrontations with the police (Barron 2019). This was also the moment most comparable to the bloody revolutions of other countries. Since then, and due to the effect of the coronavirus outbreak, large-scale confrontations such as this have not been seen again (Dapiran 2020).

Chapter Three

Literature Review


3.1.1 Theories on the Nation

Nationalism is a relatively modern phenomenon that arose from the birth of nation-states in Europe. Since then, many scholars have attempted to formulate a reason behind the rise of nationalism in nation-states. Before exploring the reasons behind how nationalism came into being, it is crucial to first define a 'nation.' However, the term 'nation' is a "notoriously amorphous word" (Ting 2008, p.453) and has become a serious bone of contention. The slipperiness of the terminology has enabled the exploitation of the word for particular goals. While one may utilise the notion of a nation inclusively for self-determinism and extension of the political franchise, another may adopt the term exclusively to protect the rights of an established group and marginalise all others. It all depends on the normative ideals surrounding the concept of the nation. Helen Ting (2008) reminds us that "to use nation solely as a term designating the concrete political community of a state is to ignore the quality of the idea of nation as an "essentially contested concept"" (p.453). Nevertheless, the concept of a 'nation' as a political community under a state can be approached generally from both objective and subjective angles.

An 'objective' approach would designate specific criteria that a political community would have had to achieve for it to be classified as a 'nation.' For example, Anthony Smith (1991) lists the factors that contribute to a nation, in which common myths and historical memory, "historic territory, legal-political community, legal-political equality of members, and common civic culture and ideology" (p.11) are the required components. Territory, statehood, ethnicity, and cultures are all essential elements for the existence of and demarcation between 'nations.' One could argue that even if an individual were not aware of being a part of a nation or lacked a sense of national belonging, they would still nevertheless be a part of their national community.

This approach begs some critical questions. Firstly, the relative importance of these seemingly 'objective' criteria for nation-ness is difficult to pin down. It is problematic to weigh and delineate the lines between traditions and cultures. Secondly, one might not accept being passively placed into a nation. Nations that seek self-determination and

autonomy are fully aware that the narratives imposed by official nationalism may not correspond to the politics of belonging felt by the broader political community. Thirdly, postcolonial nation-states that obtained their independence in the 20th century are nations that have emerged from struggle and resistance against imperial powers. Unlike European nation-states, these nations are relatively young and have been provided with limited time for national myth creation and for historical memory to crystallise into national identity. Modern postcolonial nation-states often contain colonial legacies such as the fragmented dispersion of ethnolinguistic groups, in which these political communities may be equally labelled as 'nations.' This approach lacks the problematisation of the notion of the 'nation' in diversity across different settings.

In contrast, a subjective approach seeks the awareness and acceptance of one belonging to a nation as the crucial element for a national identity. Montserrat Guibernau (1996) defines a 'nation' as "a human group conscious of forming a community, sharing a common culture, attached to a demarcated territory, having a common past and a common project for the future and claiming the right to rule itself" (p.47). Unlike Smith's definition, Guibernau's definition highlights the importance of group consciousness and self-determination in the formula. In this sense, one has to identify themselves as belonging to a nation. As Benedict Anderson (1983) claims, the nation "is an imagined political community. … It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (pp.5-6). However, the collective social categories that Smith proposes should not be forgotten. They provide a valuable foundation of 'ticking the boxes' in evaluating the nation-ness of political communities. The subjective approach also neglects the multidimensional nature of the identities one may possess. However, the subjective approach does allow for negotiation and change in contextualised cases.

3.1.2 Theories on Nationalism

Nationalism is a political ideology that promotes the interests of its own nation. Equally a contested concept, the rise and the nature of nationalism can also be approached from different angles. Michael Freeden (1998) provides a useful framework for exploring the necessary elements of the core structure of nationalism. He listed five core concepts critical for the existence of nationalism as an ideology:

"First, the prioritisation of a particular group – the nation – as a key constituting and identifying framework for human beings and their practices. The realized condition in which this occurs is called nationhood. Second, a positive valorisation is assigned to one's own nation, granting it specific claims over the conduct of its members. Third, the desire to give politico-institutional expression to the first two core concepts. Fourth, space and time are considered to be crucial determinants of social identity. Fifth, a sense of belonging and membership in which sentiment and emotion play an important role" (Freeden 1998, pp.751-752)

The five core concepts each highlight a vital element of nationalism. The first two concepts form the centre of the nationalism debate, which is to confirm who are the members of the national community, and thus who can claim rights. The motive of nationalism is to nurture a sense of 'we-ness' among people of the same membership. No matter how the nation is 'imagined' or 'constructed,' there is always a fine line drawn which delineates between insiders and outsiders of the political community. The commonality among members of a political community, such as language, traditions, history, values, and collective memory, becomes the criteria for sorting members by different identities. The third core concept refers to the aspiration of the nation to achieve self-determination. The spectrum of self-determination can vary from recognition to autonomy, statehood, and independence. The fourth core concept refers to the privatisation of the temporal and spatial aspects of the nation's particularities. Members of the nation should have exclusive legitimacy over the membership's commonalities. Lastly, the fifth core concept refers to the emotional attachments to one's sense of belonging (Freeden 1998). In short, nationalism involves "drawing the boundaries of the collectivity, creating sentiments of belonging, and establishing the principles of organization and mutual relationships within the national community" (Itzigsohn & Hau 2006, pp.196). Hence, nationalism offers a channel for the establishment and legitimisation of the emotions of a nation into a political force.

Nations are not simply natural or organic. As Ernest Gellner (1983) has famously written, "it is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round" (p.55). The categories that Freeden listed frame the debate surrounding the idea of the nation, and invite further discussion on the concept and its practices. However, how these 'objective' elements of a nation translate to nationalism has differed between scholars. In the study of nationalism, Ernest Gellner, Anthony Smith, and Benedict Anderson are influential scholars that represent different approaches in explaining the rise of nationalism.

In *Nations and Nationalism*, Ernest Gellner (1983) proposed a model in which nationalism is a phenomenon arising from the process modernization which further fosters the nation-state's economic development. In traditional agrarian societies, peasants did not share the

same culture as the elite ruling class. The cultural and linguistic diversity scattered across the society hinders the labour mobility required for industrialisation. In response, the state provided education and comprehensive knowledge through standardized education. As a result, the modern and standardized educational system enhances social mobility between classes, leading to a universal, homogeneous high culture. The product of a modernised education system in industrial societies is therefore a shared national identity among all individuals in that society (Gellner 1983).

Gellner's theory on nationalism has a strong emphasis on the effect of capitalism. However, it fails to explain the phenomenon in pre-industrial, non-industrial, and post-industrial societies. Anthony Smith (1995) argues that nationalism is a derivative of cultural markers, such as kinship, religion, belief systems, and common historical territories and memories. As a primordialist, he notes that pre- and post-modern societies would still give birth to nationalism - what Armstrong (1982) refers to as "nations before nationalism" - and that it is not merely an organic product of modernisation. The more capable a state is in harnessing existing cultural markers, the better it can consolidate ethnic and cultural identities in a nation for its legitimacy (Smith 1995).

Smith's theory did not acknowledge that new national consciousnesses can arise from the creation of a new repertoire of cultural symbols. Benedict Anderson's (1983) work on the "imagined community" addresses the reasons for the origin and the spread of nationalism to other parts of the world. He depicts the nation as "an imagined political community" (Anderson 1983, p.15) because it is impossible for all members of the society to know each other personally; "communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (Anderson 1983, p.6). Like Gellner and other modernists, Anderson's theory emphasises the role of modernity. However, unlike Gellner, he argues beyond the notion that nationalism is not simply a functional consequence of capitalism and modernisation, but rather a deliberate manipulation of the mass public by the elites (Anderson 1983).

In his work, he argues that the rise of the printing press, engendering things such as novels and newspapers, was critical in creating a sense of simultaneity in time. It was the power of publications that connected actors within the same clocked, calendrical time, a "temporary coincidence" that allowed them to realise that their actions occurred at the same time (Anderson 1983). For the first time, people were able to imagine things as members of the same nation collectively. The experience of earlier nation-states with print capitalism then

became a 'model' which could be transplanted to other regions (Anderson 1983). This act thus requires the conscious action of elites to purposefully manipulate national identity through the use of symbols in bolstering political legitimacy. As this form of nationalism depends on the incentives of the elites who moulded it in their own favour, we see that national identities can be fluid and malleable. Hence, in Anderson's theorisation on nationalism, national identities are socially constructed.

Mapping these theories and definitions of the nation and nationalism into Hong Kong's context requires further careful scrutiny. As Agnew (1989) reminds us, all nationalisms are local and contextual because of the historical context. Neither theory is adequate for fully encompassing the characteristics of nationalism in Hong Kong. As an example of late nationalism, Hong Kong developed its national consciousness later than the city's modernisation. Thus, Gellner's theory fails to explain why Hong Kong's economic growth in the 80's did not lead to the development of national consciousness. Yew & Kwong (2014) writes that despite not being sovereign, Hong Kong has 'ticked the boxes' of possessing all the characteristics of Smith's definition of a 'nation': ''named populations possessing a historic territory, shared myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members, which are legitimized by the principles of nationalism'' (p.1092). However, the categories of primordial cultural markers that Smith offers are insufficient for understanding Hong Kong's version of nationalism. Since nationalism "provides an unfolding map for the nation's future as well as an archive of its history" (Jusdanis 2001, p.7), the present and future aspect of a nation is especially important for a nation in development like Hong Kong. Anderson's framework of "imagined communities" captures the nuances of a nation in the making, yet it still misses the discussion of individuals trying to shape their "imagined community" based on collectivity and resistance in postcolonial nation-building.

The contradiction of mapping these prominent theories onto the rise of nationalism in Hong Kong is that these theories focus on the role of the state or elites in establishing and maintaining national discourses. However, these theories do not address the transformations of nationalism. National discourse can be contested when individuals read differently from the regime's representation of the nation, hence altering the imagination and membership of that nation. Anthony Cohen (1996) advocates the importance of "personal nationalism," in which one should be aware of how individuals perceive themselves as well as their nation. Similarly, Itzigsohn & Hau (2006) describe "unfinished

imagined communities" in which a proposed official "imagined community" can continue to be moulded by social forces and alter the boundaries of national inclusion over time.

An alternative approach is required when addressing the dialectal and contested processes on the transformation of nationalism. Itzigsohn & Hau (2006) suggest that nationalism should be seen as a consciously articulated ideology by the state and a cultural script in which individuals frame their social relations. Equally, Prasenjit Duara (1995) argues that historical identification of particular members of the political community can subvert the dominant, official version of the nation, in which nationalism is "the site where very different views of the nation contest and negotiate with each other" (p.152). Duara's conceptualisation speaks to the political reality of Hong Kong where many Hong Kongers' seek to reject official Chinese nationalism. Given the frequency of contentious political events that have taken place in Hong Kong since the 'Handover,' Hong Kong's "unfinished imagined community" is still in the making.

3.2 Ethnic Nationalism versus Civic Nationalism

The epistemology of nationalism is highly abstract. The knowledge production of the literature on nationalism comes mainly from descriptive historical events. Yael Tamir (2019) describes it thus - "nationalism is historical and sociological; it follows events and tries to build a theoretical framework to fit social and political occurrences" (Tamir 2019, p.421). Without particular case studies to demonstrate how nationalism is manifested, the principle of nationalism is rather hollow. Hence, nationalism as an ideology is highly contextualised. However, once "adjacent concepts such as democracy, power, political obligation, ethnicity, liberty, community, state" are injected into the formula, the term is "now brought to bear on the core in a wide range of combinations" (Freeden 1998, p.754). In the field of study, there is an all-too-convenient tendency of sorting nationalism into dichotomies among nation-states, for example, western versus eastern, political versus cultural, civic versus ethnic, liberal versus illiberal (Spencer & Wollman 1998). In particular, the dialogue between ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism has always been a contentious debate.

Ethnic nationalism defines a nation based on ethnicity. The prototype of this type of nationalism can be traced back to the definition of the German nation by German philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte in 1808. In his book *Address to the German Nation* (German: Reden an die deutche Nation), he advocated the legitimacy of a German nation by

23

highlighting the distinctiveness of a common German culture under Napoleon's French Empire (Jusdanis 2001). Looking at the German language, the German noun 'Volk' means a sense of 'people' in ethnic terms. For ethnic nationalism, cultural markers, such as a shared heritage, a common language, a common faith, or a common descent, demarcate the line between inclusion and exclusion (Hastings 1997). In other words, these seemingly objective criteria of ethnic commonality ignore individuals' choice to belong to a nation but enforce a membership that is decided biologically at birth. Ethnic nationalism views the nation as a congruent cultural and political unit. Thus, the ethno-nationalistic nation-state takes the form of a culturally homogeneous state (Smith 1995).

Civic nationalism, on the contrary, defines a nation based on shared devotion to political principles. The term 'civic' comes from the Latin word *civis*, which means "relating to a citizen" (Isin 2002). Thus, instead of equating cultural homogeneity with nationhood, civic nationalism considers the legal and political dimensions of communal life. The archetypal example of civic nationalism is French nationalism, where Liberté, égalité, fraternité, meaning "liberty," "equality," and "fraternity" in English, is the national motto for France. In his lecture, *What is a Nation?* in 1882 (French: Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?), French historian Ernest Renan famously said a nation is a "daily plebiscite," requiring individuals with free will to offer continuous consent as a collective identity (Renan 2003). By looking at the history of the French Revolution, race was not the basis for the unification of people, but values that people pursued (Renan & Giglioli 2018). Additionally, democracy is logically inherented in nationalism due to principals of popular sovereignty and equally between the members (Greenfield 1992). Since individuals have a choice to commit to that political and legal framework in earning membership to the nation, democracy is inherently necessary to adequately address the ever-changing membership of the society (Miller 1995). In short, civic nationalism is the nurturing of a sense of belonging through traditional liberal values like freedom, equality, and rights (Tamir 1993).

The ethnic/civic dialogue, or even the terminology of 'ethnic' and 'civic,' requires further problematisation. The distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism was first written in *The Idea of Nationalism* by Hans Kohn (1944). Judging by the history of nation-building across different nation-states, he argues that civic nationalism is a characteristic of Western states, and ethnic nationalism is typical of Eastern states. For the 'civic' nature of nationalism, he based his understanding of the examination of five Western nation-states: France, Great Britain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and the United States. The French Revolution, especially, intensified and accelerated the spread of liberal practices, such as

the writing of constitutions, to other newly-born civic nation-states (Kohn 1944). The state took precedence over the nation for all these five nation-states; thus, nation-building was consciously guided by elites, coinciding with the state's interests. For Eastern nation-states, their formation as nations preceded the building of the state. Hence, states would often find it difficult to map their concept of nation onto appropriate territories, resulting in the political divisiveness of the nation-state.

Other prominent scholars on nationalism have continued with this strand of thought. Gellner (1983) classifies civic nationalism as being that of nations unified based on high culture, while ethnic nationalism as being that of nations held together by conventional culture. Similarly, in Ignatieff's (1994) *Blood and Belonging*, he claims that civic nationalism is constituted by "a community of equal, rights-bearing individuals who are united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values" (p.6). On the other hand, he argues that ethnic nationalism is predetermined by cultural elements, stating that "it is the national community that defines the individual; not the individual who defies the national" (pp.7-8). In short, he attaches civic nationalism to the enlightenment and presence of a well-cultured bourgeois, while associating ethnic nationalism with the passive, uneducated mass. Ignatieff's notion on the ethnic/civic divide invited critics such as Billig who (1995) argued:

"Despite Ignatieff's claim to be a civic nationalist, he personally disavows loyalty to a single nation-state. He does not describe how 'civic nationalists' create a nation-state with its own myths; how the civic nations recruit their citizenry in war-time; how they draw their own boundaries; how they demarcate 'others' beyond those boundaries; how they resist, violently if necessary, those movements which seek to rearrange the boundaries; and so on" (pp. 47-8)

The variation of nationalism has influenced policy considerations. The nature of nationalism determines how nation-states frame and formulate their identities on domestic and foreign policies, such as citizenship and migration. Thus, based on the inclusivity/exclusivity of this variant of nationalism, an extra layer of moral debate has been injected into the discussion. The default understanding is that civic nationalism is inclusive; thus, it is 'good,' while ethnic nationalism is exclusive; hence it is 'bad.' Unsurprisingly, the perception comes from the false impression that the emphasis on civility and consensus in western nation-states results in peace and liberty whilst social fragmentation and ethnic confrontation arise in postcolonial Asian and African states (Roshwald 2016).

Thus, this conventional understanding of the ethnic/civic dichotomy is heavily criticised. Each nation-state has come into being through a particular historical process. Tamir (2019) expresses the concern that making such a distinction between the 'developed' nationalism of the West and the 'primordial' nationalism of the East is "more normative than descriptive," in that the dichotomy would "establish the moral supremacy of the West" (p.425). She further contends that "ethnic nationalism is depicted as characteristic of the early developmental stages, while the aspiration to act in accordance with state law characteristic of civic nationalism is presented as an expression of the more advanced stage of moral and political development" (Tamir 2019, p.425). The scholars that associated the ethnic/civic binary with backward/progressive also indicate the teleological progression of the discussion on the evolution of nation-states.

Furthermore, the dichotomy ignores a myriad of ethnic and civic elements in a nation-state. Instead of seeing both as distinctive counterparts, one should acknowledge that ethnic and civic nationalisms are "endpoints on a typological spectrum" (Roshwald 2016, p.3). In reality, ethnic nationalist nation-states can develop institutions to make things 'civic,' making the legal and political dimensions of the nation-state more inclusive. In contrast, civic nationalism continues to haunt liberal, democratic nations because the values of the dominant group often decide the nature of inclusion/exclusion, creating opportunities for alienation of the excluded other (Spencer & Wollman 1998). As Spencer & Wollman (1998) argue:

"That pattern is the problem of the Other, against which all definitions of the nation are constructed. Nationalism, however benign in form, must always seek to define the nation by reference to something else that it is not. The problem of forming boundaries and defining who falls in one side and who falls in the other is still at the heart of the nationalist project" (p.271)

Given the overlaps between ethnic and civic nationalism in dimensions of good/bad and inclusive/exclusive, the distinction is difficult to sustain. As Smith (1995) writes, "modern nations are simultaneously and necessarily civic and ethnic" (p.99). Therefore, the ethnic/civic dichotomy must be challenged.

The unique context of Hong Kong poses the challenging question of how to map its experience onto the ethnic/civic debate. Undoubtedly, the ethnic Chinese appeal has its presence in the formation of Hong Kong's identity. Nevertheless, the entrenched civic values of individual liberty and freedom hold a vital role for Hong Kongers in their self-identification. More importantly, Hong Kong's experience defies the model in which

Western nation-states gave birth to nationalism. The heavy dependence on these Western nation-states as case studies for civic nationalism has questionably shaped the conventional understanding of how civic nationalism should form and the characteristics of those nations. Western civic nationalism is inspired by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract*, written in 1762. Both French and American nationalism are rooted in the ideals that Rousseau proposed - that people who are sovereign have an all-powerful right. Elites and intellectuals had defined what was meant by 'civic' and 'citizenship' and were made popular when people embraced the concept. The generation of a national constitution is the moment when 'civicness' is put into practice.

For Hong Kong, the way 'civic' is put into practice is different. Hong Kong's 'civicness' is not expressed by the generation of a constitution but from the daily resistance and struggles against the oppressive state in securing one's liberty. It is the ordinary citizens who hold the instruments of nation-building, rather than elites or intellectually-focused, high-cultured entities. Along with new technologies, new tactics, and new strategies in nation-building, this participatory element in the imagining of the nation would create a 'civic' nationalism unique to Hong Kong. Therefore, even if Hong Kong's nationalism is 'civic' in nature, the processes of achieving this civic nationalism and the substance included in the terminology are drastically different.

3.3 The Banal, the Everyday, and Civic Nationalism

The study of nationalism, including the never-ending debate on the ethnic/civic nationalism dichotomy, reached a turning point when more scholars began to value research beyond using nation-states as the unit of analysis. Beck (2007) commented on the study of nationalism calling it "methodological nationalism," meaning that research approaches often prefer the nation-states over cities, networks, and communities as the unit of analysis for nationalism. As a result, there is a tendency for research to underemphasize the importance of the sub- or supra-national in nation-building. The discursive turn in the understanding of nationalism helped scholars to understand how the masses contribute to nation-building. Although Benedict Anderson's (1983) *Imagined Communities* investigates the apparatus that elites use to promote nationalism, his work also examines how people perceive of the nation in their speech, actions and in their imagining of the world. The perception and reproduction of national identity among ordinary people became a new avenue of research into nation-building.

Michael Billig's (1995) seminal work on *Banal Nationalism* provides the foundation in exploring the perception and reproduction of national identity among ordinary people in an established nation. Like Anderson, Billig agrees with the strong social-psychological dimension of nationhood, in which he investigates the forces behind the reinforcement of one's national identity. The significance of Billig's study comes in at least two ways. Firstly, the unit of analysis for nationalism is no longer the nation-state itself. Secondly, Billig's work reorientates the focus of previous works where past scholars have frequently equated nationalism to peripheral politics and separation movements.

Billig's research investigates the nation's everyday representations in mature, established nations, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. The examples that he covered include the use of flags, national songs, coins, and banknotes, language in sports events, and more. He argues that a "whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations, and practices" constantly 'flags' as a reminder of a national community, and the habitual cultural production results in the internalisation of national awareness and identity as an "endemic condition" of nations (Billig 1995, p.6). As a word or terminology, 'nationalism' does not need to make an appearance in describing the common political community in everyday life, but instead, is replaced by the use of language such as 'our society' to represent the nation. In short, banal nationalism reinforces a sense of belonging and concretises the shape of national identity. Hence, the ingrained and mundane everyday practices of banality demonstrate that the continual reminding of nationhood "provides a continual background for their political discourses, for cultural products, and even for the structuring of newspapers" (Billig 1995, p.8).

Certainly, Billig's banal nationalism has its theoretical limitations. Skey (2009) argues that while banal nationalism may be valuable in targeting a uniform, homogenous audience, Billig has failed to recognise the complexities within nation-states. For example, in the case of the United Kingdom - a nation-state made out of four distinct 'nations' and heavily-subjected to international migration - the diversity invites different understandings of 'the national' to co-exist. The banal reproduction of the nation is much more sophisticated than the routine applications of banal nationalism and imagined communities in the context of the United Kingdom (Rosie et al. 2006). Thus, the operation of banal nationalism has an asymmetrical effect on different political communities.

Furthermore, although subtle in nature, banal nationalism still has a state-centric focus in the reproduction of national identity. While Billig (2009) restated that he does not assume that people passively perceive the 'flagging' of cultural signifiers, nonetheless, banal nationalism is preoccupied with a top-down dynamic operated by the overarching structure: the state, the elites, and traditional forms of media. The bottom-up dynamic, operated by agency-centered ordinary people, as well as the shaping and reshaping of national identity were less mentioned. Nevertheless, Billig's work inspired scholars to rethink the importance of cultural signifiers in shaping nationalist discourse and thus opened up a new dimension of studying nationalism: everyday nationalism.

The literature on everyday nationalism builds on Billig's banal nationalism in uncovering the forces behind the perception and reproduction of national identity. The 'everyday' of nationalism does not literally describe the daily performance of a nationalist practice but refers to the mundane, subtle habits and practices of a person's social life as a way of articulating and naturalising discourses on the politics of belonging (Edensor 2002). It is the small things that one insists in everyday life that contributes to the larger identity. People of the same nation act and perform similarly to demonstrate the commonalities in their nationhood. Equally, everyday nationalism can also be a process of othering through the bodily practices of everyday life. For example, small linguistic markers such as the words of defining 'us' and 'them,' or concerning how the 'others' undermine 'our' society are active boundary-making processes of identity (Haldrup et al. 2006).

Banal nationalism and everyday nationalism share some similarities, but the latter focuses on everyday expressions of nationhood by looking at the visual and discursive representations of nationalism and how national narratives are understood differently by ordinary citizens (Benwell 2015). In turn, the study also reveals the agency of people shaping national identity from cultural resources and repertoires. Scholars like Antonsich (2016) have even attempted to offer a clear divide between the banal as a top-down, state-centric approach compared to the everyday as a bottom-up, agency-centred engagement on nations and nationhood. By understanding how nationhood is experienced and understood among the population, people can delineate a sense of belonging from everyday practices. Thus, while each nation has its own set of cultural symbols and repertoires, these entities are susceptible to contestation and reimagination. For example, Geoffrey Cubitt (1998) opened the new potential of approaching the study of nationalism through a cultural angle. He argues that "however institutionalised [nations] become, and however well-established the symbolism that denotes them, nations remain elusive and

indeterminate, perpetually open to context, to elaboration and to imaginative reconstruction" (Cubitt 1998, p.3).

Further exploring the mundane cultural practices of people, Tim Edensor's (2002) influential publication *National Identity, Popular Culture, and Everyday Life* examines how cultural symbols reproduce and transform a sense of identity. Landscape, movies, performance and culinary practices are all everyday habits that should not be taken for granted, but these aspects of looking at the nation are "routinely represented, materialised and performed through a range of cultural forms, material environments, and everyday practices" (Antonsich & Skey 2017, p.5). For example, the superhero Captain America promotes the American national identity through the visual representation of the American landscape within the Marvel comics (Dittmer 2005). Exploring the nationalist politics in Transylvania, Brubaker (2006) also argues that it is through everyday experience that nationhood is (re)produced within the political community.

Some scholars like Jones & Merriman (2009) suggest that the banality of nationalism should be part of the everyday nationalism. In their research on road signs in Wales, they found that even these road signs are a contentious arena where ordinary people construct identity at a local level. The banal might even lead to sparking moments of 'hot' nationalism, the transformation movement produced by a sense of crisis of identity and belonging (Hutchinson 2006), leaving us with the phenomenon of the "hot in the banal" (Paasi 2016, p.21). Thus, in Jones & Merriman's (2009) account, the day-to-day of nationalism highlights the people's agency in the reproduction of the nation. In short, the everyday aspects of nationalism entail the need to acknowledge the agency with which ordinary people testify to the cultural resources of a given nation.

To investigate everyday nationalism, as discussed by the scholars mentioned above, traditional forms of analysis no longer encapsulate the subtleties of everyday experiences. Whether it is Anderson's (1983) method of investigation through press capitalism or Gellner's (1983) approach to media technologies, contemporary nationhood no longer needs to rely on traditional media for the construction and dissemination of its concept of nationalism. In the age of the Internet, 'going online' opens up a new platform for the production, transmission, and reception of cultural resources. The everyday practice of modern civilisation through the Internet can allow ordinary people to reproduce and reform expressions of nationhood. Thus, newer and more creative forces can shape the existing imagined community.

With the deterritorialisation of nation-building, cultural homogenisation no longer has to be confined within existing nation-states. As Eriksen (2007) notes, "it can no longer be taken for granted that the people who identify with a given nation inhabit the same space" (Eriksen 2007, p.1). Szulc (2017) identified two groups that have taken advantage and thrived from the new medium: diasporas and stateless nations. In terms of diasporas, Kim's (2011) research uncovers how Asian women make sense of their transnational lives in London, arguing that "electronic mediation intensified by the Internet provides a necessary condition for the possibility of diasporic nationalism" (Kim 2011, p.133). Established "imagined communities" can retain their identity whilst being estranged from their original nation-state, or connect these "imagined communities" back together. Hence, Edensor (2002) suggests that "national identity has become detached from the nation-state, proliferates in diasporic settings far from its original home, appears in syncretic cultural forms and practices and exists in 'hyphenated' identities" (Edensor 2002, p.29). In terms of stateless nations, Eriksen (2007) reveals how Kurdish national identities are mediated through the creation of websites and the promotion of their key issues to the rest of the world. These decentralised national communities can come together again in an alternative form, reconstructing the imagined community by ignoring geographical boundaries. Hence, in the Internet age, "nations thrive in cyberspace" (Eriksen 2007, p.1).

As a result, the Internet offers a key arena in which the practices and discourses of everyday nationalism produce and reproduce national identities. Non-elites can generate and transmit messages across different countries in which Shifman et al. (2014) call "user-generated globalisation" from the cross-national diffusion of Internet jokes. The Internet can further serve as an incubator for counter-public politics (Fraser 1992), in which ordinary people can "articulate and legitimize their distinct national identities or their denied belongings to a particular nation" (Szulc 2017, p.68). Therefore, the Internet can have an empowering function for ordinary people in refashioning cultural resources and reconfiguring their concept of the nation.

In the case of Hong Kong, the everyday nationalism of the Internet and the 'civicness' of political communities' civic nationalism are intrinsically linked. Although the existing literature on everyday nationalism focuses on how existing nationalism manifests itself in everyday life, the theoretical framework can equally be applied to Hong Kong to account for a nation that is still developing. The Internet has partly facilitated a decentralised model for Hong Kongers to participate in the social movement in a multitude of ways. It is known that

how people participate and interact in social networks determines the level of engagement in civic participation, especially for younger generations (Loader et al. 2014). This viewpoint can be developed further to investigate how participation constructs a civic national identity among the people of Hong Kong, and "about where, when and using which Internet devices or online platforms they routinely reproduce national symbols and meanings or more actively flag their nationality" (Szulc 2017, p.69).

Chapter Four

Origin and Characteristics of Hong Kong and Chinese Nationalism

This chapter briefly traces the historical processes of Chinese and Hong Kong nationalism and how those narratives have evolved over time. To understand why a national consciousness has developed in Hong Kong requires a careful look at how the people of Hong Kong insist on a cultural identity that distances themselves from the Chinese identity. The politics that lies behind, however, are not easy to disentangle.

As it was a British colony for nearly 150 years, Hong Kong has departed significantly from the historical trajectories and developments that happened in Mainland China. While there have been continuous mutual interactions between the populations across the Hong Kong-China border over the years, their significance and the direction of travel differed under different administrations. The British colonial administration effectively shielded Hong Kong from the nationwide movements that led to the development of contemporary China. What nationalism means for China is a paradoxical mix of inferiority stemming from a history of national humiliation and pride arising from current economic and societal achievements. In turn, the historical and cultural characteristics of the Chinese nation have nurtured a sense of patriotism centred on the Communist party, where the CCP is the saviour of the Chinese nation, protecting the population from foreign interference. Inevitably, these historical processes shaped the Chinese nation based on race, ethnicity, and blood. Hong Kong nationalism, on the other hand, stems from the experience of collective resistance and struggle against the Chinese regime. Resentment against the Chinese has been brewing for some time. The more China wants the people of Hong Kong to 'love the country,' the more Hong Kong people turn away in search of their own identity.

The first section traces the historical development of Chinese nationalism, where the ethnic narrative has dominated the formulation of the Chinese nation. The second section discusses the evolution of Hong Kong identity and its struggles with the politics of belonging. Lastly, the third section explores the intricate interactions between the Chinese in their attempt to convert Hong Kong people into 'true' Chinese and the Hong Kong people's reaction to the discontents which have arisen from Chinese intrusion into their everyday lives.

<u>4.1 The History and Features of Chinese Nationalism</u>

Chinese nationalism presents an exceptional case of how the nation is formed. While most nation-states are modern inventions, China is instead "a civilisation pretending to be a nation-state" (Pye 1996, p.109). The nation came first, then the state appeared. As an "empire-turned-nation" (Tang & Darr 2012, p.814), the state is only a container that fills the inherited legacy of an empire. Chinese nationalism draws extensively on the cultural symbols and resources of ancient Chinese civilisation, where the roots of Chinese nationalism can be traced back to late Qing. The Chinese nation arose from the urge to turn the Chinese people away from imperial Manchu power and to establish a strong, united Chinese nation-state. The features of contemporary Chinese nationalism stem from its path dependency on how the Chinese nation interacts with the outside world.

A significant feature of modern Chinese nationalism is the strong emphasis placed between territoriality and nationhood. This feature is a definitive characteristic of ethnic nationalism, stressing the need of a monoethnic nation to be defined by territorial boundaries. Historically, however, the collective importance of territory and nationhood was not apparent in ancient China. In ancient China, the Chinese structured foreign relations through the 'Tianxia' concept, which entailed "a cultural hierarchy of Chinese and non-Chinese based on the China-centric view; and differentiation between Chinese and non-Chinese based on the cultural hierarchy and perception of Chinese superiority" (Zheng 2012, p.218). The interaction within the tribute system was not only a mercantilist system of economic exchange but also a socio-cultural interaction between countries. The closer and more susceptible to Chinese cultural influence, the more 'civilised' a country becomes. In simple terms, the Sino-centric ideal of ancient China comprises a civilized centre and barbarian periphery (Agnew 2010).

The concepts of borders and territoriality were more fluid in this system of international politics. However, this system of international relations was "disrupted by the onslaught of Western imperialism" (Agnew 2010, p.573) in the 19th century, making Qing realise the existence of stronger foreign powers in relation to its imperial power. Since then, imperial China has had to constantly renegotiate and adjust its strategies and interactions in international politics with the broader world (Chih 2017). Instead of following a Sino-centric world order of a tribute system, where boundaries were more porous, imperial and contemporary China have actively appropriated the Western notions of a nation-state in mapping the Chinese nation over a neatly confined territory. Hence, Chinese nationalism

stems from both traditional Chinese nationalism and modern Western nationalism (Zheng 2012).

The realisation of Qing as being but one of the many imperial powers in the world shook the Han Chinese into believing that Manchu's rule had caused the Chinese civilisation to decline. The few wars fought by Qing with other imperial powers in the early 19th century had demonstrated that the Manchu regime was not able to defend itself against humiliation at the hands of foreign powers. This rude awakening of the Chinese resulted in the 'self-strengthening movement,' in which people pursued Westernisation to resist this humiliation. The movement served as a form of embryonic nationalism in which the Chinese nation was defined through the desire of the Chinese nation to strive for national unity and empowerment (Lu & Fan 2010). When all the reforms of Qing failed, forming a genuine Chinese nation became the only way to face China's national crisis in the eyes of many Han Chinese (Wu 2008). This later paved the way to the 1911 Chinese revolution, consisting of many rounds of anti-imperial revolt and uprising in the form of anti-Manchuism (Zheng 2012). In short, the Han Chinese believed that national salvation required people to submit to the nation-state instead of an emperor, hence the urge to form a modern Chinese nation-state.

Defining what the Chinese nation was proved difficult in shaping an appropriate discourse for the public. There was diverging theorisation of how and what kind of nation-state should be built for the new China. The two main theories of what new China should be were those of ethnic nationalism and cultural nationalism. Sun-Yat Sen, the iconic leader of the Chinese revolution, theorised along the lines of ethnic nationalism, in which he emphasised a unified Chinese nation that comes from a common ancestry (Zheng 2012). He believed in the notion that 'if one does not belong to our racial group, then his mind must be different" (非我族類, 其心必異, Mandarin: fei wo zu lei, qi xin bi yi), thus proposed the need to ward off the Manchus as a way of achieving the objective of 'expel the barbarians, recover China' (Zheng 2012). In Sun's belief, his understanding of the Chinese nation was more exclusive. On the other hand, Liang Qichao, another reformist at the time, promoted a sense of progressive cultural nationalism. Liang emphasised common culture as the keystone in the construction of the Chinese nation. He believed that barbarians could be 'Chinese' if they were subjected to the 'civilising' process, in which Manchus were Sinicised to assimilate into the Han and hence establish legitimacy to rule (Zheng 2012). In Liang's argument, his understanding of the Chinese nation was more inclusive.

In the end, "Five Races under One Union" (五族共和, Mandarin: wu zu gong he) was accepted as the norm. The literal meaning of this term is the mutual harmony of five ethnic groups living together, which includes the Han, the Manchus, the Mongols, the Hui (Muslims), and the Tibetans. This arrangement aimed at a strong multinational and unified state for national revival and rejuvenation (Zheng 2012). In Sun's speech, he said:

"The fundament of the state is the people. Incorporating the territories of the Han, the Manchu, the Mongol, the Muslim, the Tibetans into one state means integrating the Han, the Manchu, the Mongol, the Muslim, the Tibetans into one population. This is what we call national unification."

Sun Yat-sen, ''*Linshi da zongtong jiuzhi xuanyan shu*'' [Inauguration Speech of the Provisional President], in Sun Zhongshan quanji, vol. 2, 2 (Cited in Zheng 2012, p.225).

The progressive take on the understanding of nationalism was "consistent with democracy, such as the acceptance of all ethnic groups in China, the desire for self-determination and emancipation from Western colonial exploitation, individual dignity and integrity, and economic development through contact with the outside world" (Tang & Darr 2012, p.821). People in the Chinese nation also had to be fit to revive the country and to save it from foreign powers (Lu & Fan 2010). In sum, the idea of nationhood during the Republic of China upholds an anti-imperialist discourse needed for national self-determination and resisting national humiliation.

The notion of Chinese nationalism, however, experienced changes after the founding of the People's Republic of China. The Chinese state reviews the world through the lens of realism, since China was a victim of imperialism and colonialism and national self-determination was vital for protecting national interests from foreign aggression (Matten 2016). Particular elements of early 20th century Chinese nationalism was magnified; for instance, the need for China to become a strong power for emancipation from Western exploitation. Chinese nationals would particularly react to issues of racial and territorial integrity in the face of international disputes, with sentiments of ethnic nationalism dominating political narratives. Secessionism from the inside was also not to be tolerated. Long histories of confrontation of the Tibetans and Uyghurs with the Han majority demonstrates that the Chinese nation was never a unified collective of a harmonious Chinese imagined community. The problem of the enforced Chinese-centric view on non-ethnic Chinese populations is that

"this process invariably creates tensions between the cultural and territorial unit, for the culturally-defined nation never corresponds perfectly to the territorially-based one. In other words, group differentiation entails some form of territorial dislocation. The search for ethnic solidarity triggers mechanisms of exclusion."

(Lecours 2010, p.158)

What was considered 'progressive' turned out to be "an- almost- obsessive concern with mapping contemporary national sovereignty (in the Western sense of exclusive jurisdiction) onto a traditional imperial domain" (Agnew 2012, p.307). The idea and identity of China therefore always centred on territorial integrity and a stable national culture and civilisation within a united Greater China (Callahan 2004).

Contemporary Chinese nationalism has two main dimensions. These dimensions include a state-engineered nationalism by the CCP and a popular nationalism stemming from economic development and cultural superiority. These dimensions of nationalism are both rooted in communist authoritarian prosperity in modern China (Wu 2008).

In terms of the state-led official nationalism, the CCP has taken advantage of the Chinese nation's history of humiliation to foster a sense of victimhood, hence recalling the need to build a strong nation-state to resist foreign exploitation. Sensing the dangers of losing political legitimacy, the regime has incorporated nationalist education into national policy to cultivate a sense of nationalism among Chinese nationals after the Tiananmen Square Incident in 1989 (Shirk 2007). The nationalistic indoctrination constantly reminds the people of the cruelty of the Western imperial invasion of China, nurturing a victim mentality (Shirk 2008). For example, Callahan (2009) argues that how map-making in China, in what he calls "Maps of China's National Humiliation," reveals the Chinese thinking on where China 'ends' and the rest of the world begins. The normative maps demonstrate the lingering effects that foreign colonials have brought bring to China in explaining the assertive approaches to the territorial integrity of Greater China. In effect, the experience of the 'Century of Humiliation' and the 'Scramble for China' continues to haunt the possibilities of a benign interaction between foreign countries and the Chinese nation. The perceptions of 'disrespect and distrust' (Jia 2005), indicated by incidents such as the United States' bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999, have reactivated the negative experiences of Chinese victimization at the hands of foreign colonial powers (Agnew 2012).

In consequence, the nationalist education narrative focuses on the need for solidarity within China to defend against imperial powers. Originating from Mao, the saying of "美帝國主義亡

我之心不死" (Mandarin: mei di guo zhu yi wang wo zhi xin bu si) (Yang 2001), which roughly translates as the idea that American imperialism will never abandon its intention to undermine China, is ingrained in the mindset of the Chinese nation. The narrative of the national movements, such as the May Fourth Movement in 1919, has been hijacked by modern interpretations of the CCP. Rather than seeing the movement as "in search of wealth and power" to save the nation through science and democracy (Wu 2008, p.469), the regime has taken parts of the story and framed it as a patriotic movement against foreign powers. Equally, the CCP negates any form of mention of the lack of solidarity with other ethnic minorities in China. The false promise of a harmonious "Five Races under One Union" is nothing more than an "imagined multi-ethnic community constructed by the Communist Party" (Tang & Darr 2012, p.820).

In terms of popular nationalism among Chinese nationals, the unprecedented economic development since the Chinese economic reform has amplified a sense of pride stemming from the Chinese civilization. In the post-Mao ideological vacuum, economic pragmatism has replaced Maoism as the emotional anchor for Chinese nationals (Tang & Darr 2012). Materialistic improvements and economic performance have become the source of legitimacy for the regime. For example, in a statistical study on the relationship between economic inequality and nationalism in China, Chen (2019) argued that greater inequality results in lower nationalist feelings because the sense of pride stems from economic development, an apparent characteristic of Asian developmentalist societies. Hence, despite social coercion and control over society, Chinese nations place greater weight on the regime's effort to alleviate poverty and pursue economic development. The improvements to Chinese society have also made Chinese nationals believe in the rise of China's status on the international stage. To Chinese nationals, the CCP is the primary protector of the weak, the core defender of national interests, and the representative of the oppressed nation from the imperial west (Wu 2008).

The confidence bred by economic success has also made Chinese nationals pursue the factors that led to China's success. Chinese nationals trace back historical achievements to generate "a sense of continuing pride in an exceptional cultural history" (Agnew 2010, p.576). In other words, the Chinese 'bloodline' is a core part of identity, inheriting a sense of superiority spiritually and morally from Chinese cultural traditions (Wu 2008). In sum, nationalism in contemporary China is an instrumental tool to strengthen regime stability and bolster its legitimacy to rule (Tang & Darr 2012).

## 4.2 Hong Kong Identity and Hong Kong Nationalism

Hong Kong nationalism is a relatively new subject of discussion in the public realm. To understand its emergence, one is required to take an in-depth look at the discussions on Hong Kong identity. Hong Kong identity has been subjected to intense struggles, contestation, and reimagination with the Chinese identity, where "China is an unequivocal variable in the formation of Hong Kong identity" (Fung & Chan 2017, p.410).

The origin of Hong Kong identity dates back to the 1970s during the British colonial administration. For many years during the colonial period, Hong Kong was a "borrowed place [and a] borrowed time" (Hughes 1976), a migrant city which was seen as a safe haven from political movements in Mainland China and a stepping stone to greater successes. Many Chinese immigrants retained a sense of Chinese identity, despite escaping China for Hong Kong. Before the economic take-off, working hard and earning enough money to support the family took precedence over other issues in society. In this belief of 'utilitarian familism' (Lau 1981), people prioritised the interest of the family unit and were uninterested in civil society. In the 1970s, colonial governance started to improve the social conditions in Hong Kong. Even though the British was still seen as 'foreigners' governing a predominantly Chinese society, Steve Tsang (2003) argues that the act of "benevolent paternalism" from the colonial government was "not with a view to fulfilling the requirements of a good government in the Chinese tradition but because they were deemed sensible by policymakers at the time" (Tsang 2003, p.201). Eventually, the initiated programmes nurtured a sense of citizenship, community, and belonging among the people in Hong Kong (Tsang 2003). Developing a Hong Kong identity was also a response with which to dampen the presence of Chinese identity in society, especially after the 1967 riots, when Chinese patriots promoted Maoism in Hong Kong whilst the Cultural Revolution happened simultaneously in China (Law & Lee 2006).

In the 1980s, rapid economic growth elevated the standard of living of the population. People started to take pride in the city's economic success. At the same time, cultural indigenisation further reinforced a cultural identity unique to Hong Kong. As a cultural hub in Asia, Cantonese movies, dramas, and music were widely recognised as icons of Hong Kong culture. It is also during this period where Hong Kong people started to differentiate themselves from the Chinese in Mainland China (Lau 1997). In media productions, the Mainland Chinese were stereotypically portrayed as lazy, uneducated, backward 'Ah Chan' coming to Hong Kong to work, while not knowing the norms and customs in society (Law &

Lee 2006). Still, the economic and cultural dimensions of Hong Kong identity were more prevalent than its social and political dimensions.

In the wake of the Sino-British Joint Declaration settled between the UK and China, there was a crisis of confidence towards the Chinese regime ruling Hong Kong. Even though the constitutional documents drafted at the time promised that the way of living would not be interrupted after the Handover, Hong Kong people were still highly reluctant given their taste for democracy and greater degrees of autonomy when political reform accelerated in the late 80s. The fears of the Chinese government were realised in the Tiananmen Incident in 1989. Many chose to emigrate while some chose to adhere to a Pan-Chinese identity, believing that democratic retrocession would occur and that Hong Kong people had been given a 'sacred mission' to promote democracy on Chinese soil (Mathews et al. 2008). The commemorations for the Tiananmen Square Incident, held by the organization named Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China, served as a self-identification of being Chinese. For the past thirty years, this Vigil is held every year. Nevertheless, the people of Hong Kong were able to distinguish between loving the Chinese nation in the abstract cultural sense and loving the regime in the political sense (Ma & Fung 1999). Feelings towards the regime were rather "luke-warm or downright hostile" (Dupré 2020, p.9). Despite the presence of a Pan-Chinese national identity, in the eyes of the regime, skepticism towards the CCP was deemed to be a non-reconcilable factor with the official stance of nationalism (Chan 2017).

After the Handover, there were ambivalent emotions towards the nature of Hong Kong identity. On the one hand, driven by a "market-based identity" (Mathews et al. 2008), the strengthening of socio-economic ties in the first ten years after the Handover resulted in the increase in Hong Kong people who self-identified as Chinese or professed a mixed Hong Kong/Chinese identity (Ma & Fung 2007). That sense of belonging reached its highest in 2008, at the time when China was the global growth engine, and when Beijing showed off its soft power in the Olympics (Ma et al. 2011). This duality in identity - the maintenance of the Hong Kong identity whilst being in favour of the Chinese identity simultaneously - was the result of cultural interactions from the bottom up (Ma 2006).

This sense of dual identity was reflected in the Public Opinion Programme under the University of Hong Kong, where the programme conducted surveys that asked about the self-identification of ethnic identity in various categories. Around 2008, shown in Graph 1, 38.6% of the surveyed population identified themselves as straight "Chinese," while only

18.1% of people identified as "Hongkonger" (Public Opinion Programme 2020). Despite the controversy of the Article 23 bill in 2003, it did not substantially affect Hong Kong's affiliation with Chinese identity. Rather, the combined effects of economic growth and integration drew the identities closer (Ma et al. 2011). Until 2008, the hybridised self-perception of identity reflected a honeymoon period of Hong Kong-Chinese relations (Fung & Chan 2017).



Graph 1: Self-perception of Hong Kong-China identity between years 1997-2019

On the other hand, Hong Kong people were also anxious about slowly losing their local identity. The Preservation Movements in 2006-2007 which arose due to the controversy of the demolition of the Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier, both relics of British colonialism, demonstrated the sensitivity of the public in holding onto collective memory by attempts to preserve the built environment (Lam, 2015). The case revealed the lack of place-based identity within Hong Kong's identity, which evoked the fear of "culture of disappearance" (Abbas 1997). With China's ascendency, Hong Kong films and popular music also has adjusted or shifted to the preferences of the Chinese market, undermining the cultural significance and uniqueness of Hong Kong (Chu 2013). Howard Choy (2007) argues that Hong Kong people fell into a schizophrenic condition of an identity crisis. A sense of nostalgia for the governance from the colonial period kicked in when comparing the legacies of value systems constructed during colonial Hong Kong, such as the rejection of corruption, protection of rights and liberties, to the poor governance after the Handover (Tsang 2003). As the criminal movie, *Infernal Affairs* suggests, the people of Hong Kong were unsure as to whether the Hong Kong identity fit into the British or Chinese context, almost as if people were double agents manoeuvring between the two powers. He correctly points out that

"the identity crisis is not only about, as critics suggest, split personalities between good and evil, but also political tensions between the colonised and colonisers" (Choy 2007, p.52).

This search for belonging created puzzling identity crises in the population. Lo (2007a) claimed: "there is a perpetual doubling in Hong Kong identity even ten years after the handover: we cannot entirely demarcate what it is and we are always determined by it" (p.444). This ambivalence in identity, however, ended when Beijing's assertive political intervention into Hong Kong politics - as well as the promotion of greater integration - triggered the anxieties of Hong Kong people towards the OCTS promise. The mounting political tensions between Hong Kong and China meant a divergence in political identity between the two places. For Hong Kong people, people opted for the political identity that treasured the core values and shared beliefs of Hong Kong: freedom and liberty over abstract cultural affiliations with China (Fung & Chan 2017). While in the end, the Umbrella Movement ended up not being able to pressure Beijing into offering genuine universal suffrage, the pursuit of political ideals reinforced the political dimension of Hong Kong identity.

At the very same time, there were already elites studying and framing the nature and basis of Hong Kong nationalism that departed from the characteristics of the Chinese identity. In 2014, Undergrad, a magazine under the Hong Kong University Student Union, published a book named *Hong Kong Nationalism* (香港民族論, heong gong maan zuk leon). The book received little attention at first until the former CE C.Y. Leung accused Undergrad of advocating independence and "putting forward fallacies" (Cheung et al. 2015). This key publication gathered short pieces written on the nature of Hong Kong nationalism by students and scholars. As this topic inevitably crosses the red line of Beijing, the publication was a fresh attempt at 'coming out of the closet' from academia and entering the public discourse. The magazine editor, Brian Leung, emphasized the importance of putting Hong Kong nationalism into the realm of public debate. Firstly, he argued that the construction of this nationalistic discourse would allow Hong Kongers to build moral legitimacy in defending the right to self-determination upon China's erosion of the city's autonomy. Secondly, this nationalist discourse would (re)inject political agency into the "Two Systems" in withstanding the oppression of the "One Country" narrative. Finally, he argued that the discourse would enable Hong Kongers to (re)discover the uniqueness of their political and cultural identity in resisting the CCP's efforts to dismantle Hong Kong's identity (Leung 2014).

The elites that wrote in *Hong Kong Nationalism* represented the first attempt to define the nature of Hong Kong nationalism. The publication made a consistent argument agreed by all authors; Hong Kong nationalism should be an inclusive, liberal form of civic nationalism that centred around democracy, freedom, and human rights. In the publication, Leung (2014) defines "Hong Kongers" as "any Hong Kong resident, no matter when one starts living in Hong Kong, as long as one agrees to the Hong Kong values, supports privileging Hong Kong, willing to safeguard Hong Kong, he/she is a Hong Konger"[1]. The discourse highlights the notion of fostering "national ideals without losing sight of other human values against which national ideals ought to be weighed" (Tamir 1993, p.79). It is an attempt to demarcate the line between the boundaries of Chinese official nationalism - a nationalism based on race, blood, and ethnicity with illiberal features - and that of a nation in which freedom and human rights take precedence.

This notion of bringing Hong Kong nationalism into the broader civic nationalism debate serves two purposes. Firstly, despite the differences in cultural repertoire between Hong Kong and China, cultural markers like speaking Cantonese and writing traditional Chinese characters alone are insufficient to define Hong Kong as a nation. If one were to trace the origins of the cultural markers Hong Kong people possess, the debate would reach an immediate dead-end when arguing about the authenticity of Chinese culture. In fact, Wan Chin (2011) argued that ethnic and cultural bonds between Hong Kong and China are not as strong as expected by many, because the CCP's rule over Mainland China has exhibited a different path dependency between the two political entities, especially in terms of core values and civic qualities upheld by its people.

Secondly, in whatever form under Chinese rule, the people of Hong Kong are not allowed to practice the genuine autonomy promised in earlier constitutional documents. The Umbrella Movement demonstrates that the Hong Kong identity has not only the dimension of cultural identity but also a combination of political subjectivity and social entity. As a result, the desire to change the status quo becomes a means to seek an alternative definition that would best define the identity of a 'Hong Konger' - the inhabitant of a nation which favours the ideologies of democracy and freedom in the imagined community. As Brian Fong (2017) argued, the difference in political trajectory resulted in "One Country, Two Nationalisms."

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[1] Author's translation. The original Chinese words are as follows:「任何香港居民，無論什麼時候開始在香港生活，只要認同香港價值，支持香港優先，願意守護香港，就是香港人。」

4.3. When the National meets the Local

Different historical trajectories between Hong Kong and China have led to a different path dependency influencing the nature of national consciousness. Territorially speaking, although Hong Kong's sovereignty was transferred to China in 1997, China always hoped for a 'Second Handover,' in which the hearts and minds of Hong Kong people would also 'return' to China. Attaining a status of an 'inalienable alien' of China (Leung 2019), Hong Kong is territorially unified but culturally strange to Beijing. As Beijing opposes any cultural identity constituting an opposition to the official Chinese identity (Lo 2007a), the Chinese state has attempted various methods to convert the Hong Kong identity to a Chinese one, ranging from softer approaches such as generating reciprocity from greater economic integration to hard laws which enforce an uncritical patriotic sentiment. Those methods are apparent on two levels: the institutional and the everyday, and their effects are intertwined.

The institutional method consists of bolder moves, such as passing legislation and changing policy directions, in order to make the people of Hong Kong 'love the country.' The very baseline of official nationalism is that the people has to accept CCP rule, while the PRC is the "legitimate and natural political embodiment of Chinese civilization" (Dupré 2020, p.8). Beijing believes the reason behind the reluctance of Hong Kongers to embrace the Chinese identity is because of education (Tse 2011). Education is what went 'wrong' in Hong Kong in that people are contaminated by Western influence (Jones 2014). Through the use of the subject of history in its education curriculum, the state asserts a Sino-centric view of looking at Hong Kong history, which aims at 'correcting' that sense of colonial mentality, and stressing Hong Kong as an indivisible part of the Chinese ethnolinguistic lineage (Kan 2007). As the Chinese base their nation on a "biologised ethnicity" (Sautman 1997, p.79), this narrative is also included in the textbooks in Hong Kong (Jackson 2014). The emphasis on the bloodlines establishes a connection between the people of Hong Kong and Mainland Chinese, cultivating a shared sense of identity drawn from common cultural and ethnic heritage (Morris 2009).

A notable example where China enforced state nationalism on Hong Kong was the Moral and National Education (MNE) controversy in 2012. The issue was controversial because it attempted to replace the Moral and Civic Education curriculum, making the subject compulsory for students, and because of the lack of transparency and objectivity in formulating the teaching materials required for the course. Aimed at fostering a Chinese identity, a government-funded organization produced a pamphlet named "China Model

National Conditions Teaching Manual," which glorified the merits of the Chinese governance model and criticised the Western democratic model (Oriental Daily 2012). Pressure groups and critics proclaimed that the partiality of teaching materials constituted 'brainwashing' (CBC 2012). As Yew & Kwong (2014) writes, transplanting nationalist education from China to Hong Kong is "fundamentally flawed" (p.1110). Ultimately, in Beijing's eyes, education is an instrument of promoting uncritical patriotism in Hong Kong (Vickers 2003).

The everyday method focuses on the increasing interaction between the people of Hong Kong and the Mainland Chinese through more significant degrees of economic, social, and cultural integration. Both governments framed the necessity of tightening cooperation as a reciprocal activity, a win-win situation benefiting the people of both Hong Kong and China. For example, China launched the Individual Visit Scheme (IVS) and allowed Mainland Chinese to travel to Hong Kong on an individual basis, as a change of policy where previously Mainland Chinese could only visit Hong Kong via a business visa or on group tours. It was aimed to provide a stimulus to the Hong Kong tourism industry stemming from a sharp drop in tourist numbers after the SARS outbreak in 2003. Beijing hoped that Hong Kong people would take pride in the nation's political and economic development like the Mainland Chinese (Mathews et al. 2008). However, from the perspective of people in Hong Kong, deepening integration means 'Mainlandisation' (大陸化, daai luk faa), which is the process of being "politically more dependent on Beijing, economically more reliant on the Mainland's support, socially more patriotic toward the motherland, and legally more reliant on the interpretation of the Basic Law by the PRC National People's Congress" (Lo 2007, p.186).

The looming presence of Mainland Chinese influence is most felt through the interaction between the people of Hong Kong with the Mainland Chinese tourists and parallel traders, affecting the livelihood (民生, mun saang) issues of communities. As for all places that open up for tourism, the influx of tourists brought the unpleasant effect of traffic and minor disruption. More importantly, however, negative attitudes towards Mainland Chinese tourists come from the activities that affect citizens' daily lives, such as the failure to learn the norms and practices in Hong Kong (Wong 2018). Similarly, Chinese parallel traders have taken advantage of the multiple entry visa system of importing goods from Hong Kong to China - or 'smuggling' as perceived by some - resulting in shortages and speculative prices of daily necessities in local communities (Siu 2016). These acute social conflicts have exacerbated the cultural divergence between Hong Kong and Chinese identity, making Chinese the political 'other' (Chan 2014). As Chu (2018) writes, the local sense of identity is

shaped by the bottom-up lived experiences. Cultural hostility eventually reached a boiling point where the behaviours of the Mainland Chinese visitors were further described as a plague of locust descending in Hong Kong, causing devastating impacts on society (Jackson 2014). The physical presence of the Mainland Chinese has come to be seen as "parasitical, revolting and threatening" (Ip 2015, p.410). In turn, the misbehaviour of some Mainland Chinese has ignited frustration among Hong Kongers towards the Chinese regime and its people.

Mixed feelings towards the Mainland Chinese have bred protectionist sentiments of saving Hong Kong from China. In the early 2010s, 'localism' (本土, bun tou), also known as nativism, appeared in the public discourse and has gained significant traction becoming the dominant political narrative in society since the Umbrella Movement. In contrast to regionalism and centralism, localism priorities local history, culture, and identity in factoring in governance and decision-making. Although there was not a deployment of political language framing Hong Kongers as a nation, the discourse put forward to the public was a precursor to Hong Kong nationalism. As Chan (2017) argues, localism is "an effective discursive frame on Hong Kong nationalism" because it boldly represents the interests and values that matter to the Hong Konger national membership (Chan 2017, p.17).

Indeed, the definition of 'localism' has evolved in Hong Kong. In the early 2000s, 'localism' was first appropriated by the Hong Kong government and social elites. It was mainly referred to as the need to develop a 'local economy' in response to the underperforming economy after the Asian Financial Crisis (Chow et al. 2019). In the late 2000s, the term was utilized by left-wing, progressive activists in stressing the importance of 'local' history and collective memory for the Preservation Movements in 2006-2007, a form of social empowerment and resistance against urban redevelopment (Chen & Szeto 2015). 'Localism,' in this context, exhibited an inclusionary dimension of reappropriating public space for Hong Kong locals against the capital forces of transforming urban space into a 'private city' (Iverson 2007).

Catalysed by the misbehaviours of Mainland Chinese tourists and parallel traders, the understanding of localism was injected with right-wing beliefs in emphasizing protectionism and 'Hong Kongers first' (Ip 2015). 'Localism' was anti-China in nature (Ma 2015), stemming from the threat of Chinese encroachment on Hong Kong's core values and interests. Activists who called themselves 'localist' (本土派, bun tou paai) strongly believed that the Hong Kong government lacked the agency and political will to oppose China's political

project of integration. For example, when asked about the case of Mainland Chinese parents allowing their children to urinate in public, Gregory So, the former Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, commented that Hong Kongers should be tolerant of the cultural differences between Hong Kong and China (Wong 2014). In the view of the localists, instead of being a primary defender of Hong Kong values and interests, the Hong Kong government had become rather a facilitator of Beijing's agendas. What is more intolerable to some is that the Hong Kong government allowed its own powers to be minimized and gave up on blocking Beijing's excessive interference in the legal-political system.

Insofar as it represents the fear of Mainlandisation, localism was a deliberate rejection of state-promoted Chinese nationalism (Fong 2017) and the Hong Kong government's moral legitimacy to rule (Cheng 2016). Self-determinism and social awakening are the core elements in the localism discourse (Chan 2017). In short, the localism discourse has been an important narrative that has catalysed the debate surrounding the interests and values key to Hong Kong's identity, paving the way to the realisation of Hong Kong nationalism.

In the end, the attempts of the Chinese government to foster a Chinese identity were rather unsuccessful. The emergence of the Hong Kong national identity is primarily due to a reactive response to China's actions. Ho & Tran (2019) correctly point out that:

"Hongkongers' non-acceptance of unequal power distribution in cultural terms has bred a series of local discourses which have underscored separation from rather than unity with the Chinese government, and differences rather than sameness with the Mainland."

(Ho & Tran 2019, p. 190)

Despite the fact that "a set of contingent relations and peoples" (Callahan 2004), including bureaucrats, politicians and tycoons, were mobilised to promote the benefits of having Hong Kong integrate into the Greater China framework, it was rather perceived as a form of Chinese encroachment into legal, political, social, and economic spheres, eroding the boundaries that separate Hong Kong and China (Jones 2014). All policies of deepening the integration between Hong Kong and China were seen as harbouring malicious intentions of undermining Hong Kong's autonomy. The discourse of danger and insecurity on Hong Kong's identity puts China as the external threat (Ip 2020). As a result of the repulsion towards China, a separate political identity emerged from the years of mistrust and antagonism. Given the difference in the historical and cultural other between Hong Kongers

47

and Mainland Chinese, the separate sets of cultural repertoires such as language, symbols, tradition, history, and collective memory (Yew & Kwong 2014) engage in an active process of the "production of difference and exclusion" in identity (Hall 1996, p.4). Simply put, "Hong Kong identity has long been positioned as parallel to if not independent from Chinese identity" (Chan 2017, p.3). Therefore, the promotion of state nationalism has backfired and led to the emergence of Hong Kong sub-state nationalism (Dupré 2020). This development of a national consciousness is the last thing that Beijing wants to see in Hong Kong.

4.4 From Localism to Nationalism

Localism and Hong Kong nationalism both stem from the same anti-CCP and anti-China sentiments, but these political ideologies each envision a different type of future. The localism movement was more of a reactive response to nuisance and discomfort from the mainland Chinese on an individual level. The late stages of the Anti-ELAB movement have departed from the 'anything but China' sentiment to focus on the need to construct a defined national community that safeguards the people's beliefs and values. Indeed, there are overlaps between the two ideologies and the actions carried out before and after the Anti-ELAB movement. For example, the Hong Kong National Party (HKNP) promoted Hong Kong independence in its agenda in the post-Umbrella Movement era. However, Hong Kong's independence was not a widely accepted and popularised political discourse. For the Anti-ELAB movement, two unique elements stand out when compared with the Umbrella Movement and the post-Umbrella era of localism ideologies: the desire for self-determination outside of existing institutional structures and the birth of a distinct national community.

Back in the Umbrella Movement, protesters still had hope in the institutions. The movement was an act of "transformative disobedience" that hoped to transform the legal-political system through civil disobedience, creating a fairer, more equal, society (Chen 2016, p.103). In later stages of the Anti-ELAB movement, however, protesters rejected any optimism in trying to change the current institutionalised system. Dependent on the commands of Beijing, the Hong Kong government is nothing but a puppet of the Chinese government. In the end, "nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy" (Gellner 1983, p.1). Gradually, self-determination via independence became the focus of political mobilisation. Looking into the slogans of the protest reveals the nature of the movement. People have interpreted the slogan of "Liberate Hong Kong, the Revolution of Our Times" differently. For the pragmatic,

particularly the older generations who have experienced British governance, the slogan means returning to the status of good governance and greater freedom that was present in colonial Hong Kong. However, for others, especially the younger generations, there is no turning back. Self-determination and political independence are the only way out to safeguard the values and interests of their hometown.

The movement has also nurtured a sense of solidarity based on the collective memories of resistance, struggle and suffering. While protesters have committed to the Anti-ELAB movement in various ways and degrees, the movement has engaged the people in Hong Kong to feel the same way, in both moments of joy and despair. For example, when the pan-democrats won by a landslide in the District Council elections, people gathered to celebrate the election outcome. On the other hand, there have been numerous injured protesters and even cases of death throughout the movement. Despite being strangers, some people set up commemorations to mourn the death of the ones "sacrificed." One of the slogans that appeared in the movement was "I am willing to stop a bullet for you, will you be willing to go on a general strike to voice out your demands?"[2], which shows that "we" are willing to make sacrifices for one another unconditionally. Simply by looking at the slogans yelled by protesters, it reveals a changing sense of identity from "HeungGongYan" purely used as an adjective to describe the population or citizens of Hong Kong to a common political community that is connected by shared emotions. Through emotional attachments to the movement and their home city, it was "the first time that a group of people who had previously been treated as not part of a nation began to see themselves as equal members of a community" (Go & Watson 2019: 36).

Given its background of having a national community based on an imagined community and the aspiration for a future defined by self-determination and independence, the Hong Kong political community has put together "resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from,' so much as what we might become" (Hall 1996, p.4). The most apparent characteristic of the Hong Kong nation is that it is a "nation without state" (Guibernau 1999), which refers to nations that do not have their own territory or full independent control of it. The potential for success of reaching self-determination much depends on China, but with Beijing's tightening grip on every aspect of Hong Kong affairs and framing Hong Kong nationalism as

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[2] Author's translation. The original Chinese words are as follows:「我可以為你上前線擋子彈，你願意罷工表達訴求嗎。」

secessionism, Hong Kong lacks the objective conditions to achieve genuine autonomy. Hence, the Hong Kong nation is also a case of "mini-nationalism" (Snyder 1982), because Hong Kong lacks political leverage to achieve the ultimate goal of self-determination: an independent nation-state. Nevertheless, the political reality will not stop the continuous construction and renegotiation of the "unfinished imagined community."


4.5 Summary

The historical processes of China and Hong Kong have determined the nature and characteristics of the national community. In the early 20th century, there were vigorous debates and conceptualisations of how Chinese nationalism should look, whether to be inclusive of ethnicities other than the Chinese or exclusive in insisting that race and blood is the foundation of the Chinese nation. The modernisation experience of China has settled on ethnic nationalism. Chinese nationalism is now a hybrid of hatred from its history of national humiliation and pride stemming from national rejuvenation under the rule of the CCP. In China, loving the nation and loving the party are intrinsically tied together.

For Hong Kong, a unique historical process steered the national identity to one that is different from the Chinese identity. The city has presented a case of contradiction and confrontation between ethnic appeals and civic values (Chan & Fung 2018). Going from stages of political apathy to identity struggles, the birth of the Hong Kong nation stems from a reactionary response to the sour relationships with China. Mainlandisation accelerated the process of developing Hong Kong's national identity. In the next chapter, this paper will demonstrate how the Anti-ELAB movement is a critical lens through which to look at the development of Hong Kong's national consciousness through the mundane, bodily practices of everyday nationalism. Through the analysis of songs, zines, and gaming content, we shall see that the national consciousness of Hong Kong builds on the civic virtues of democracy, liberty, and equality as an ideological resistance against the Chinese authoritarian regime.

Chapter Five

From Virtual to Reality: Digital Activism and Civicness in Everyday Nationalism

This chapter assesses the importance of everyday nationalism in concretizing Hong Kong's civic national identity by analyzing digital activism in the social movement. Through the production and utilisation of repertoires during protest and resistance, in particular songs, zines, and virtual features in gaming, these cultural resources provide a medium for the consolidation of national consciousness. Although in the given definitions of banal and hot nationalism by Billig and other scholars, social movement fits in the 'hot' nationalism category, in order to sustain the passion of protest and resistance, the everyday aspect of nationalism is essential to accumulate sufficient political momentum during 'quieter' times of the protest and unleash it during times of confrontation.

In Billig's (1995) *Banal Nationalism*, the daily and routine practices, such as the use of flags, songs and publications, are the state apparatus of reinforcing one's national identity. China has made similar attempts to cultivate a sense of patriotism in Hong Kong. However, these programmes have been deliberately rejected by Hong Kongers. Hong Kongers have been seeking new ways to redefine themselves and move away from Chinese national identity. Applying Antonsich's (2016) distinction of the banal as a top-down, state-centric approach and the everyday as a bottom-up, agency-centred engagement with the concept of nationhood, the struggle between the banal and the everyday is played out in the broader struggle of Hong Kong's identity formation vis-a-vis Hong Kong-China relations.

In Hong Kong, pro-democracy social movements are the core arenas in which everyday nationalism is performed. Political participation through the use of digital media and online platforms has been an integral part of Hong Kong's civic culture, making counter publics visible through bodily and visual dissent (Cheng 2014). Reaping the benefits of social media popularisation since the left-wing localism movements of 2006-2007, Hong Kong protesters have creatively produced visual materials that effectively translate sentiment into to mobilization (Lam & Ip 2011). Those visual materials have mainly taken the form of protest slogans and political satires in cartoons. Digital activism, however, has reached a new high in the recent movement. Looking at Hong Kong's "networked social movement" (Castells 2015), the Anti-ELAB Movement has given birth to a rich constellation of cultural symbols representing the deepest roots of protest and resistance from a shared political community.

Decentralism in Hong Kong's social movement has enabled people to freely invent, adopt, and spread these cultural resources to a wider audience. Not only protest materials have been produced but also art and songs. Through the processes of self-making, these cultural products unite and consolidate a national consciousness as a form of ideological resistance (Scott 1992). Over time, cultural resources and repertoires will serve as carriers of people's collective memory of their contribution to the movement, crystallising a national identity that truly represents Hong Kong's "imagined community."

The first part of this chapter explores how songs have been used to empower the spirit of Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement and consolidate the particular 'Hong Kong spirit' in its civic nationalism. The second part examines the visual representations of zines and their function in reinforcing one's collective memory and identity. Lastly, the third part analyses how Hong Kongers have made use of the most recent popular game, *Animal Crossing*, to display and disseminate political messages to a more extensive audience.

5.1 Civic Nationalism and Songs

Songs are an integral part of one's national identity. Whether it is the state-produced national anthem or folk music and pop-culture from the society itself, songs can reflect the tastes and preferences of a population and serve as carriers of a place's history, culture, and collective memory (Kennedy & Gadpaille 2017). Since culture is a process (Hall 1990), cultural resources like music are subjected to continuous reformation and renegotiation. On the one hand, states can make use of music to circulate propagandized discourses on normative political ideologies about patriotism. On the other hand, music can be used as a counter-hegemonic voice of the masses for means of empowerment against oppression (McDonald 2013). Additionally, the ability to comprehend and perceive the message behind the songs also demarcates the boundaries of the ideas of the 'self' and the 'other' "engaged and naturalized within or against the dominant order" (McDonald 2013, p.31). Thus, songs provide a cultural battleground where identity is continuously reinterpreted.

Likewise, in Hong Kong, songs are a contested field in identity politics. The difference in language between the use of Cantonese in Hong Kong and the use of Mandarin in Mainland China already provides the basis of distinguishing the 'self' and 'other.' The political dispute on the national anthem is a salient example in the Hong Kong-China conflict.

The *March of the Volunteers* (義勇軍進行曲, Mandarin: yi yong jun jin xing qu), is the national anthem for China, and also for the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau. The anthem is an adaptation of a dramatic poem from the film *Children of the Troubled Times* (風雲兒女, Mandarin: feng yun er nü), which tells a patriotic tale of resistance against Japanese invaders. The lyrics of the Chinese anthem describe the bravery of people in defending against foreign powers, and thus represents an attempt to redeem the memory of China's national humiliation.

As a national anthem, it was designed to cultivate a sense of patriotism, particularly in Hong Kong and Macau. Since 2004, local television broadcasts are required to put on a government-prepared video of the national anthem in Mandarin before their evening news (Vickers 2011). The national anthem is often coupled with China's Five-star Red Flag to generate a synergic effect in promoting a sense of patriotism, especially the flag-raising ceremony. The Golden Bauhinia Square, where the flag-raising ceremony is performed every day, is often promoted as a tourist attraction, especially for Chinese tourists. The banality of the flag-raising ceremony is a device used by the ruling elites to assert dominance (Scott 1992). This coincide with Billig's research on the American system where swearing the Pledge of Allegiance during flag-raising ceremonies is supposed to cultivate sense of Americanness (Billig 1995). However, this deliberate, propaganda-like instrumentalisation has not raised the Chinese national anthem's liking among the people of Hong Kong (Mathews et al. 2008).

The heated tensions between Hong Kong and the Mainland in the past ten years have driven antagonisms towards the national anthem, or any political symbols related to China, to a new high. Notably, at sports matches, or other formal occasions, Hong Kong audiences have booed the Chinese national anthem as a form of political protest (Cha 2019). Beijing hopes to put an end to this disrespect for the national anthem. The NPCSC supplemented articles through Annex III of Hong Kong's Basic Law for local ratification. Although Hong Kong has passed National Anthem Law (NAL) in the legislature, the controversies focus on opaque boundaries of falling into legal traps and harsh criminal sentencing to enforce a legal obligation to pay respect to the Chinese national anthem. This bold institutional method of making Hong Kong people 'love the country' undoubtedly raises fears of undermining freedom of speech and expression. Debating on whether to use English or Spanish to sing the American national anthem, Butler & Spivak (2007) remind us that language sorts out who are 'insiders' and 'outsiders' of the political community. For the case of Hong Kong, Hong Kongers as Cantonese-speakers are immediately outside of the Mandarin-speaking

Chinese political community. Hence, the lack of affiliation with the Chinese national anthem is simple; it is a Mandarin song that is not in the mother tongue of Hong Kong and does not represent the values that Hong Kongers uphold.

In popular culture, there are a few notable songs that are widely accepted as representative of Hong Kong. Roman Tam's *Below the Lion Rock* (獅子山下, si zi saan haa) is the classic example. Released in 1979, the song focuses on a mountain that overlooks Hong Kong. The song has been seen as a reflection of the commonly shared core values of Hong Kong people at the time: solidarity and perseverance. The 'Lion Rock Spirit' transformed Hong Kong into an international city. Centre to the song is the value of perseverance and solidary. The last stanza of the song mentions:

<div align="center">

放開彼此心中矛盾 理想一起去追

同舟人 誓相隨 無畏更無懼

</div>

This is translated into English as "Of one mind in pursuit of our dream, All discord set aside, with one heart on the same bright quest, Hand in hand to the ends of the Earth." This verse highlights the spirit of a people setting aside their disputes as all of them are 'in the same boat,' showing the solidarity of the population (Yeung 2003). The song then continues:

<div align="center">

同處海角天邊 攜手踏平崎嶇

我哋大家 用艱辛努力寫下那

不朽香江名句

</div>

This verse translates as "Fearless and valiant inside, Rough terrain no respite. Side by side, we overcome ills, As the Hong Kong story we write." Perseverance is emphasized in the lyrics, where one can achieve his/her goals if he/she never gives up (Yeung 2003). These values share some similarities to the ethos of the 'American dream,' that is, to work hard and achieve success, thereby moving up the social ladder.

While the song *Below the Lion Rock* represents a core value that Hong Kong people have upheld for the past few decades, this spirit is no longer the dominant narrative, especially among the newer generations, as more problems have surfaced after the Handover under Chinese rule. Socioeconomic conditions have drastically improved, but political openness

and personal liberty have been seen as diminishing. No longer just about solidarity and perseverance, the younger generation seeks to redefine the 'Lion Rock Spirit,' adding civic values such as freedom, liberty, justice and fairness to the overall Hong Kong core values (Chan 2014). These values can be seen in the choice of songs of Hong Kong's pro-democracy social movements over the past years.

Up until the Anti-ELAB movement, the Hong Kong rock band Beyond's *Boundless Oceans, Vast Skies* (海闊天空, hoi fut tin hung) was the signature song that was widely sung in the social movements. The song was originally written to express personal freedom and the pursuit of dreams in the music industry. However, the song coincidently mirrors the perseverance and desire of Hong Kong people to pursue democracy and hold on to their civic values. In one of the verses, it mentions:

<div align="center">

多少次 迎著冷眼與嘲笑

從沒有放棄過心中的理想

</div>

The verse translates as "many times, I've faced harsh and mocking jokes, never once did I give up my dreams and hopes." Despite the hardships that Hong Kong people face in the semi-authoritarian system, including being looked down upon by others and the minimal chances of success, the song claims that they have not given up on the democratic and liberal ideals. In the chorus, it famously states:

<div align="center">

原諒我這一生不羈放縱愛自由

也會怕有一天會跌倒

</div>

In translation, this means "please forgive me, but I'll always love to chase freedom, even though I sometimes may fall down." As a medium, the song enabled Hong Kong people to sing out their strong desires of pursuing and upholding the universal values they hold dear in their civic identity. This song slowly became the protest anthem of Hong Kong's social movements. However, the representative power of the song reached a bottleneck at the later stages of the Umbrella Movement. Some protesters claimed that singing in the demonstrations was merely ceremonial and could not advance any of the demands besides giving motivation and encouragement to the movement (Lui 2018).

The protesters also sang the most recognisable song from *Les Misérables*, *Do You Hear the People Sing?*. From a musical based on the June 1832 Rebellion, this song symbolizes the courage of uprising in facing oppression. "Long chimed with protestors around the world," Hong Kongers took it a step further and created a Cantonese version of the song, 問誰未發聲 (man seoi mei faat sing) (Moore 2014). Now a signifier of democracy, the song was sung in the Umbrella Movement and the earlier stages of the Anti-ELAB movement. Nevertheless, given the cultural indigenization of the song, it was only appropriated from another cultural background. The song that is widely recognized as being the representative of the anti-ELAB movements, and the broader aspects of Hong Kong national identity, is the song *Glory to Hong Kong* (願榮光歸香港, jyun wing gwong gwai heong gong).

Upon the song's release, *Glory to Hong Kong* replaced *Boundless Oceans, Vast Skies*, and other songs as the favourite protest anthem. If one were to make a comparison with other protest anthems, the sense of empowerment could be compared to *We Shall Overcome* in the Civil Rights Movement (Payne 1995). Currently, the song is even perceived as the de facto national anthem of Hong Kong (Leung 2019). The significance of *Glory to Hong Kong* to the understanding of everyday nationalism in Hong Kong and the 'civicness' in civic nationalism comes in three ways: the production of the song from collective participation, the lyrical meaning of the song, and the application of the song for public use.

The creation and production of *Glory to Hong Kong* was a collective effort enabled by the Internet. The song was composed by a musician named "Thomas dgx yhl," who believed that the songs that had been sung in previous social movements were out of place in the atmosphere of the Anti-ELAB movements. Instead, he composed a march song that was inspired by other national anthems. He believed that:

"Music is a tool for unity; I really felt like we needed a song to unite us and boost our morale. The message to listeners is that despite the unhappiness and uncertainty of our time, Hong Kong people will not surrender."

(Thomas dgx yhl, in Leung 2019)

He cleverly posted the instrumental version of the composition in LIHKG, a local online forum equivalent to Reddit (Victor 2019). LIHKG and Telegram were the two main software/applications that allowed pro-democracy Hong Kongers to exchange their views and tactics regarding the protests, usually through an active deliberative process. 'Netizens,' the portmanteau of the words Internet and citizens, played an important function in formulating political narratives, mobilising people to vote in the District Council elections in

November 2019, using other social media platforms such as Twitter to spread Hong Kong's news to other governments and countries. The topics and content discussed on these two platforms determine which way the wind blows in the protests. LIHKG and Telegram aided the construction of dynamic translocal networks, which allow the concentration of resources and develop common political identities and alternative imaginaries (Leitner et al., 2008). In effect, these are sites where participatory politics and counter-public politics are manifested, nurturing a sense of community composed of non-hierarchical members striving for the goal (Ku 2020).

The deliberative process used to exchange views on tactics was also applied in writing the lyrics of the song. Everyone that had an interest in the writing of the lyrics could freely participate in the making. Effectively, through crowdsourcing, the anthem was the brainchild of the collective participation of ordinary people. The collectively written lyrics of the song expressed the strong emotional sentiment of Hong Kongers trying to safeguard their 'land' and construct freedom in their city. The anthem also adopted the protest motto Liberate Hong Kong, the Revolution of Our Times, to echo the social movement. The song comes in four stanzas:

<div align="center">

何以 這土地 淚再流

何以 令眾人 亦憤恨

昂首 拒默沉 吶喊聲 響透

盼自由 歸於 這裡


何以 這恐懼 抹不走

何以 為信念 從沒退後

何解 血在流 但邁進聲 響透

建自由 光輝 香港


在晚星 墜落 徬徨午夜

迷霧裡 最遠處吹來 號角聲

捍自由 來齊集這裡 來全力抗對

</div>

勇氣 智慧 也永不滅


黎明來到 要光復 這香港

同行兒女 為正義 時代革命

祈求 民主與自由 萬世都不朽

我願榮光歸香港


The first stanza mentions the frustration and emotional suffering from the suppression of human rights on this 'land,' meaning Hong Kong. The second stanza then refers to the Anti-ELAB movement, which describes the people standing up against injustice despite blood being shed. The third stanza highlights the perseverance, courage, and intelligence of Hong Kongers in darkness and perplexity. Lastly, the fourth stanza expresses hope for the future when approaching dawn, a call to action for the city to regain its glory and honour through democracy and liberty (Yeung 2019).

The anthem contained keywords which related to ethnic and civic nationalism. In terms of ethnic nationalism, words like 'land' (土地), 'tears' (淚), 'frustration' (憤恨) from the first stanza, and 'fear' (恐懼) and 'blood' (血) from the second stanza are selected for the anthem. These keywords are a common thread among accounts of ethnic nationalism, such as *Blood and Belonging* from Ignatieff (1994). The song provided a metaphorical representation of the emotional sentiment of fear and frustration, where people are willing to defend their 'homeland' from foreign oppression despite blood and tears. The nationalism of the everyday is expressed through these discourses.

More attention, however, is paid to the emphasis of civic nationalism. Words like 'belief' (信念) in the second stanza, and 'justice' (正義) and 'democracy' (民主) in the fourth stanza are used in the anthem. Most importantly, 'freedom' (自由) appears four times and is used in every stanza throughout the whole song. While elements of ethnic nationalism set the background of the situation, powerful connotations of freedom and justice from traditional liberal morals are the core messages that the song wishes to convey. By highlighting the oppressions of the authoritarian state, the emphasis on civic ideals provides a stark contrast between the divergent beliefs Hong Kongers and the Chinese regime hold. In effect, "it seems that the aesthetic tools of empowerment are created, made meaningful, by the very

power structures struggled against" (McDonald 2013, p.25). The 'civicness' of Hong Kong civic nationalism is, therefore, explicitly mentioned through everyday nationalism in songs. Lastly, the anthem is repeatedly performed on numerous occasions in public. On September 10, in a football match against Iran, the Hong Kong football fans booed the Chinese national anthem and instead sang *Glory to Hong Kong* to express their support for the movement (Lau et al. 2019). On the same day, as a form of protest, people also gathered in shopping malls and sang the anthem at 8:31 pm, which signifies the police attacks of August 31 and the NPCSC Decision on Hong Kong on August 31, 2014 (Ling & Lai 2019). For the next few days, the people of Hong Kong continued the 'sing with you' (和你唱, wo nei ceong) event in other districts in Hong Kong. At its peak, more than 1000 people gathered and sang the anthem in New Town Plaza, Shatin (Stand News 2019).

The activity of singing the anthem in public can be understood through the lens of spatial politics. The relation between the 'public' in urban space and the civic has long been associated since the beginning of the polis, meaning 'city' in Greek (Isin 2002). In the Ancient Greek ideal of a city, citizens exercise rights and fulfil obligations in the agora. The deliberative processes in the agora are also seen as the earliest practices of direct democracy (Painter & Jeffrey, 2009). In the modern era, a 'public' city indicates a city that is open to all, regardless of social and economic status, for inclusion and participation (Iverson, 2007).

In spatial politics, public urban space is a social imaginary that can be both oppressive and liberating (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]). For Hong Kong, public spaces are heavily divided between class interests (Harvey, 2009 [1973]; Castells, 1977), serving capitalism, rule, and order. Since the state firmly regulates public space, it limits the political imagination so much so that change seems impossible in the city (Jaffe 2018). In consequence, public space becomes the arena for social contestations between different political imaginaries. The fundamental role for public spheres, as defined by Kurt Iverson (2007), is to "sustain different forms of public address as a distinct form of social imaginary" (p.47). The public should not just be viewed from a topographical approach (i.e., public/private divide; Mitchell, 2003), but also a procedural approach (Benhabib, 1992), such as the notion of performativity.

In performativity, actions, gestures, and behaviour result from one's identity, and these activities further reinforce one's identity, actively refining acts and symbolic communication through speech (Butler 1990). Applying David McDonald's (2013) notion of "performativity

of resistance," singing Glory to Hong Kong in public is an expression of "my voice is my weapon," resisting the banality of the Chinese national anthem and its implied patriotic discourse. As McDonald denotes, "one does not simply "belong" to the nation. Rather, belonging is the performative achievement accomplished through the ritualized citation of the "national" in performance" (p.324). Hence, "protesters have turned to song to express both their frustration and solidarity and to literally sing out their identity as Hongkongers." (Lanyon 2019)

The three forms of everyday nationalism seen in *Glory to Hong Kong* - the song's production from collective participation, the lyrical meaning of the song, and its application for public use, fully demonstrate the use of song to express the 'civicness' of its national identity. The song cements collective memories towards the social movement and consequently builds a sense of community and belonging. The song also demarcates the boundaries between the Hong Konger 'self' and Chinese 'other' on the discursive field, in which

"Culture and identity are also at the heart of the conflict, and it's revealed through the languages of these two anthems. The people of Hong Kong are deeply attached to the Cantonese language and the use of classical Chinese characters. They have seen the Central Government funnel Mandarin-speaking immigrants into Hong Kong, and designer stores cater to Mainland visitors with signage written in simplified characters. Singing Glory to Hong Kong in Cantonese affirms a sense of identity that demands fighting for."

(Thompson, in The Globe and Mail 2019)

Struggles in the discursive field do not end in the production, circulation, and utilisation of the song. The use of zines in both the virtual world and in reality is another way of expressing solidarity with the movement and discontent with the regime.

5.2 Civic Nationalism and Zines

Zines have been the core instrument for expressing, conveying, and publicising the political messages of the Anti-ELAB movement. In sociological studies on art, art does not merely describe the world, but also often explores topics on social justice, identity, and freedom (Milbrandt 2010, p.8). Art goes beyond its purely aesthetic value and serves as an instrumental function in social movements. With regard to zines, in particular, it further contains the ability to harmonise activities within the movement; to inform internally in order to reinforce values and ideas; to inform externally as an effective way of communicating with bystanders, and to critique the ideology and direction of the

movement (Reed 2005). Ultimately, such visual materials are "rendered visible, or invisible, in the public sphere" (Doerr et al. 2013, p.xi). Art is also an effective medium of expressing national identity, where it serves "as a symbol for communicating a coherent identity, marking membership, and cementing commitment to the movement" (Adams 2002, p.21). Artists have the power to imagine and perform in innovative ways, and thus, the agency to provoke people to see, think, and act differently (McCaughan 2012).

The significance of zines to the understanding of everyday nationalism in Hong Kong and the 'civicness' in civic nationalism can be analysed in the same three ways: the production of the zines, the visual representation and meaning of the art, and the application of this art for public use. For the analysis, zines from a website named "Collaction.hk" and a Telegram channel named "反送中文宣谷 (faan sung zung man syun guk),"[3] meaning the "Anti-ELAB publicity group," have been used for the qualitative study on the visual representation of zines. With the permission of both sources, 48 images of zines were downloaded for the discourse analysis.

*Collaction* is a crowdsourcing website that allows anyone to create a new project and enables other people to inject their resources and talents into the project. Up until April 30, 2019, there are 33,353 images of zines uploaded to the website, contributed by 1306 uploaders. Most artwork/zines are untitled due to the anonymity of producers. In the "About Us" section of the website, the writers state their belief that decentralization is the trend of the future, allowing for the freedom to participate and to divide labour. Ultimately, the crowdsourcing website believes that this mode of collective action will bring social change through greater participation in public affairs in the Internet Age (Collaction 2020).

Similarly, for the Telegram channel, it welcomes anyone to produce and upload the zines to their database. Up until April 30, 2019, there are more than 38,400 images of zines uploaded to the website[4]. However, excluding the production of zines from the core members of the Telegram channel, roughly 70% of these images have been made by anonymous Netizens (Cheung 2020).

Both websites/channels highlight the importance of decentralisation in the making of zines. The vast amounts of zines produced for the anti-ELAB movement are only enabled by the

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3 The literal meaning of '谷' is a valley, but it is used to represent 'group' because the Cantonese pronunciation is similar to the English pronunciation.
4 Telegram Channel: https://t.me/s/hkstandstrong_promo [Accessed 30 April 2020]

democratization of the production and dissemination through the Internet. Anyone willing to contribute to the movement can do so by using design applications on their computer and uploading directly onto the website or Telegram channel. As an intermediary, the website/channel can then disseminate to a wider domestic and international audience by having people download and resend the zines through other forms of social media, including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The huge number of zines, is the fruit of the collective labour of ordinary people.

Zines produced by the movement come in different varieties. By typing keywords related to the movement, including Liberate Hong Kong (光復香港), freedom (自由), democracy (民主), companion (手足), and the CCP (中共), the visual representation of the zines can be thematically categorized into three groups: expressional, commemorative, and functional/informative.

The first category, also the most abundant category, contains expressional elements of the Anti-ELAB movement. Typing keywords related to civic values such as freedom, democracy, and liberty on the website's search function would give zines featured artistically or photographically (Appendix A Figure 1-8). While some zines have also contained elements that common within ethnic nationalism, such as suffering and bloodshed (e.g. Figure 1), the message across is rather commemorative than the purpose of arousing hatred. These types of zines usually serve the function of record keeping, harmonising activists within the movement and informing internally to reinforce values and ideas held by the protesters. Along with these themes, some zines also feature the Lion Rock Mountain, in which it symbolizes the 'Lion Rock Spirit' as a coherent part of Hong Kong identity (Figure 9-11). As LIHKG is also the source of inspiration for popular culture and derivative work, many of the zines would feature the mascots of the protest such as the LIHKG Pig (Figure 12). Unquestionably, there are also zines involving the CCP, often including political satires such as framing Winnie the Pooh as the Chinese President Xi Jinping (Figure 13-14). Figure 13 especially directly compares Hong Kong and Xinjiang, expressing the concern that human rights abuses in Xinjiang today will take place in Hong Kong tomorrow.

Another feature of the zines is the commemorational aspects of the Anti-ELAB movements. The most iconic image of this type of zine is a protester in a yellow raincoat and yellow umbrella (Figure 15-18, 20-21). This image is used to commemorate Marco Leung, the first protester to have died in the protests. In order to warn against and raise awareness of the extradition bill, he put up a banner "反送中 No Extradition to China" and committed suicide

while wearing a yellow raincoat (AppleDaily 2019). In the act of memorialization, the cultural repertoire of the yellow raincoat man is "the continuing social presence of the dead" (Bailey et al. 2014: 72). Results of the yellow raincoat man are prominent when searching through the keyword 'companion' (手足, sau zuk). The literal translation of '手足' is 'hands and feet,' but it is used to denote 'companion' in Cantonese. The reason is that the 'hands' and 'feet' are inseparable body parts of a person, which is a metaphorical expression that other '手足' are inseparable members of the community. The act of commemoration for a stranger fully reflects the notion that Anderson (1983) discussed of the imagined community; it is impossible to know every member of the society, but how it is imagined affects the sense of community. Interestingly, some zines also mention the June 4th Incident in 1989 (Figure 22-24). By drawing parallels with the social movement in 1989, it is an attempt to transcend time, linking the two movements and emphasizing the courage of fighting for democracy and liberty against an authoritarian regime.

The last function which characterizes the zines is their provision of functional/informative materials for the Anti-ELAB movement, which includes reminding people to vote and to participate in the community events, assemblies, and demonstrations (Figure 25-30). For example, the two artworks were designed to remind people about the District Council elections in November 2019. The purpose is to inform external bystanders, especially the ones that are politically neutral or apathetic. Some artworks also clarify the instructions and procedures of voting for first-time voters.

The zines displayed demonstrate the international horizons that Hong Kongers have acquired. For example, Figure 4 is an artistic expression of the street protests in Hong Kong, featuring a style of artwork similar to the drawing *Liberty Leading the People* in the July Revolution by the French artist Eugène Delacroix. Drawing parallels with the Euromaidan protests in Ukraine in 2013-14, Figure 19 remakes a Hong Kong version of the screenshot from the Netflix documentary *Winter on Fire: Ukraine 's Fight for Freedom*. The quote from the documentary "our friends would not forgive us if we accepted those terms from the government" is often used to express the same anger and perseverance of finishing the movement on behalf of the companions that have been injured or passed away along the way (Figure 20). Figure 26 features the event 'Hong Kong Way' as a commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Baltic Way, a peaceful demonstration by the Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians holding hands together in a chain to demonstrate the desire for independence. Lastly, Figure 29 mimics the style of the Uncle Sam "I want you" poster used for recruiting people into the US Army in World War One. These are all examples of intertextuality, where

we see how texts shape one another across time and space (Allen 2011). Through this lens of analysis, zines in Hong Kong absorb the information from media and reattribute a new life to the artworks created in the social movement. With many references to the idea of revolution, including the protest motto, the Anti-ELAB movement is not a mere collective action, but a process of bringing fundamental changes.

Interestingly, Hong Kong protesters have used "Pepe the Frog" in the zines. Pepe the frog symbolises the alt-right in the US, but was appropriated by the anti-ELAB movement as a symbol of liberty and resistance, along with the other LIHKG mascots (Ko 2019). The appropriation of Pepe the Frog demonstrates the point made by Shifman et al. (2014) on "user-generated globalisation," where user-generated content can be understood differently in a different context. All these artworks are an attempt to connect with the international audience in supporting the movement in Hong Kong.

The abundance and diversity of these zines can only be facilitated by a decentralised network of participants contributing to the movement. One does not have to be a professional cartoonist or graphic designer to create these artworks. Rather, they can be created by anyone who wishes to contribute to the movement. The production of this artwork reflects the everyday duty to explore and reflect upon the issues of social justice, identity, and freedom. Consequently, it becomes a practice of communicating a coherent identity and cementing collective memories into the core DNA of the movement. Agency, hence, is manifested through the everyday practices of nationalism.

Lastly, the zines do not just circulate on the Internet, but are actively posted in the community. The zines are posted along with post-it memo notes, making up the 'Lennon Wall.' Hong Kong's Lennon Wall is inspired by the Lennon Wall in Prague, Czech Republic, where the wall was filled with commemorative graffiti of English singer John Lennon from the band The Beatles, and it is currently a spot to express political messages. The practice of adding to the Lennon Wall in Hong Kong started with the Umbrella Movement, where protesters wrote their messages on memo notes and created a collage of political messages at the Central Government Complex, the focal point of the protest and occupation (Lau 2014).

The phenomenon of the Lennon Wall has sprouted in other communities, especially in transportation hubs and residential areas. When replicas of the Lennon Wall cover a whole pedestrian tunnel, it is not done by individual effort but relies on people putting up their

messages *en masse*, and the wholeheartedness of residents in maintaining the quality. Through a method of 'storytelling' (Lam-Snott 2019), the primary purpose of putting up zines in the community is to function as a community board, notifying people of important updates and informing them of counter-narratives against the dominant discourse constructed by mainstream pro-Beijing media (Cheung 2020). By bridging the information asymmetry gap, the strategy is particularly useful in informing bystanders, some of whom do not receive information from the Internet but only from limited sources of traditional media. As pro-Beijing media generally projects an image of the protests as illicit and violent, the zines provide an effective way of conveying the rights of the citizenry and the moral legitimacy of the social movement. Hence, it creates not only aesthetic value for the community, but also breaks the echo-chamber of many critics and converts them into supporters of the movement.

In terms of spatial politics, the act of constructing Lennon Walls in the community is a courageous attempt to reclaim public space. By claiming space in public, the movements allowed themselves to be seen, rendering the formerly invisible visible in the public debate (Mitchell, 1995; 2003). Mainly because the government refuses to acknowledge the other demands that the protesters have posed, the Lennon Wall is a blunt but effective way of forcing the ruling elites to answer the demands. These spaces are 'public' not because they simply occupy public space, but because spaces are made public by people encountering one another. They are "spaces of encounter" (Merrifield, 2013, p.66), where the process of structuration and political coherence are rendered visible. In this way, it allows possibilities to be re-imagined, allowing counter-discourses to be formulated and circulated (Fraser, 1992). As a result, they are letting the moral legitimacy of the social movement "become common notions of the public" (Merrifield, 2013, p.70). Hence, public spaces are taken and remade by Hong Kongers by regaining dominance over space.

Finally, the practice of everyday resistance marks the membership of the Hong Kong civic nation. From the decentralized production of the artwork to crowdsourcing and distributing via online platforms and using it on Lennon Walls, zines constitute a central role in the social movement. As McCaughan (2012) suggests, a social movement is operated through culture, where "art and media [are] not merely illustrative or supplementary, but instead central to the forging of new conceptions of identity, community, and social relations" (Gunckel 2015, p.141). The use of zines is also an extension of Anderson's printed nationalism, where the traditional printed press no longer exerts so strong an influence, replaced by newer forms of media enabled by the Internet. In this analysis of zines, the practice of 'civicness' is not

limited to one exercising their civic right through electoral votes and demonstrations. The civic duty can also be fulfilled by exploring social justice, identity, and freedom by making zines at home and enjoying a cup of tea while making artwork in front of the computer screen. The activity reinserts personal agency into the making of change, overcoming a sense of powerlessness of not being at the actual spot of protests (Sassen 2011). Therefore, the production, circulation, and utilization of the zines is a manifestation of 'civicness' in Hong Kong's civic nationalism.


5.3 Civic Nationalism and Gaming


Gaming has been the latest manifestation of everyday nationalism in Hong Kong's civic nationalism. At the time of submission of this publication, the world was hit by the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak, leading to the lockdown of many cities and countries. Hong Kong was no exception, which pushed the Hong Kong government to declare a public emergency and enforce emergency measures on social distancing. The emergency measures empowered the government to put on restrictions on public gathering. Amid the state of emergency, the coronavirus has aided the government by stopping the gathering of people and curtailing protests. This development has made the government more able to crack down on the pro-democracy protests, and the strict lockdown measures may eventually lead to what Giorgio Agamben (2005) calls the "state of exception," where the extension of power by the government is retained after a supposed temporary time of crisis. Both physically and legally, the period of the coronavirus outbreak has created a harsh environment making it difficult for the pro-democracy protests to reappear on the streets.

However, instead of spending time on the streets, the pro-democracy protests have opened new horizons and made gaming the new protest ground. Fierce political contentions in the virtual world are not new in the gaming industry. For example, in the game of *Grand Theft Auto Five (GTA V)*, an action-adventure game that rewards players who commit crimes in the virtual world, Hong Kong players have dressed up in the same outfit as Hong Kong pro-democracy protesters for in-game missions, including wearing black clothes, gas masks, and yellow safety helmets (Yee 2019). The move by Hong Kong gamers sparked anger among Mainland Chinese players. In response, Mainland Chinese players dressed up as riot police with water cannon trucks, similar to the Hong Kong Police Force outfit, and defeated the Hong Kong gamers by numbers (BBC 2019). The antagonism between Hong Kong and

66

Mainland Chinese gamers is an extension of the Hong Kong-Chinese conflict. However, a similar debate now arises in Nintendo's *Animal Crossing* series.

*Animal Crossing* is a social simulation game that allows the player to design a utopian island and interact with other anthropomorphic non-player characters (NPC) in the game, including bug catching, shopping, and socialising. The game requires the player to give a name and an island tune for the utopian island. Using the in-game illustration tools it enables the player to produce custom designs and decorate their island. The game also allows the player to connect to other players that have the same game, including allowing friends to hop on each other's islands virtually (Nintendo 2020).

Although the physical form of protests has been temporarily suspended at the time of social distancing, the protests' reflexive nature has moved from the battleground of the streets to that of virtual space. Before the pandemic, Hong Kong's pro-democracy protests had already been interacting simultaneously in the virtual and real worlds, creating, constructing, and utilising zines both on the streets and online. However, the open-ended gameplay of *Animal Crossing* opened a new avenue of recreating the repertoires used in the protests. The user-generated content can be shared via QR codes for other players to shape their own gameplay experience (Figure A). The burst of creativity includes recreating the protest outfit, political banners, unofficial mascots of 連豬連狗 (lin zyu lin gau, a pig and a dog icon from LIHKG), and portraits of political figures such as the city's leader Carrie Lam and Chinese President Xi Jinping (Bernhard 2020). The Hong Kong gamers have also given their islands names related to the pro-democracy protests, for example, "光復香港島," literally meaning "Liberate Hong Kong Island" and used the de-facto national anthem "Glory to Hong Kong" as the island tune. All the ingredients that were used in the protests were poured into the game (e.g. Figure B). The virtual continuation of the protest helped to sustain the passion for the pro-democracy protesters to achieve their political goals. Joshua Wong, Hong Kong's prominent pro-democracy activist, even claimed that the game is the "newest international frontline" to promote the visions of the pro-democracy protests (Wong 2020).

Figure A: QR codes for *Animal Crossing* related to the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests.



Figure B: In-game content in *Animal Crossing* related to the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests.

The viral phenomenon of decorating gameplay with zines alarmed Taobao, China's biggest E-commerce site equivalent to eBay, so much that they pulled the game from their website (Li 2020). As for all foreign content, China has been putting strict restrictions on the video market, in which only three Nintendo switch games are officially sold in the country. *Animal Crossing* was not one of them, and people relied on the grey market of E-commerce to purchase the game (Leung 2020). It is currently unknown whether Taobao has self-censored politically sensitive materials by pulling the game from its website or if the Chinese content regulator has released an official ban to stop the retail of the game. However, many Chinese players have blamed Joshua Wong for playing the game and released a post on Twitter displaying his customization of the island with zines (Borak 2020). Unlike *GTA V,* the gameplay of *Animal Crossing*'s virtual world is an invite-only ecosystem that allows Hong Kong gamers to exhibit zines without disruption from Mainland Chinese players. Nevertheless, as with the case of *GTA V*'s, this phenomenon can be viewed as an extension of the Hong Kong-Chinese conflict in terms of value systems.

In previous games of the *Animal Crossing* series, the game had been an object of study through ethnography in media and communication studies (Kim 2014). The interactivity of video games underpins the notion of "democratisation of participation" (Cover 2004, p.174), in which players are participatory and productive in shaping the game and community itself by the creation of user-generated content (Kim 2014). A comment by the gaming website, the US Gamer, explained:

"Historically, Animal Crossing games have long been a refuge for players looking to practice kindness and sharing in a calm, low-pressure game environment where you can't get (seriously) hurt or die. At the same time, the series has prompted a vigorous round of discourse on class politics, colonialism, capitalism, and consumerism-real-world issues that add depth to an otherwise innocuous family-friendly game."

(US Gamer 2020)

The commentary correctly depicted the multi-layered nature of the game. For example, Kim's (2014) ethnographic research on the *Animal Crossing* series found that the hard-working ethic and culture of consumerism displayed in the games are not purely pre-determined by the game developers, but voluntarily accepted and naturalised by the players. In Hess's (2007) study on a warfare action game, he writes of gaming as an "interactive museum" that provides players with the experience of war at home and sparks nationalistic pride from the warfare gaming experience (p.339). In other words, the game is not just a game of escape from normal life, nor merely a virtual recreation simulating

everyday life, but is a platform imbued with discourses linking the actions conducted in the virtual space to real-life interactions in the society. The gaming platform, hence, is a core site where discourses are produced and reproduced, and further circulated in society.

This incident reveals the importance of everyday nationalism in solidifying one's identity and cultivating the 'civicness' of Hong Kong's civic nationalism. Firstly, the game provided a medium for Hong Kong protesters to create, display, and share content related to the pro-democracy protests. For example, a Youtube channel named "黃色動森圈"[5] posted a video called "願榮光歸香港(動物之森版)"[6] which uses the characters and user-made content of *Animal Crossing* to remake the orchestral music video of *Glory to Hong Kong* posted by the user Black Blorchestra (Stand News 2020). McDonald's (2013) notion of the "performativity of resistance" is made possible in gaming. The constant employment of protest symbols reinforces one's identity. As a result, through the daily, routinised actions of keeping up with the game, the repetitive use of cultural repertories is a constant reminder of the collective memories crystallised during times of physical protest on the streets. The case demonstrates that the mundane, subtle acts of everyday nationalism can concretise one's overarching beliefs.

Secondly, the game's pre-determined design, the notion of freedom and empowerment, is creatively amplified by the players. Freedom, the civic virtue that Hong Kongers have continuously upheld, is manifested through the "democratisation of participation" of players to create user-generated content related to the pro-democracy protests. Participatory politics here is not in the institutional sense, but in the daily practice of sharing and expressing political messages freely to the rest of the world. Anyone can contribute to the large pool of zines and use them in the game, and anyone can use the game to spread the message to reach a wider audience by posting on social media. In stark contrast, Mainland Chinese gamers lack the simple freedom of choosing to buy the game freely. Mainland Chinese players can only get around the system through alternative means. The political censorship present in China is a cause that widens the gap between the value systems that Hong Kongers and Mainland Chinese hold. Therefore, only through the continuous practice of 'civicness' can the 'civic' qualities of civic nationalism be enshrined.

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5 黃色動森圈 (2020) 願榮光歸香港（動物之森版）[online video] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjOxydgEelk [Accessed 30 April 2020]
6 Black Blorchestra (2020)《願榮光歸香港》管弦樂團及合唱團版 MV [online video] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUIDL4SB60g [Accessed 30 April 2020]

5.4 Summary

The Anti-ELAB movement has been the breeding ground for the production, transmission, and reception of cultural resources for everyday nationalism in Hong Kong. The popular culture in Hong Kong's civic nationalism sheds light on the understanding of 'civic' in alternate ways. Firstly, Hong Kong's civic nationalism is participatory in nature for the imagining of the nation. For the anti-ELAB protests, anyone can engage and participate in the social movement through different means. The anti-ELAB protests operate in a multitude of dimensions, and making zines and explaining Hong Kong's situation to the international audience is equally important to standing on the frontline of the protest. The making of protest repertoires becomes the aesthetic instrument which ordinary citizens implicitly and explicitly use for nation-building.

Secondly, this form of decentralised nation-building is enabled by the age of the Internet in the production, circulation, and utilisation of content. The Internet as a medium has opened new forms of direct democracy, such as discussing appropriate protest strategies, the sharing of protest materials, and their dissemination to a larger and broader audience. Through the different forms of publicity, digital activism has enabled the practice of civic responsibility now and in the future. Therefore, Hong Kong's civic nationalism is expressed through the everyday resistance performed during the social movement. In the next chapter, we will examine the extent to which ethnic minorities, South Asians, and new migrants from Mainland China can tap into the social movement's cultural resources and the effect of their own identities on Hong Kong's civic nationalism.

Chapter Six

From Ethnic Minorities to HeungGongYan

This chapter explores and evaluates the extent to which political membership of the Hong Kong nation can be extended to ethnic minorities: the South Asians and new immigrants from Mainland China. Due to the strong presence of social movements over the years, the discussion surrounding Hong Kong identity and collective action has been centred on local ethnic Chinese Hong Kong people. However, starting from the Umbrella Movement, ethnic minorities have expanded their role in the discussion from their participation in the movement to the consolidation of their identity. However, the acceptance of the 'other' into the 'imagined community' involves a complex set of negotiations and interaction. Their identities pose challenges for their assimilation into Hong Kong as a political community, both in the institutional and the everyday spheres. The institutional and the everyday are certainly intertwined, but considering the scope of this study, this chapter will specifically focus on how changes in the subtle, imbued everyday practices connect to the debates of inclusivity surrounding Hong Kong civic nationalism.

An analysis of the marginalisation of ethnic minorities requires the invitation of postcolonial theories to explain broader discussions on power relations in Hong Kong's society. Postcolonialism provides a critical analysis that rereads the dynamics and shifting nature of coloniality, changes in power relations and practices, as well as struggle and resistance in the (re)colonial present (Walsh 1998). Both British and Chinese colonialism have shaped the "long term processes involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic, and psychological divesting of colonial power" (Tuhiwai Smith 2010, p.33), intersecting debates of class, race, ethnicity, and gender in Hong Kong society. In other words, postcolonialism offers a lens through which we may understand the discourses and material outcomes that exist beyond formal colonialism (Veracini 2015).

Given the marginalized status of the ethnic minorities, using the definition given by the postcolonial scholar Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, they are considered as the 'subaltern' of the population. The term 'subaltern' originates from Antonio Gramsci in the *Prison Notebooks*. He refers to the 'low rank' populations suffering under hegemonic domination who are displaced, excluded, and denied fundamental rights and political voices, such as the writing of local history and culture (Green 2011). This vocabulary has entered postcolonial

scholarship, denoting the concept of identity, otherness, and marginality from colonial domination, as well as intersecting categories of race, class, gender, and religion. Subaltern is not an interchangeable term with simply the oppressed, but ones that are marginalised from the endured colonial structure (Spivak in de Kock, 1992). Spivak (1988) raised the question the famous essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, where she argued for the potential of voiceless social groups on the margins of society to attain agency. While she warns against the over-broad application of the terminology - that is, to a population with limited or no access to cultural imperialism and not simply just a group of people that are being oppressed - the concept of the 'subaltern' applies to ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. How ethnic minorities are now being perceived in Hong Kong's society has its colonial legacies which may even be further perpetuated under Chinese rule.

While in the past, ethnic minorities had been excluded from the debates of self-identification as a Hong Konger, or 'HeungGongYan,' the Anti-ELAB movements opened up new ways of incorporating the inclusivity of identity politics into the debates of Hong Kong civic nationalism. Hong Kong civic nationalism provides a way of moving beyond the metanarrative of 'objective' categories, such as language and traditions, that define the nation. Instead, the extent to which the subaltern ethnic minorities are a part of the Hong Kong nation depends on their mentality and their actions in defining themselves as 'HeungGongYan.' Consequently, ethnic minority communities actively remodel and remake the boundaries of nationalism constructed by the local ethnic Chinese Hong Kongers. With the involvement of other ethnicities in Hong Kong's civic nationalism, national identity is redistributed, where it is now situated in "a multi-dimensional, dynamic composite of networks" (Edensor 2002, p.30), contesting the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion.

However, this chapter also explores the limitations of the political agency that ethnic minorities have in shaping the definitions of Hong Kong civic nationalism. Although civic nationalism is perceived to be inclusive, there are specific boundaries drawn to delineate between the insiders and outsiders of the national identity. Whilst commentators on the ethnic/civic dichotomy suggest that the two types of nationalism are at endpoints of a spectrum, countries of civic nationalism also contain elements of exclusivity. Hong Kong's civic nationalism is no exception.

To be included in the nation, inevitably there will be commitments for an outsider to fulfil, often requiring one to reach a particular benchmark. For Hong Kong, language has been the main barrier to access greater "cultural capital" (Bourdieu 1986). It is a symbolic capital that

is "an irreducible part of social life, dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life" (Fairclough 2003, p.2). Proficiency in Cantonese is not only required for day-to-day communication but is also crucial in understanding the norms in society. The sharing of habits, assumptions, and routines is a crucial part of identifying an identity. The institutionalisation of these characteristics underpins a common sense in the society of 'how things are' and 'how we do things' (Jenkins 1996). Without a clear understanding of how things are done in Hong Kong, the inclusivity of the national identity would be limited. In other words, it is not simply choosing between the Cantonese language and civic value as the defining characteristics to delineate the insiders and outsiders of the Hong Kong nation. Rather, Cantonese is a cultural marker which is essential to demonstrate to the insiders that one fully comprehends the essence of the values of the nation. Hence, despite the emphasis on liberal values in Hong Kong civic nationalism, the actual presence of the Chinese ethno-cultural aspect of identity still places a heavy burden on ethnic minorities to share the same sense of identity.

The first section introduces the background of the marginalization of the South Asians in Hong Kong society. The second section then analyzes South Asians' engagement in the ant-ELAB movements and how it synchronised with the activities performed in everyday nationalism. The third section explores how new immigrants from Mainland China remain outsiders in the Hong Kong national project. Lastly, the fourth section evaluates the inclusivity of Hong Kong's civic nationalism with the presence of multiple identities.

6.1 Cosmopolitan City, Homogenous Population

Hong Kong is regarded as a cosmopolitan city due to the cohabitation of people from different cultures. For a city of 7.5 million people, however, population statistics do show that Hong Kong is a city made out of a homogenous population (Census and Statistic Department 2020). In the 2016 Population By-census Thematic Report, 92% of Hong Kong's population is Han ethnic Chinese. People that are non-ethnically Chinese are considered to be the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, a total of 584,383 residing in the city, and accounting for 8.0% of the population. The person's ethnicity is determined by their self-identification based on cultural origins, nationality, colour, and language. A significant proportion of the ethnic minorities is made up by the Filipinos and Indonesians, who work as domestic helpers in Hong Kong. Excluding the foreign domestic helpers, the largest groups of ethnic

minorities are the South Asians, including Indians, Pakistanis, Nepalese, Bangladeshis, and Sri-Lankans. Currently, 84,875 South Asians are living in Hong Kong (Census and Statistics Department 2016).

Among the South Asians living in Hong Kong, some are transient residents that run businesses, but some have been rooted in society for a few generations. Early migrants came to Hong Kong for different reasons, where the Indians and Nepalese worked for the British Army, the Sikhs and Indian Muslims worked for the Police Force, and Pakistani and Indian merchants came to the city to do business (O'Connor 2012). However, Hong Kong's history has always looked from an Anglo-centric or Sino-centric angle, attributing less importance to the diverse and vibrant histories from the different ethnic minority groups (Erni & Leung 2014). Simply put, their histories exist outside of the official written histories of Hong Kong.

The political identity of the South Asians in Hong Kong had been ambivalent before the Handover. For the South Asians that worked as civil servants and in the security forces before 1997, many had predicted that they would find it difficult to integrate into society institutionally and culturally as Hong Kong people. Thus, they believed that they were only transient residents and had limited engagement with civic life in Hong Kong (Weiss 1991). Some settled down and gave birth to the 'local boys,' which are the second generation of South Asians. The 'local boys' started to build their communities, including their religious spaces in the city, and to initiate new associations and community groups for their population (Weiss 1991). Within the South Asians exists a massive class difference, ranging from the elites to the ordinary citizens, stemming from their familial history since the colonial period. While some South Asians have successfully made use of their ethnic identities and tapped into the cultural capital of society, some are continuously marginalised by the majority population (Plüss 2005). The linguistic and social differences have continued to impede the extension of the political franchise to the ethnic minorities. Marginalisation of the South Asians comes on two levels: the institutional and the everyday interactions.

The institutional marginalisation of the South Asians can be seen in their official designation in the census and the language used in policies. With a heavy focus on the ethnic Chinese population, the census puts South Asians down as 'others', forging an 'outsider' category for the population (Law & Lee 2012). In policy texts, South Asians go under the label of 'ethnic minorities,' and such discourses give the impression that the South Asians are minorities

that require special policies to cater to their needs while leaving them out of the policies designed for the majority. Lack of recognition results in the lack of access to social resources, where South Asians experience problems with access to public services, employment, housing, and education (Law & Lee 2013). Thus, Law & Lee (2012) criticise the Hong Kong government for the lack of multicultural policy, leading to the multi-dimensional social exclusion of the South Asians. They explained that prejudice and exclusion still exist because of the systematic classification based on skin colour, a colonial legacy from British rule, and were amplified when the PRC set the Chinese as the superior race over the minorities. Moreover, the ruling elites in the Hong Kong government racialize the identity provided in the city's official civic education, privileging Chinese 'bloodlines' as the cultural insiders and the rest as 'others' or 'minorities' (Jackson 2017). This policy further exacerbates the sense of alienation for the South Asians. Since, institutionally, Hong Kong has and continues to cast South Asians as transient, temporary residents, they are perceived as not committed to or interested in being a part of civil society (Kapai 2015).

In everyday interactions, South Asians have been associated with negative connotations. Due to the lack of institutional support, South Asians have been perceived as eating up resources and being responsible for particular crime rates, further perpetuating the perception that South Asians are inferior in the ethnic hierarchy of Hong Kong (Sautman 2004). While Ku (2006) points out that ethnically Chinese Hong Kongers are only insensitive to cultural diversity, which might be unintentional, the mundane, bodily practices of how Hong Kongers engage with ethnic minorities can be considered as discrimination. For example, the practice of not sitting next to a Pakistani woman in a hijab on public transport is also considered as discrimination, as racial discrimination can be a practice regardless of consciousness and intent (Feagin & Feagin 1978). These practices reveal how the people of Hong Kong engage in "practical orientalism" (Hadrup et al. 2006: p.173), in which the bodily practices of everyday life are boundary-making processes of identity. As an extension of Edward Said's (1979) *Orientalism*, Hadrup et al.'s (2006) theorisation on "practical orientalism" testifies to the notion that the objectifying gaze based on skin colour, age, disability, and sexuality is felt through the sensory practices of seeing, hearing, smelling, and touching. As a result, ethnic minorities are marginalised as the 'other' in Hong Kong.

Reflecting this unequal status, South Asians are thus seen as the "melancholy migrants" in Hong Kong, where they are a 'sore point' for the community (Ahmed 2010, p.121). For more liberal groups or media, those enterprises would highlight the stories of the ethnic minorities that bring cultural diversity to the city. However, Jackson & Nesterova (2017)

point out that liberal media such as the *Apple Daily* would still portray ethnic minorities in a stereotypical manner, that requires NGOs like the Hong Kong Unison to act on their behalf. These discourses of marginalisation demonstrate that South Asians are placed in a different identity category to the ethnically Chinese people of Hong Kong.

With institutional and personal marginalisation operating in the background, South Asians exhibit ambivalent sentiments about living in Hong Kong. On the one hand, South Asians believe that they have a certain degree of assured freedom and liberty compared to living in their home country, but on the other hand, social discrimination is real. Hence, they rarely challenge the ethnic hierarchy, and consequently, it normalises the discrimination of ethnic Chinese Hong Kongers against their community (Chan et al. 2015). The case is especially apparent in schools where South Asian students experience an identity crisis of whether to consider themselves as Hong Kongers or not. Even though they have been born and raised in Hong Kong, they identify fluent Cantonese as a prerequisite for being a 'real' Hong Konger (Gu et al. 2017). As South Asian students structure their identity around the interactions in school, family, and the broader society, when the education system categorises them as ethnic minorities, in effect this creates a discursive 'us' and 'other' among the South Asian students as well (Gu et al. 2017).

Recent studies on South Asians in Hong Kong, however, also show signs of a more positive identification with the Hong Kong identity. Over time, the newer generation of South Asians has felt less discrimination and feels included by the Hong Kong identity, especially after the waves of social movements in the past few years (Ng et al. 2018). Equally, as they perceive themselves as core members of the society, they are also concerned that China will strip away Hong Kong's civil liberties even though those liberties are enshrined in the Basic Law. Walsh's analysis (2017) indicates that ethnic minorities have participated in various protests and major social movements, including the Umbrella Movement. For ethnically Chinese Hong Kongers, social movements, and in particular, the Umbrella Movement, cultivated a sense of pride in being a Hong Konger (Yew & Kwong 2014). The same process of identity formation happens for the South Asians as well. By using social media to share their experiences of democracy and struggle, South Asians realise a sense of empowerment and a sense that social change is possible from action rather than inaction (Walsh 2017). As a result, their actions have facilitated broader discussions of inclusion in the Hong Kong identity due to their participation in the social movement. Therefore, South Asians have the agency to shape their own identity and make their way towards becoming members of Hong Kong's imagined community.

## 6.2 'WeConnect!' Civic Nationalism by Participation

The jump from acknowledging oneself as having a Hong Kong identity to actually being a Hong Konger requires a remarkable step. Ng et al. (2018) remind us that the agency of the minority population to construct identities may be limited by how the majority population perceives their imagination of that identity. Accepting whether the South Asians are Hong Kongers in correspondence to the concept of the nation requires acknowledgement and effort from both the South Asians and the ethnically Chinese Hong Kongers. To proudly shout out "we are Hong Kongers," both sides have to share common political principles and aspirations to achieve this goal. In order to take this step, South Asians in Hong Kong need to understand the cultural repertoires produced during the daily resistance of everyday nationalism and pursue the same values of democracy and liberty enshrined in Hong Kong's civic nationalism. Equally, ethnic Chinese Hong Kongers have to adjust their mentality to incorporate the South Asians and acknowledge their political commitment to civil society. Thus, the negotiation of the membership of Hong Konger nationalism is a mutual interaction between the two groups.

The Anti-ELAB movements have offered both sides an invaluable opportunity to deepen their understanding of each other to construct an inclusive civic national identity. The spotlight on the contribution of the ethnic minorities to the movement started with the incident where Jimmy Sham, the Convenor of the Civil Human Rights Front, was attacked by five hammer-wielding South Asian men. As a political activist who had been responsible for organising the marches since June 2019, he was an obvious target to silence the protests. His statement mentions that "it is not hard to link this incident to a spreading political terror in order to threaten and inhibit the legitimate exercise of natural and legal rights" (BBC 2019).

This news shocked the society and raised fierce debates on social media, including LIHKG. As a platform opened up for deliberative politics, LIHKG was the barometer that allowed people to envision the next steps for the social movement. Some emphasized the need to take revenge, including 'renovation,' or "裝修 (zong sau)[7]," of the Chungking Mansions, the hub of ethnic diversity in Hong Kong. Others, however, argued that it was unnecessary to blame the minorities, speculating that those attackers were mere mercenaries who had

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[7] The literal meaning of "裝修" is a renovation, but in the context of the social movements, it means to trash and vandalise shops that are against the movement, especially shops that have links to Chinese assets

been hired for the job. The conclusion from the deliberative process on social media was to make peace.

Zines, again, served as a useful tool for communicating ideas to a greater audience. The visual materials generated before the protests were mainly informative. They declared that protesters would not assault the South Asians on the day of the protests and cautioned that the government would try to divide local ethnic Chinese Hong Kongers and ethnic minorities (Appendix B Figure 31-32). The zines also warned the locals not to mess with the South Asians in town (Figure 33-34) What was important was that the materials were translated into various languages, including Tamil, Thai, Urdu, and Nepali, so that those ethnic minorities could be aware of the situation. There was even a post in LIHKG of explaining the need to respect the cultural sensitivities of different cultures (LIHKG 2019).

On the other hand, fearing that protesters would retaliate against the ethnic minorities, Jeffrey Andrews and a couple of his friends decided to do things to ease the situation: to distribute snacks and drinks for the next protest to show support. On Facebook, he posted in both English and Cantonese of what the South Asian community hoped to do for the protests:

"My beloved Hong Konger's today my group of friends and I are aiming to do to two things at one time, to take away this negative image of Chungking mansions and show you the real beauty of this harmonious place and it's diverse people who also make HK unique. Secondly to let everyone know that many of us are Indians, Pakistani, Nepalese, Filipinos, Africans, and many more ethnicities that call ourselves Hong Konger's and call this great city our Home. We make this city truly colourful. Lastly I want to say that I do not represent any Organisation, agency or religious institution or I surely can't claim I reap rent all Ethnic minorities. I represent myself and please do not confuse us for anything else accept we are all Hong Konger's. We care, respect and contribute positively to this great city, the greatest city in the world! We Are HONG KONG!!! Water bottles for anyone and everyone in need and to peacefully safeguard our beloved Chungking and provide hospitality to those that may be in need.

我心愛的香港人，今天我和我的朋友們打算同時做兩件事:
首先是一改重慶大廈的負面形象 - 香港其中一樣與別不同的美麗, 就是我們與各種少數族裔友好和平共處。其次，我要告訴大家，我們是許多印度人，巴基斯坦人，尼泊爾人，菲律賓人，非洲人以及其他許多將這五光十色的城市稱為自己的根, 自己的家的人。最後，我要說的是，我不代表任何組織，機構或宗教機構，或者我當然不能聲稱我代表所有少數民族。我代表我自己 - 我們都是愛香港的香港人!! 我們關心，尊重和以正面態度來支持香港
我們想以行動為這個城市做小貢獻來支持香港人- 我們向所有人提供水，及向有需要的人提供款待。大家繼續用和平理性的方式維護我們心愛的重慶和香港!!!"

(Jeffrey Andrews, October 20, 2019)

In the interview, he explained how they came to the decision of extending the olive branch:

"I have been following on the updates of the protest and I heard that Jimmy got beaten up. I checked what people were saying on social media about people who wanted to take revenge for Jimmy. Ethnic minorities are always being labelled and blamed on for crime, but this time it was serious. It was the first time where the people in the Chungking Mansion was scared of the hatred on the Internet. People were planning to close the shops for the Kowloon Protest, fearing that they would get targeted. So, I thought that we could actually do something to solve the crisis. We decided to visit Jimmy in the hospital. Even we didn't do anything wrong, but I thought it was good to pass our greetings to him.

Later, the Civil Human Rights Front invited us to lead the Kowloon march. It was a huge honour because it may be the first time that ethnic minorities lead the march. We also wanted to contribute to the solidarity of the movement. Unfortunately, the march was not given permission, and we rejected the offer as I do not want to expose people to an illegal march, especially for people that participate for their first time. Threats still existed, so we changed our plans and agreed that "let's stand outside Chungking and give out snacks and water bottles.""

(Jeffrey Andrews, personal communication, 2020)

Fortunately, those fears did not materialise at the next protest. Instead, the initiative that Jeffrey and his friends performed in the protest was welcomed by the participants. They were the 'peace ambassadors' trying to show a sense of togetherness. With the crowd, the South Asians sang *Boundless Oceans, Vast* Skies as a show of support for their values. Their actions also drew media attention to how they cheered during the march. He continued:

Luckily, it turned out greatly during the protest. The act of giving out water went absolutely viral. Of course, the risk was still there, as it was an unauthorised march. But it was the most intense moment of solidarity that I ever felt. I believed that history had been made. Many Hong Kong people were shouting "Thank You" to us.

(Jeffrey Andrews, personal communication, 2020)

In Cantonese, Jeffrey improvised a call-and-answer with the protesters. The online media outlet *Quartz* (2019) documented the interaction between Jeffrey and the crowd:

"Will you guys still be afraid of Chungking Mansions any longer?" he shouted into the microphone.

"No!" the crowd responded.

"Will you guys still be afraid of South Asians?" he asked.

"No!" the crowd roared back.

"We are all Hong Kongers, yes or no?" he asked.

"Yes!"

The common notion of 'Hong Kongers' bridged a link between the local ethnic Chinese Hong Kongers and the South Asians in the city. During the interview with Jeffrey and Vivek, multiple references indicated that Hong Kong was to be considered the home of South Asians. Despite racial-ethnic differences, it seems that safeguarding 'Hong Kong values' has become a sufficient element to be recognised and accepted as a genuine Hong Konger. In Vivek's interview, he commented on the significance of that event:

"It was historical. I think the activities had a bigger impact on helping the ethnic minorities than the government had done so far. It's about breaking the myth that we are not bad people and we care for society as well."

(Vivek Mahbubani, personal communication, 2020)

The peaceful protest ended with riot police dispersing the crowd. During the dispersion, the gates and steps of the Kowloon Mosque were dyed with a stinging blue liquid sprayed from the police water cannon truck. The news shocked the local Muslim communities, as there were not any protesters assembling next to the Mosque. The police later apologised, saying that it was unintended. What brought the protesters even closer with the ethnic minorities was that a group of citizens voluntarily gathered to clean away the dye. A mix of South Asians and ethnic Chinese Hong Kongers, many of whom were still in their protester outfits, helped out together (Mahtani 2019). Although the Mosque stands in the middle of the bustling city, the religious ground was alien to many local ethnic Chinese Hong Kong citizens. Both the Kowloon Mosque and the Chungking Mansions on the opposite side of the road had previously been discrete spaces that the local ethnic Chinese would not visit.

Swift responses on the mosque clean-up appeared on the Internet. Capturing the photographic images and quotes from interviews with South Asian leaders, netizens made zines in the hope of drawing greater attention to the incident in different languages (Figure 39-41). The zines also included messages that were represented in a more artistic form (Figure 42-45). For example, Figure 44 demonstrates 'WeConnect' which took place between ethnic Chinese Hong Kongers and the South Asians, while Figure 45 delivers the

message of "HKer is not defined by race" through the solidarity manifested outside of the Mosque. These zines reveal a change in mentality towards the ethnic minorities, with the native ethnic Chinese paying attention to cultural sensitivities, accepting diversity, and recognising people as Hong Kongers regardless of cultural background.

Jeffrey and others claimed the events that happened on that day's protest as 'WeConnect.' The term 'WeConnect' was the slogan used by the city's leader Carrie Lam when she campaigned for the Chief Executive election. She felt that the society had been torn after the political disputes that arose from the Umbrella Movement, and she promised to reconcile the different stakeholders if she were elected (carrielam2017.hk 2020). Ironically, the release of the extradition bill deepened the divide between pro-democracy and pro-establishment camps in society. Unlike the Umbrella Movement, where the pro-democracy protesters had lacked support from other stakeholders in society, the Anti-ELAB movements received an overwhelming popular base from a range of stakeholders. For example, the business sector expressed concerns about the extradition bill in that the arrangement blurred the legal boundaries between Hong Kong and Mainland China. How the Hong Kong Police Force dealt with the protests with excessive violence, including acts of extrajudicial punishments, also pushed parts of the population to side with the protesters. Carrie Lam once criticised the fact that the protests were stirred by a "small minority of people" that had "no stake in society which so many people have helped to build," neglecting the reality that nearly two million citizens, equating two-sevenths of the city's population, went on a march demanding the retraction of the extradition bill (Cheng 2019). Consequently, people use the term 'WeConnect' to describe how the pro-democracy movement connects with other interest groups in society. For the Kowloon protests, the 'WeConnect' moment came between Hong Kong's ethnic Chinese population and the South Asians.

The intensity of 'WeConnect' did not end with the events of that day. On the day after the march, Jeffrey, Vivek, and their friends received positive comments about the water distribution initiative on various social media platforms and in LIHKG. As an extension of the activities they held that day, they came up with the idea of conducting tours of Chungking Mansions. They posted a Facebook post and created an image to explain the details of the event (Figure 50). They also placed a description of the event in Cantonese, hoping that Netizens could help spread the news. Word spread, and comments revealed that the protesters wanted to 'punish' or '懲罰' (cing fat), the shops in Chungking Mansions. Jeffrey was initially confused by the terminology used by the protesters:

I then heard reviews that people wanted to 'punish' us, and I was a bit confused [laughs] like why would they want to punish us when we are doing good? My Hong Kong friends then explained to me that to 'punish' is to support by consumption.

(Jeffrey Andrews, personal communication, 2020)

The colour coding of the protest extends to a protest economy, where protesters advocate 'buy yellow, eat yellow' as the main principle of supporting allies of the movement. By boycotting businesses that are 'blue' or 'red,' such as Chinese state enterprises, a 'yellow economic circle' came into being that represented a self-sufficient protest economy, generating economic sustainability to fund the political struggle and resistance. Thus, to 'punish' in this context does not follow the literal meaning of disciplining the shop. Rather it is a sign of support by people voting with their wallets. In the zines made for the event, the protesters framed it as a reciprocal activity in the form of a 'Thanksgiving Day' on which they accepted that the South Asians are equally Hong Kongers (Figure 46-49).

On the day of the tours, what awaited Jeffrey and his friends was a massive crowd of locals queuing for the tours. According to Vivek, he was astonished that there was one moment that the Chungking Mansion was so full that they had to stop the queue for the tours. Jeffrey was equally surprised by the turnout:

"I was shocked by the numbers. Some of the shop owners told me that they had opened the shop for more than 15, 30 years, and they have not seen so many locals in the Chungking. The power of people is so remarkable … It is a service that we would want to continue to do."

(Jeffrey Andrews, personal communication, 2020)

The tours did not turn out to be a one-off event but were so popular that Jeffrey and his friends continued the tours for months until the coronavirus hit the city. He claimed that different charity and school groups sent in requests, hoping to learn more about the building and its history.

During the interview, both Jeffrey and Vivek expressed optimism that their actions had made a positive, permanent change to the perspectives of ethnic Chinese locals on the ethnic minorities. Vivek said it was a "whole brand-new moment" that helped to eliminate some of the prejudices against the way of life of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong and the stigmatisation that was previously attached to these groups:

Previously, the government would just hold some carnivals or ethnic minorities day and hope that racism will end. No, racism does not end that way. It is just going to reinforce the stereotypical images that ethnic minorities hold as if they dance and eat curry the whole day. Nothing was really done by the government compared to the stuff that we have done for those few days.

<div align="right">(Vivek Mahbubani, personal communication, 2020)</div>

The tours demystified the image of the Chungking Mansions. As "an echo of British colonialism" (Mathews 2011, p.3), the building complex accommodated people of different ethnicities and national backgrounds. Thus, in the past, the Chungking Mansions had been the home of racial otherness (Mathews 2011). Through the performance of solidarity, this space is no longer a ghetto for minorities but has become rather a place of diversity that is synonymous with Hong Kong's civic values. The diversity extends from the building to the broader society. The process of 'WeConnect' is more than a strategy to put more pressure on the government to answer the demands. It symbolizes the genuine comprehension of cultural diversity as a core element of Hong Kong's values and the making of civic nationalism.

Certainly, understanding the mundane, bodily practices of everyday nationalism practiced by the local people of Hong Kong was not easy for non-Cantonese speakers at first. The spoken Cantonese language involves puns that are hard for non-Cantonese speakers to understand (Clarke 2001). Even for Cantonese speakers like Jeffrey and Vivek, it took some time to understand the meanings of particular terminologies used in the Anti-ELAB movement. When asked about how he understood the cultural repertoires of the movement, Vivek claimed:

"It's a very Hong Kong phenomenon, using some kind of slang to replace some simple terms. Words like '懲罰' (punish) won't make sense if it's out of context. Either you get it, or you don't. It is quite exclusive of being the members of the club, but that's what special about the culture in Hong Kong. Social media helps a lot in understanding the context of the slangs, and I would check Facebook and LIHKG to keep myself up to date. There is a channel called *Be Water HK* also helped to clarify the stuff by translating some of the local discussions into English. There is actually a lot of people that wanted to participate, but not a lot of people bothered to translate the stuff for the ethnic minorities."

<div align="right">(Vivek Mahbubani, personal communication, 2020)</div>

By knowing the language, one can understand the norms and practices and tap into the cultural resource offered by the society. It is a way of comprehending 'how things are' and

'how we do things' in society. Thus, there is a strong reason why South Asians, especially Cantonese-speaking individuals, can 'WeConnect' with the majority political community. Vivek's definition of 'companion' does not differ much from how local Hong Kongers would understand the term:

For me, '手足' is making sure that everyone is part of it. It is a positive thing to keep people motivated and feels important. There is a positive mindset of taking part, a certain bond that we are all trying, a family that would always support you. As the literal meaning suggests, *it's your hands and legs, and it's an inseparable part of the whole body*.

(Vivek Mahbubani, personal communication, 2020, Italics by Author)

The case of ethnic minorities in the Anti-ELAB movement brought out two key messages. Firstly, that the local ethnic Chinese should acknowledge that South Asians are willing to safeguard 'Hong Kong values', thus elevating the status of ethnic minorities and expanding the boundaries of being a Hong Konger to people of different races and ethnicities. For ethnic minorities, this meant that Hong Kong should be seen as equally their home and that they should be willing to embrace the same civic values proposed by the social movement, and more broadly, the Hong Kong civic nation. Secondly, there was the realisation that ethnic minorities in Hong Kong were determined to engage in a similar participatory process of everyday nationalism practiced by local ethnic Chinese Hong Kongers, chanting protest slogans and singing protest anthems. Embracing the identity requires one to actively learn and comprehend the language used for the communication of cultural repertoires. The sequence of events during the movement turned a new page in the history of accepting South Asians as part of 'HeungGongYan' identity.

## 6.3 'WeConnect?' New Immigrants and the Political 'Other'

The success of South Asians 'WeConnect'-ing with the majority population of ethnic Chinese reflects a shared sense of political and cultural commonality across ethnic and racial divides. Inclusion requires the processes of learning the civic culture of 'how things are' and 'how we do things' in Hong Kong. The practices of everyday nationalism provide an opportunity to perform the ritual of genuinely understanding the values encompassed by Hong Kong civic nationalism. For new immigrants, the mutual interaction in the negotiation of the membership of Hong Kong nationalism has not been that fruitful. New immigrants occupy an ambivalent position, sitting on the delicate borders of inclusivity and exclusivity in the

Hong Kong civic nation. While some new immigrants are devoted to the civic culture and pursue the same values of democracy and liberty enshrined in Hong Kong's civic nationalism, ironically, they are vulnerable to exclusion from the 'objective' cultural marker which defines Hong Kong as a nation: Cantonese. Solidified prejudice against new immigrants not learning the language properly, equating to the inability to comprehend the institutionalised practices of society, may offset their commitment and participation in civil society. In effect, the inclusion of new immigrants into the 'imagined community' is limited by how the majority population perceives its identity.

Before exploring the reasons why new immigrants face difficulties in joining Hong Kong's imagined community, it is crucial to revisit the contentious debates regarding the identity conflict between Hong Konger and Mainland Chinese. As discussed in Chapter Four, the very reason why localism became the dominant narrative in Hong Kong politics was the reaction towards China's encroachment on Hong Kong through planned integration. Aside from the Mainland Chinese tourists and parallel traders with whom Hong Kong people have lost their patience, their discontents also extend to the new Chinese immigrants in the city.

Historically as an immigrant society, Hong Kong has always been a recipient of migrants, especially of people north of Hong Kong's borders. Chinese immigrants were a vital source of human resources filling the labour pool that contributed to the city's economic growth in the 70's and 80's. Despite media portrayals which frame the immigrants as 'Ah Chan,' learning the language and cultural norms was necessary for one to assimilate into society for greater employment opportunities.

Since the Handover, a different discourse has been applied to Chinese immigrants. The Hong Kong census does not categorise and differentiate the Han Chinese by their origin. It is to show that Hong Kongers and other Mainland Chinese belong to the same ethnicity. In general, however, 'new' immigrants have been refered to Chinese immigrants that have settled in Hong Kong since the Handover. Designating a 'new' group of immigrants in Hong Kong attaches a relatively negative connotation to that community. While 60% of the population is locally born, many still maintain family ties in China (Law & Lee 2006). Due to the grey areas in immigration and population policies in Hong Kong and China, there were many cases of parents with Hong Kong citizenship giving birth in China and Mainland Chinese parents giving birth in Hong Kong, inducing a constitutional crisis regarding the right to abode (ROA). After two constitutional reviews by the Court of Final Appeal (CFA) and a re-interpretation of the Basic Law by the NPCSC, the case *Director of Immigration v. Chong*

*Fung Yuen* (FACV000026/2000) concluded that "Chinese citizens born in Hong Kong before or after 1 July 1997 have the status of permanent residents," regardless of the Hong Kong immigration status of the parent (Basic Law Bulletin 2001, p.13). Law & Lee (2006) argued that the economic-centric identity of Hong Kong victimised new migrants in relation to the economic conditions in Hong Kong, such as endangering economic prosperity and exacerbating the acute problems of housing and state resources. Thus, tensions on the ROA left legacies of social exclusion against the new immigrants in Hong Kong (Law & Lee 2006)

Years later, the social impacts of the ROA cases have surfaced. There was an explosive increase in the number of non-Hong Kong Chinese parents giving birth in Hong Kong which took advantage of Hong Kong's immigration policy. In consequence, the policy continued to generate separate families across the border, where children were eligible for permanent citizenship while their parents remained Mainland Chinese. Cases of family reunion require an application for the 'One-way Permit.' This permit allows residents of China to leave China and settle in Hong Kong or Macau permanently. Currently, Hong Kong has a quota of 150 per day, but the Chinese government controls the execution of the policy. Unlike other sovereign nation-states, there is no form of citizenship test that filters out applicants who do not meet the standard. Hung (2014) argues that the policy triggers the 'Tibetisation' of Hong Kong, allowing a large influx of people to settle in Hong Kong and marginalize the locals. It is an attempt to create a settler colony, a project of 'changing blood' from that of Hong Kongers to Mainland Chinese.

The influx of immigrants eventually began to stretch the healthcare system and other social services. The discontent over the new immigrants using Hong Kong's resources formulated an image of how the new immigrants relied on social welfare, especially getting public housing when housing is a critical shortage in Hong Kong. Following the same discourse of the 'other' 'invading' the host society, the new immigrant influx was portrayed as a swarm of locusts laying their offspring in Hong Kong, 'eating up' resources and overwhelming the local population (Jackson 2017). At the peak of the localist movement, localists organised activities that attempted to expel the Chinese tourists and parallel traders, shouting slogans such as "Go Home" and "Go Back to China." Inevitably, new immigrants are also targeted in this vortex. The sense of disempowerment comes from the lack of ability to control the flow of immigration. Adopting the Foucauldian notion of biopolitics, which is the biopolitical control of the administration and control of life (Foucault 2007), Ip (2015) argues that these localist movements are not simply venting their anger but are aimed at actually impacting

immigration policies. The protest slogans of "Go Home" and "Go Back to China" are thus imposed disciplinary orders to expel the 'other.'

While undoubtedly there are new immigrants that have made efforts to integrate themselves into the wider Hong Kong society, such as learning Cantonese and finding a job, the combination of stereotypes and mistrust may have collapsed all Mainlanders into the same category, neglecting the subtle differences within the Mainland Chinese community (Ip 2015). As a result, the difference in beliefs, norms, and practices has enabled a process of self-ethnicization of the Hong Kong identity as a way of distancing from the Chinese identity (Lo 2007). For someone who is 'fully' Chinese is someone who refuses to learn the local language and customs, neglecting the principles of 'how things are' and 'how we do things' in Hong Kong.

As a result, the years of Hong Kong-China conflict have created an imaginative geographical discourse. The dissolution of psychological and physical maps has blurred the boundaries between reality and the perception of a defined place (Gregory 1995). These mental constructions of geographical imaginations are faced towards both external and internal audiences, illustrating how the 'others' are being imagined in the 'other' place (Radcliffe 1996). Even though Hong Kong is part of China in terms of political correctness, the values professed by the Chinese regime are not compatible with the civic values that Hong Kongers uphold (Lowe & Ortmann 2020). As the Mainland Chinese have not always behaved within the acceptable norms of Hong Kong society, the orientalist gaze of Hong Kongers views the people living in the imagined 'China' as having a stereotypical character of backwardness and an inability to comprehend local customs. Thus, as Delaney (2002) contends on how racial identities are spatialised and spaces racialised, the Hong Kong identity is structured against an imaginary Mainland Chinese identity, ethnicising new immigrants to justify differences and hierarchical status in the postcolonial society (Lo 2007).

The Anti-ELAB movements have caused the paradoxical debates on the politics of belonging of new immigrants in Hong Kong to resurface. A mixture of entrenched prejudice and misunderstanding puts new immigrants at a considerable disadvantage in joining the civic nation, even if one speaks the language and respects the local culture. Whether to extend the application of the 手足 to new immigrants – ones that equally pursue the same values as Hong Kongers – is a crucial benchmark in determining the possibility of a person from Mainland China joining the Hong Kong nation.

The heated debate surrounding the figure of the Mainlander 手足 started when Minnie Li, a Shanghai-born sociologist from the Education University of Hong Kong, and a few of her new immigrant friends visited Kwong Wing Catering (光榮冰室), a famously known 'yellow' restaurant in town. In earlier periods of the coronavirus pandemic, the restaurant had posted a notice declaring that they would only serve Hong Kong people and would not serve customers that speak Mandarin (Li 2020a). Despite receiving allegations of racism, the restaurant did not back down, reasoning that Mainland Chinese are of high risk after the spread of disease from Wuhan across the whole country. The restaurant only updated their status on Facebook saying they welcome Taiwanese friends. While some members of her group spoke a decent level of Cantonese, Minnie and her friends wanted to test whether the restaurant would reject their group if they spoke Putonghua while ordering their food. As expected, they did not receive a pleasant experience and the waiters of the restaurant refused to take orders in Mandarin. The group wanted to convey the message to the restaurant owner that even though they were new immigrants in Hong Kong, they equally supported the beliefs behind the pro-democracy movement and the values Hong Kongers hold (Li 2020b). At the end of the day, the owner did not appear, and the group left a booklet named "新移民手足的心聲," meaning "The Voices of New Immigrant Companions," which explained the contribution of new immigrants to Hong Kong's civil society.

After the social experiment, Minnie wrote down her experiences and posted them online. She argued that while she had paid respect to the owner by supporting Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement and showing an understanding of the paranoia which Hong Kong people feel regarding the coronavirus since the lessons learnt in the SARS outbreak, she disagrees with the way the restaurant had screened its customers by language. The act of demarcating who is qualified to eat in the restaurant by a mere cultural marker, in her opinion, was straight racism (Li 2020c). Not only that, this screening by language does not prevent the spread of disease, but instead, evokes a politics of fear, painting Mandarin speakers as people who have 'ancestral sins.' However, her post received heavy criticism which accused her of decontextualizing the situation and loosely using the label of racism (Lo 2020). Putting aside the controversies on the motive and approach of how Minnie and her friends conducted the social experiment, the case does raise some interesting questions on the paradoxical situation of the inclusivity of Hong Kong civic nationalism: can new immigrants from China be 手足 and be part of the shared political community in Hong Kong?

One of the social experiment participants, 南南 (nam nam), wrote a commentary on her blog expressing her thoughts on the dining experience at the restaurant and dissecting her psychological journey of naturalisation from a Mainland Chinese to a Hong Konger. According to her experiences in Hong Kong, she supports Hong Kongers fighting for more democracy and liberty under CCP rule. Having participated in the Umbrella Movement as well as the Anti-ELAB movement, she shares collective memories of political struggle and resistance against authority, along with the majority population (南南, 2020). During her first year in Hong Kong, she was too afraid to interact with other people as she could not speak a decent level of Cantonese (Chan 2020). After coming to Hong Kong for several years, she now speaks Cantonese but with an accent. However, she claims that she still suffers a daily identity crisis as she wanders the grey areas between Hong Kong and Chinese identity.

On the one hand, her parents and relatives treated her as someone coming from Hong Kong when she shared her experiences of the Umbrella Movement. Her parents believed that she had been 'Hongkongised' and "brainwashed" as she now professed the same universal values that Hong Kongers uphold. On the other hand, some locals do not acknowledge her as being a 'genuine' Hong Konger. At times, the mundane bodily practices of Hong Kongers that she interacted with made her feel uncomfortable. She was questioned by a local Hong Konger "We Hong Kongers are fighting for democracy, have you thought of what is *your position as a Mainlander*?" (南南, 2020, Italics by Author)[8] As a non-Hong Konger, she was questioned by others as to whether she was qualified to speak of her experiences in the Umbrella Movement. Furthermore, she was accused of being a colonialist: "whatever you did for Hong Kong, you are a colonialist, because you are a Mainlander that came to Hong Kong under the colonial structure and policy. That is your original sin,"[9] (南南, 2020). For some localists, the voluntary migration of the Mainland Chinese is framed as an accomplice of the Chinese colonial project, as if there were the same group of people colonizing Tibet.

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[8] Author's translation. The original Chinese words are as follows:「我們香港人在爭取民主,你想過你作為大陸人的位置是什麼嗎?」

[9] Author's translation. The original Chinese words are as follows:「無論你來香港做了什麼,你就是殖民者,因為你是在殖民政策的結構中來到香港的大陸人,這是你的原罪。」

"I only realised at the time that I was never a 'Mainlander' before coming to Hong Kong; I only became a 'Mainlander' when I came to Hong Kong"[10]

(南南, 2020)

During the Anti-ELAB movement, she had proudly joined the rally using the identity of a new immigrant from Mainland China. Under the banner of "Protest regardless of origin, new immigrants safeguard Hong Kong"[11], new immigrants have made themselves visible in the social movement. Showing solidarity, she received comments saying that "You are already a Hong Konger!" and hoped that she would apply for Hong Kong citizenship. Occasionally in the protest, she heard her friends saying "Go Back to the Mainland" to the police only to immediately clarify that those words were not directed at her (南南, 2020). New immigrants still tread a fine line between Hong Kong and Chinese identity.

Unpicking the debates from the case of Kwong Wing Catering and 南南's experiences, they reveal the intertwined relationships between the mundane, bodily practices of everyday nationalism and the imagined geographies of the 'other.' Regarding the imagined China, the discourse associates the Chinese regime with the whole Chinese population, making Hong Kongers believe that the mainland Chinese are not able to comprehend civic values of democracy, liberty, and freedom, at least not within the same definitions that Hong Kongers uphold them. The use of linguistic markers such as 'us' and 'them' delineates whether one is qualified to speak on issues about Hong Kong. Note that the protesters would also yell at police to tell them to "Go Back to the Mainland." Even if the police had been born and raised in Hong Kong, given the level of police brutality over the year of the protests, those people would be considered as 'non-Hong Konger' as they defied the universal values held by 'genuine' Hong Kongers. An authoritarian China would be a better place for them to settle. 'HeungGongYan,' thus, is only attributed to the people who believe in the same civic values.

Hence, in order for new immigrants to 'WeConnect' with the Hong Kong identity, they must learn the Cantonese language actively and comprehend the civic qualities upheld within the Hong Kong identity. By acting in the same ways that a 'genuine' Hong Konger does, a new

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[10] Author's translation. The original Chinese words are as follows: 「我當時才意識到了，在來香港之前，我從來不是「大陸人」，我是來了香港之後才成為「大陸人」的。」

[11] Author's translation. The original Chinese words are as follows: 「抗爭不問出處，新移民護香港」

immigrant may demonstrate that they understand 'how things are' and 'how we do things' in Hong Kong. As Au (2020) observes:

"I think the way in which the boundary [between insiders and outsiders of the Hong Kong community] is drawn depends on how one views Hong Kong as a system. For example, how does one view the institutional system and its associated rights and duties? I have heard people saying that "if you do not think that Hong Kong deserves democracy, then go back to the Greater Bay Area [in China]." This reflects a particular value system of how Hong Kongers want Hong Kong to become."

(Au Nok Hin, personal communication, 2020)

Given their subaltern status, new immigrants have 'spoken up' by making themselves visible in the rally and trying to break through the stereotypes of the colonial hierarchy. To some, however, that learning process may not compensate for the 'sins' of an immigrant's original identity - particularly in the case of a Mainland Chinese moving to Hong Kong – in the context of the colonial relationship between Hong Kong and China. The new immigrants remain scapegoats in the acute tension between Hong Kong and China.

There are exceptions. Nathan Law, the ex-Chairman of the pro-democracy party Demosistō and also the youngest ex-LegCo member, was born in Shenzhen, China. He moved to Hong Kong for a family reunion when he was around six years old as his father was from Hong Kong and his mother from China (Mingpao 2016). His participation in the Umbrella Movement and the Anti-ELAB movement and his overall contributions to Hong Kong's democratic movement would not mark him as a new immigrant 'eating up' Hong Kong's resources. Equally, Edward Leung was born in Wuhan, China, and moved to Hong Kong at the age of one. He was born in a typical new immigrant family of mixed Hong Kong-Chinese parentage (Appledaily 2019). Nevertheless, his actions as a localist/pro-independence activist for Hong Kong won him honour as he promoted the consciousness of localism in society and subsequently became the main driver of Hong Kong nationalism. Certainly, these young pro-democracy activists set a high benchmark for others to follow, revealing that a massive effort is required for a new immigrant to become a 'genuine' Hong Konger. That threshold is hard to accurately underpin, however. While there is no clear answer for how new Chinese immigrants may join the Hong Kong civic nation, through the lens of everyday nationalism, it seems to require daily, dedicated efforts to prove whether one is qualified to be included in the wider national community.

<u>6.4 One Nationalism, Multiple Identities</u>

The last critique on Hong Kong nationalism focuses on the compatibility between the diversity of cultural identities and the Hong Kong national identity. For civic nations like the US and France, national identity overrides the ethnic identity or identity of origin. National identity acts as a "trump card in the game of identity" (Calhoun 1997, p.46). However, as Stuart Hall suggests, identities are "increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply-constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions" (Hall, 1996, p.4). Edensor (2002) equally illustrates that:

"national identity does not equate with homogeneity; nor is it inherently defensive, conservative or tradition-bound. There are a multitude of social and political investments in the nation, across political spectra, ethnicity and class, for as a process, identity may weave cultural resources into its constitution according to contingency."

(Edensor 2002, p.29)

The Anti-ELAB movement revealed that identity politics are at the core of shaping the embryonic Hong Kong civic nationalism. From the experiences of South Asians and Chinese new immigrants operating in the social movement, there are still tensions between the plurality of identities and a unitary imagined community.

Throughout history, newly established nations that have escaped from colonialism suffer from degrees of colonial legacies. Due to years of being organised into colonial structures, the colonised society imitates and takes on the culture of the colonisers. This is what Homi Bhabha (1994) refers to "mimicry". Colonised elites fall into an ambivalent position between the coloniser and colonised, where they are phenotypically different from the coloniser but have also acquired the same mindset as the colonial master (Fanon 1952), becoming "almost the same but not quite" (Bhabha 1994, p.86). As a result, when a new nation emerges, the dominant colonised elites will either require different subpopulations to assimilate and pledge loyalty to the unitary nation or marginalize the unassimilated groups and neglect their contribution to the nation in fighting against colonial oppression, ignoring class, gender, ethnic and cultural differences (Guha & Spivak 1988).

In the case of Hong Kong, where the stateless nation is far from political independence or genuine self-determination, it is still possible to look at the interaction between the entrenched colonial hierarchies in the postcolonial society and civic nationalism. The histories of South Asians and new immigrants mentioned earlier demonstrated the presence

of ethnic hierarchies within Hong Kong's ethnically homogenous society. Despite the cultural dimensions of Hong Kong's civic nationalism, the pursuit of equality is equally prevalent. In other words, accepting the excluded 'others' into the national community is a test of whether the emergence of civic nationalism may correct the colonial legacies of otherness and exclusivity, at least partially.

From the water initiative and the Chungking Mansions tours, South Asians in Hong Kong have actively reshaped and redefined the boundaries of HeungGong Yan. Their actions have created shared experiences and memories, linking disparate identities with the wider political community. While acknowledging their cultural roots and religious practices, the South Asians equally value Hong Kong as their home and are willing to safeguard the city's values by action and participation. Not only are the South Asians accepted as 手足, but they have also contributed their own conceptualization of what the identity of HeungGongYan is. In Hong Kong's highly polarized society, both the 'yellow ribbon' and 'blue ribbon' attempt to put forward the narrative that they represent the 'true' Hong Kong identity. The South Asians do not precisely fit into the binary mindset, but would still claim that they are Hong Kongers. Earlier in the chapter, we saw how Hong Kong protesters had expressed their desire to 'punish' the shops in Chungking Mansions. During the coronavirus pandemic, while street protests turned quiet, the 'yellow economic circle' became the outlet in which Hong Kongers could continue to protest in another way. Locals have frequently asked Jeffrey whether the Chungking Mansions had any shops that were 'yellow' and he replied:

"ethnic minorities really care about Hong Kong and they have a strong sense of Hong Kong identity. But ethnic minorities rarely talk about politics because we get discriminated against. We do not know whether you guys will treat us as a Hong Konger…. the most yellow here is probably curry."[12][13]

(Jeffrey Andrews in Appledaily 2020)

He said that whilst the shops in Chungking Mansions may not exhibit eye-catching Lennon Walls posted in their shops, the building has nevertheless become a safe haven for protesters to take shelter when violent confrontations happen on the streets (Appledaily 2020). Precisely because of the diversity of having people of different backgrounds living

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[12] Author's translation. The original Chinese words are as follows: 「少數族裔好關心香港，對香港人身份認同感好強，但少數族裔怕講政治，因為我哋都俾人歧視，我哋出聲講，你哋會唔會當我哋係香港人呢？」

[13] Author's translation. The original Chinese words are as follows: 「或者，呢度最黃嘅就係咖喱。」

together harmoniously in Chungking Mansions, applying that spirit allows the South Asians to transcend the yellow/blue divide in society. In this way, they construct their own stories and reinterpret what matters to them for their embodied Hong Kong identity. These bodily practices of solidarity generate a sense of commonality across ethnic and racial divides between different groups of people in Hong Kong. In the South Asian case, we find that the plurality of identities can coexist with the Hong Kong national identity.

However, the road to the coexistence of a Mainland Chinese and a Hong Kong identity is rockier. There is a stronger clash between Hong Kong and Chinese identity, which suggests mutual exclusivity of the identities. From the observation with his students during the lecture, anthropologist Gordon Mathews argues that the "South Asians and Africans are no longer Hong Kong's 'ethnic other' – now it's the mainland Chinese" (Mathews 2019). In an interview, Mathews retold the story about the standard of who should be included or excluded from the Hong Konger identity, on which he also wrote an article on Hong Kong Free Press and an academic journal, where he stated:

"Several Hong Kong localists were attending the class. A South Asian refugee asked a localist, "Can I be a Hongkonger?" He was told, "of course you can be a Hongkonger! We need people like you here!" An African refugee asked, "Can I be a Hongkonger?" and was told, "of course you can be a Hongkonger! We need people like you here!" Then a mainland Chinese student, also attending the class, asked, "Can I be a Hongkonger?" The activist frowned and refused to answer."

(Mathews 2020: 4)

From this observation, despite the fact that it was taken from a small pool of educated elites, we see a sense of rejection and repulsion towards the Mainland Chinese identity. Even asylum seekers were treated inclusively and accepted into the Hong Kong identity (Mathews 2018). Since the Mainland Chinese identity also bears the burden of associating it with the hegemonic, oppressive Chinese regime, the emphasis of a Mainland Chinese identity triggers the antagonistic sentiment against the Hong Kong identity. Lo (2007) writes:

The sayings, 'we are all new immigrants' and 'we are all ethnic minorities', are supposedly a progressive operation to identify universality and exclusion in order to subvert the oppressive hegemony. However, when the Hong Kong subject occupies these positions (by claiming 'we are all new immigrants' - to the sovereignty, terrain or the big family of China - or 'we are all ethnic minorities'), the politics of the excluded other as an emancipatory politics immediately becomes the politics of the assertion of hegemonic identity.

(Lo 2007b, p.441)

With the new immigrants making a more substantial presence in the Anti-ELAB movement, the situation may have improved since 2007. Nevertheless, new immigrants will continue to face many hurdles with the duality of identities – both Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong – to represent their sense of belonging. Beijing will also try to prevent new immigrants from accepting Hong Kong values instead of making them remain patriotically Chinese through patron-client networks in Hong Kong (Wu 2020, personal communication). In the end, the Anti-ELAB movement generated a large pool of cultural resources and repertoires, in which "constellations of interrelated cultural indices coagulate around national identity, not in any fixed or essentialist sense, but in the multiple ways in which they can be assembled and connected around key themes" (Edensor 2002, p.35). As Wu (2016) argues, experiencing intellectual waves of postmodernism, post-structuralism, and postcolonialism, late nationalism exhibits characteristics of diversity, difference, and equality. Instead of elites dictating the historical process of nation-building, civic nationalism from the bottom-up is in the driving seat of determining the nature and development of national consciousness. Considering the level of reflexivity in Hong Kong nationalism, the plurality of identities, and membership of Hong Kong civic nationalism will no doubt continue to evolve over time.

6.5 Summary

When evaluating the inclusivity of Hong Kong's civic nationalism, we find that South Asians are more successful than the Mainland Chinese new immigrants in being accepted into the civic nation. With the majority local population equipping an orientalist lens, both groups have their historical reasons that explain their marginalised status in Hong Kong's postcolonial society. However, as the people of Hong Kong fight for democracy and liberty in their political system, the social movements after the Handover have provided a window for people to reflect on the issues of collectivity and inclusivity. Where the line is drawn to delineate between insiders and outsiders relies on the mundane, bodily practices of everyday nationalism which determine who is qualified to be part of the imagined community.

The Anti-ELAB movement has provided a platform for the subaltern to speak out, but some groups have spoken louder than others. Through the water initiative and the Chungking Mansions tours, South Asians have successfully 'WeConnect' with the broader political community. It takes nothing more than singing songs and chanting slogans as a way of showing support and solidarity, creating a national consciousness based on resistance and

struggle. Despite learning the customs and holding the same beliefs, it seems that the new Chinese immigrants have to put in extra effort to demonstrate that they are worthy and deserve to be included in the imagined community. As Hall (1990) reminds us, identity is subjected to the continuous play of history, culture and power. This process of negotiation and renegotiation on the membership of the civic nation will surely continue as time progresses.

It is of course undeniable that the personal experiences displayed in the case studies are statistically negligible and highly personalised. Big questions on identity politics still require comprehensive survey data to complement, support, and validate the changes in the politics of belonging, both for the South Asians and the Mainland Chinese new immigrants relative to Hong Kongers. Additionally, when one factors in intersectionality of identities, the interviewees might not be the most marginalised individuals in society. However, while it is not possible to generalize these findings, the cases displayed are still important in teasing out the intricacies and tensions over the negotiation of the membership of Hong Kong's civic nation. Only time will tell whether or not the South Asians and new immigrants are genuinely treated as 手足 and thus included in the imagined community.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

How far will the Hong Kong nation go when living under unprecedented levels of Chinese oppression? Amid the coronavirus outbreak, on May 28, 2020, the NPCSC enacted the decision to promulgate a national security law in Hong Kong, as an urgent response to the political unrest. The national security law covers all the requests that the Hong Kong government has regarding Article 23, but takes it even further: preventing treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People's Government and allowing the establishment of a national security agency in Hong Kong (BBC 2020). Undoubtedly, the decision has generated a chilling effect among the Hong Kong population. It signals the end of OCTS. It signals the end of Hong Kong. Yet, Hong Kongers will not back down.

The year 2020 marks the 31st anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident. Over the past thirty years, Hong Kongers have commemorated the Chinese that lost their lives in the incident via the Vigil. This year, for the first time, the police have not approved the assembly in the name of social distancing under the "Prohibition of Group Gathering" law (Griffiths 2020). Nevertheless, people gathered in Victoria Park, the usual venue that holds the Vigil, and disregarded the police's objection. Members of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China still held the vigil on a smaller scale. The older generations of Hong Kong people that retain the Pan-Chinese identity chanted the same slogans as before, demanding vindication of June 4, investigation into the responsibility for the massacre and the construction a democratic China[14] . However, there were a few other slogans that the younger generations shouted louder. It was not just the slogans of "Liberate Hong Kong, the Revolution of Our Times" or "Five demands, not one less,". It had now become - "Strengthen the nation, Hong Kong independence" (民族自強 香港獨立, man zuk zi keong, heong gong duk lap). People also sang *Glory to Hong Kong* to cheer themselves up. The slogans of the two generations were echoing with each other as if constructing a dialogue debating how the Hong Kong identity would look in the future. In just one year, no one could have ever predicted how the change in mentality would accelerate so quickly,

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[14] Author's translation. The original Chinese words are as follows: 「平反六四，追究屠城責任，建設民主中國。」

accepting Hong Kong independence as the framework to safeguard the interests of the nation.

The Victoria Park witnessed thirty years of commemoration; Hong Kong people had a glimmer of hope that China would one day become democratic. The same place also witnessed a departure from the Pan-Chinese identity among the new generations. Hong Kongers no longer see themselves as having that 'sacred moral mission' to inspire China to take a democratic path, but remember that the people who passed away in the Tiananmen Square Incident were equally oppressed under the authoritarian regime. June 4, 2020, was undoubtedly a critical turning point, attributing a new meaning to and redefining exactly what the Tiananmen Square incident means for the construction of Hong Kong identity.

Exploring the different events that have taken place in the Anti-ELAB movement, the central argument of the thesis is that the emergence of Hong Kong civic nationalism and the membership of the nation are intrinsically linked with the bodily practices of everyday nationalism. The 'civicness' of Hong Kong nationalism is not expressed by the generation of a constitution but by the bodily practices of expressing the commitment to shared beliefs and values that people firmly hold in their identity. These bodily practices are also crucial in understanding the boundary-making process of the inclusivity of the nation. Everyday nationalism is a process of learning, offering outsiders a way to join the wider political community of the nation. Success in becoming a member of the club will be determined by how one performs bodily practices. In Hong Kong's case, how one commits to pro-democracy social movements is key for being a part of the imagined community.

In Chapter One, I started by introducing the political background of Hong Kong from the colonial period to the present day and explaining why Hong Kong has so many protests and demonstrations over the years. Under OCTS, Hong Kong should enjoy a high level of autonomy and freedom. However, Beijing has once and again delayed the democratisation process and instead tightened its grip on the SAR. While Hong Kong people believe that the regime is stripping away the promised liberties of the people, Beijing asserts that the level of autonomy is a residual power from the authorities and that it can adjust or even take it back according to changing situations. On the understanding of OCTS, Hong Kong and China were never on the same page. From the Anti-Bill 23 protests to the Umbrella Movement, and Anti-ELAB movement, the mounting discontent from the lack of popular representation of the executive and legislative branch of the Hong Kong government causes periodic outbursts of public anger, triggered and catalysed by policies that are associated directly

with China. Hence, from the past successes of political mobilization, people turn to civil society for solutions.

In Chapter Two, I attempted to fit the phenomenon of Hong Kong within the existing literature on nation and nationalism. As an example of late nationalism, the Gellnerian theory of nationalism fails to explain the lack of national consciousness during Hong Kong's modernisation. Nor can Smith's 'objective' criteria on the nation fully encapsulate the features of the stateless Hong Kong nation. The Hong Kong nation is not a natural phenomenon. Rather, it is a social construction. Thus, Anderson's imagined communities best explain how the people of Hong Kong construct a sense of national identity through political struggle and resistance against the authoritarian regime. Regarding the position of Hong Kong position between the ethnic/civic dichotomy, Hong Kong nationalism falls closer to the civic side of things. However, Hong Kong civic nationalism differs from European examples of civic nationalism. The discrepancies in academic literature on the situation leads to the discussion on banal and everyday nationalism. The discussion concludes that ordinary citizens also hold the instruments of nation-building, and that these are distinct from the instruments crafted by elites and intellectuals.

In Chapter Three, I reviewed the difference in historical trajectories between Chinese and Hong Kong nationalism. Chinese nationalism follows the ethnic path, where race, ethnicity, blood, and ancestry construct the core of the nation. From a Sino-centric perspective, the unpleasant experiences of foreign imperial invasion in the Qing dynasty were perceived as an insult, and the nation strives to grow stronger to resist humiliation from other powers. Linking the shared experiences of national humiliation with the concept of a Chinese nation were first explored by notable figures of revolution such as Sun Yat-sen and Liang Qichao. However, the CCP later appropriated the thinking and merged it with its political discourse in portraying itself as the representative which brings China closer to national rejuvenation. Any separatism or secessionism within its territory would undermine that grand plan of national rejuvenation. Thus, an emergence of national consciousness that differs from the official narrative will not be tolerated.

Hong Kong nationalism emerged from the collective memories of political mobilisation. Hong Kong identity was nearly non-existent or apolitical during the colonial period and only began to manifest a civic identity during the very last days of British rule. The Tiananmen Square Incident left a scar on the hearts of the people of Hong Kong but urged them to set an excellent example for a democratic China. In post-Handover Hong Kong, Hong Kong

people struggled to configure the characteristics of their identity. On the one hand, people were nostalgic about the glorious achievements when Hong Kong was still a British colony; on the other hand, people also re-associated with the cultural commonalities with China when the nation-state was projecting itself as a benign power. All attitudes were reversed when the locals suffered from greater Chinese integration in all spheres and Beijing's denial of the possibility of Hong Kong people running Hong Kong themselves. As a result, the people of Hong Kong viewed the situation as China recolonising their city, which gave birth to localism to defend and safeguard the remaining liberties of the city. People finally found what mattered to their identity through political struggle and resistance, which are the civic values of democracy, rights, and liberty.

In Chapter Four, I argued for the necessity of everyday nationalism in contributing to the 'civicness' of Hong Kong civic nationalism. The Anti-ELAB movement has produced a rich set of cultural repertories that formulate a sense of nationhood, the particularities that are crucial for individuals to imagine themselves as part of a wider political community. I investigated the importance of cultural resources in digital activism, in which I selected songs, zines, and gaming content as entry points to triangulate the study by looking at the bodily practices of everyday nationalism. In terms of songs, *Glory to Hong Kong* is the representative anthem that summons people's determination in fighting against the authoritarian regime. To demonstrate a sense of solidarity, protesters sang the protest anthem on public occasions to boost the spirit of the people and as a weapon of resistance. In terms of zines, the printed material informs and connects a broader audience, forming a resilience network to fight against the government's discourse on the social movement. The Lennon Wall in different communities renders the political debate visible in the public sphere and allows counter-public discourses to develop and circulate. In terms of gaming content, Hong Kong protesters have made use of the game Animal Crossing to express their discontents in an alternative form. The content generated in the game became a way of communicating with other protesters in a virtual setting. The three cultural resources have one thing in common: the production, circulation, and utilisation of protest content enabled by the Internet in exploring the essence of civic values. Thus, digital activism offers a platform for everyday nationalism for political resistance.

Lastly, in Chapter Five, I discussed the boundary-making processes for membership in the Hong Kong nation. I argue that different actors continuously challenge the boundaries of the inclusiveness of the Hong Kong nation. Both South Asians and new Mainland Chinese immigrants have participated in the Anti-ELAB movement as the subaltern, but South Asians

have been more successful in negotiating the boundaries of membership of the nation than the new immigrants. For the South Asians, the water initiative and Chungking Mansion tours have successfully "WeConnected" them with the majority Hong Kongers. As subalterns, they 'spoke up' by singing songs and chanting the same slogans as the movement, making the majority accept them as a part of the imagined community. As the South Asians care little about the yellow/blue divide in the population, they have also redrawn the boundaries of inclusivity and inserted duality in identities as a possible group in the Hong Kong nation. However, the new immigrants face more considerable obstacles in eradicating former prejudice in their community. Since Hong Kongers have collapsed all mainlanders into the same group of people, the new immigrants have to work even harder to prove themselves and demonstrate that they are willing to assimilate and adopt the same civic values and beliefs as the majority population. As the Hong Kong national identity has been constructed in opposition to the Chinese identity in order to distinguish itself from Mainland China, the dualism in Hong Kong and Chinese identity will remain an eternal struggle for the new immigrants in Hong Kong.

For a final note, this study has heavily focused on qualitative methods as the research methodology. Qualitative methods rely more on observation and interpretation of results. While semi-structured interviews were carried out, the limited sample size serves mostly as a supplement to the research. The main body still comes from the discourse analysis of textual and visual content. While there are studies that survey people's self-identification of choosing between the Hong Kong and Chinese identity, there is no existing study investigating why one views itself as part of the Hong Kong national community, especially within the year of the Anti-ELAB movement. In the long-run, the investigation on national identification would require the support of quantitative data. Additionally, the coronavirus outbreak also limited the opportunity of going to Hong Kong for field observation of the movement. The first-person experience is preferred to investigate the subtle, mundane practices of everyday nationalism. A more vigorous methodology would be preferred.

7.1 Future Avenues of Research

Over the year, the Anti-ELAB movement has offered a tremendous amount of resources for new avenues of research into Hong Kong identity. This thesis has only taken 'snapshots' of the whole movement, picking events that are of significance for analysis into the nature and membership of Hong Kong nationalism. Hong Kong nationalism, however, has more

dimensions to it. Although it falls outside the purview of this thesis, one of the most important aspects is the intersection of nationalism with class. For Hong Kong's social movements, the middle class forms the backbone as the promoter of civic beliefs and values. In particular, professionals, such as academics, teachers, lawyers, social workers, and the media, have played a significant role in civil society. In the interview with Professor Mathews, he reminds us that there has been an evident change in mentality within the middle class over the course of the year. Instead of only pursuing good jobs and comfortable lives, the middle class will now think twice about the values which pertain to living in Hong Kong (Mathews 2020, personal communication).

On the other hand, elites and the local businessmen, or the bourgeois in general, are in the pro-Beijing camp. Through the "administrative absorption of politics" (Kim 1975), where the government attracts talent and absorbs the elites into the establishment, the bourgeois have become Beijing collaborators in Hong Kong. Beijing, the Hong Kong government, the pro-establishment lawmakers, property tycoons, and other elites are all in the same boat, forming a tight interest group to ensure Hong Kong is governed in favour of Beijing's interests as well as their own. The people that have joined the establishment have done so regardless of race and ethnicity; South Asian religious leaders and wealthy tycoons sit cheek by jowl, with equally conservative political stances. As we might expect, the ruling elites and the bourgeois are generally against the Anti-ELAB movement.

There are only a few businessmen who have spoken up to show sympathy with the protesters. One of them is Ricky Wong, a telecom and media entrepreneur, who positions himself as a centrist. He has openly criticised the Hong Kong government for forcing the extradition bill and urged the government to retract the bill in order to restore social harmony (Stand News 2019). He also went to CUHK, his alma mater, during the university siege and urged the students and alumni to protect the campus (Appledaily 2019). Another person is Li Ka Shing, the richest property tycoon in the city, whose company posted advertisements on newspapers and attached a Chinese idiom "黃台之瓜，何堪再摘" during the earlier stages of the movement (BBC Chinese 2019). The moral of the idiom is that the people in power should not persecute their own family, and some have speculated that Li wanted to hint that the Hong Kong government should not persecute those that came out to protest, even though he is against violence in the street protests. Both businessmen were also active in ensuring mask supplies during shortages in the coronavirus outbreak. Consequently, Li and Wong were perceived as 'yellow ribbons,' - 'real' Hong Kongers that care about society.

As the analysis in Chapter Five indicates, the yellow/blue dichotomy does not fully encompass who is a 'genuine' Hong Konger and therefore fully included as a member of the Hong Kong nation. Although Li and Wong are sympathetic to the younger generations coming out to safeguard their city, they are not necessarily 'companions' that are part of the imagined community. Most importantly, they are part of the massive interest group that had led to the economic disparities in Hong Kong, especially Li and his conglomerate. Unlike the approach advocated in the book Hong Kong Nationalism, where Brian Leung envisioned strategies for achieving distributive justice in Hong Kong, most protesters were too focused on how to defeat the regime and rarely addressed questions on class antagonisms. Again, the intersection between race and nation will require further investigation, possibly through survey data.

Another direction that may merit greater investigation is that of Hong Kong diasporic nationalism. Overseas diasporas, including students, workers, and Hong Kongers living overseas, are crucial in sustaining the momentum of the movement. Drawing on the experiences of the Umbrella Movement, the local Hong Kongers were already careful to create appealing images for the international audience at the early stages of the movement. The internationalisation of the protest required talents to translate the messages of the protests to other countries and their governments. Likewise, as these diasporas cannot head to their hometown and directly participate in the street protests, they found alternative ways to contribute to the movement. Many of these participants had never met before in the same country, or even in the same city. Gradually, the movement has built a massively interconnected network of overseas diasporas, including students, workers, and Hong Kongers living overseas to raise attention among international audiences. Those diasporas conduct lobbying to pressure foreign governments to speak out in favour of Hong Kong's situation (Ku 2020). Most importantly, they equally performed the bodily practices of everyday nationalism overseas, producing, circulating, and utilising user-generated content to spread consciousness and resulting in the crystallisation a Hong Kong national identity. The overseas diasporas that support the movement are thus called "海外手足," meaning overseas companions. Hence, the Internet is able to keep a stateless nation alive.

While overseas diasporas fulfill the definition of Anderson's imagined community - "members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1983: 6) - given their physical distance away from Hong Kong, we may argue that

Hong Kong is no longer a place-based identity. Given the harsher political environments in Hong Kong, once again, the political situation has triggered an emigration mentality among the population. Some protesters have even sought asylum overseas, in places such as Taiwan and Germany. This time, however, people are discussing the possibilities of abandoning the current Hong Kong and building a new Hong Kong overseas which is free from Beijing's control. Hong Kongers realise that Beijing will never give in to the phenomenon of having Hong Kongers diverging from the official national narrative. A Hong Kong nation and Chinese land are mutually exclusive concepts. In fact, for Beijing, using the notion of culturally-defined Chinese, even if one has emigrated to another country, he/she is still Chinese by blood and ancestry. Indeed, 'nation' is more about people and less about the territory, yet without a defined territory, the political reality makes it difficult for an identity to be sustained. Can the Hong Kong nation sustain itself without a defined territory? At the current time, perhaps we require a terminology other than that of 'nation' to encapsulate the exceptional characteristics of the Hong Kong identity.

Hong Kong nationalism is a product of Chinese oppression. As long as Chinese oppression exists, Hong Kong nationalism will be present to resist the pressure of official Chinese nationalism and mobilise around the same identity for the struggle of democracy. As Jusdanis (2001) reminds us, "the undertaking to build nations is an autonomous process that seeks to unify a particular people in a hostile world, to give them a realm of emotional attachments in the face of continuing change, and, above all, to propel them on a path of progress" (Jusdanis 2001, p.5). It is an unending process of social construction. The social construction of Hong Kong's imagined community will therefore continue to go through continuous processes of refinement and renegotiation.

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Maps, Graphs, and Figures

Map 1: Hong Kong's location in China
Available at: https://www.chinahighlights.com/hong-kong/map.htm [Accessed 10/06/20]

Map 2: Map of Hong Kong
Available at: https://www.britannica.com/place/Hong-Kong [Accessed 10/06/20]

Graph 1: Self-perception of Hong Kong-China identity between years 1997-2019 Available at:
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Figure A: QR codes for *Animal Crossing* related to the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests Available at: https://lihkg.com/thread/1965194/page/1 [Accessed 02 May 2020]

Figure B: In-game content in *Animal Crossing* related to the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests. Available at: https://wired.jp/2020/04/23/animal-crossing-hong-kong-protests-coronavirus/ [Accessed 23 April 2020]

Figure 1: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from: https://gnews.org/zh-hant/127643/ [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 2: 我們由2019開始的夢遊, Image downloaded from:

https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=光復香港 &gallery_id=4992&image_id=9341[Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 3: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=遊行
&gallery_id=12951&image_id=22183 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 4: "Our Vantage" by Harcourt Romanticist,
Image downloaded from: https://www.instagram.com/p/B2EQ1FPnDh1/?hl=en [Accessed
10 April 2020]

Figure 5: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=光復香港
&gallery_id=7605&image_id=14295 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 6: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=自由
&gallery_id=2792&image_id=5273 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 7: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=自由
&gallery_id=1778&image_id=3510 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 8: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=自由
&gallery_id=5777&image_id=10940 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 9: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=光復香港
&gallery_id=15967&image_id=27162 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 10: Untitled Artwork: Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=獅子山
&gallery_id=3749&image_id=7141 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 11: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=光復香港
&gallery_id=14861&image_id=25286 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 12: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.facebook.com/WhatsCarHK/services/?service_id=2926044940843909
[Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 13: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from: https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=中共 &gallery_id=5291&image_id=10005 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 14: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from: https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=中共 &gallery_id=1259&image_id=2529 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 15: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from: https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=梁烈士 &gallery_id=20639&image_id=33598 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 16: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from: https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=義士 &gallery_id=19204&image_id=31860 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 17: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from: https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=光復香港 &gallery_id=21246&image_id=34491 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 18: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from: https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=聖誕 &gallery_id=12946&image_id=22176 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 19: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from: https://twitter.com/cheriechancy/status/1169201102245552128 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 20: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from: https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=梁烈士 &gallery_id=21284&image_id=34564 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 21: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from: https://lihkg.com/thread/1783171/page/1 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 22: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from: https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=六四 &gallery_id=14910&image_id=25396 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 23: Untitled Artwork,  Image downloaded from: https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=六四 &gallery_id=11282&image_id=19649 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 24: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=六四
&gallery_id=9131&image_id=16332 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 25: Untitled Artwork for Airport Protests, Image downloaded from:
https://lihkg.com/thread/1433989/page/1 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 26: Untitled Artwork for Hong Kong Road
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=823&gallery_id=134&image_id=249

Figure 27: Untitled Artwork for 和你唱, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=和你唱
&gallery_id=5470&image_id=10186 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 28: Untitled Artwork for District Council Elections, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=選舉
&gallery_id=10597&image_id=18489 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 29: Untitled Artwork for District Council Elections Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=選舉
&gallery_id=11082&image_id=19360 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 30: Untitled Artwork for District Council Elections, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=區議會
&gallery_id=11348&image_id=19746 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 31: Untitled Declaration in Chinese, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=重慶大廈
&gallery_id=4264&image_id=8080 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 32: Untitled Declaration in different languages, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=南亞
&gallery_id=4265&image_id=8081 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 33: Untitled Declaration, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=南亞
&gallery_id=4194&image_id=7961

Figure 34: Untitled Declaration, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=重慶大廈
&gallery_id=4257&image_id=8065 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 35: Untitled Zine, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=清真寺
&gallery_id=4619&image_id=8733 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 36: Untitled Zine, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=清真寺
&gallery_id=5335&image_id=9957 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 37: Untitled Zine Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=清真寺
&gallery_id=4524&image_id=8564 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 38: Untitled Zine Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=清真寺
&gallery_id=4523&image_id=8563 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 39: Untitled Zine, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=清真寺
&gallery_id=4525&image_id=8566 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 40: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=mosque&gallery_id=4826&image_id
=9060 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 41: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=清真寺
&gallery_id=4584&image_id=8662 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 42: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=南亞
&gallery_id=5182&image_id=9715 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 43: Untitled Artwork, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=清真寺
&gallery_id=4582&image_id=8660 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 44: Untitled Notice for Chungking Mansions Day, Image downloaded from:
https://lihkg.com/thread/1664383/page/5 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 45: Untitled Notice for Chungking Mansions Day, Image downloaded from:
https://hk.appledaily.com/breaking/20191025/UVH5SHMTZDXPA7LRTICYF6N3KU/

Figure 46: Untitled Notice for 和你唱, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=重慶大廈
&gallery_id=4801&image_id=9029 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 47: Untitled Notice for Chungking Mansions Day. Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=南亞
&gallery_id=4980&image_id=9274 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Figure 48: Zine made by Jeffrey Andrews, Image downloaded from:
https://www.collaction.hk/lab/extradition_gallery?tag=南亞
&gallery_id=4949&image_id=9273 [Accessed 10 April 2020]

Appendix One: Zines



Figure 1: Untitled Artwork



Figure 2: 我們由 2019 開始的夢遊

Figure 3: Untitled Artwork


Figure 4: "Our Vantage" by Harcourt Romanticist



Figure 5: Untitled Artwork
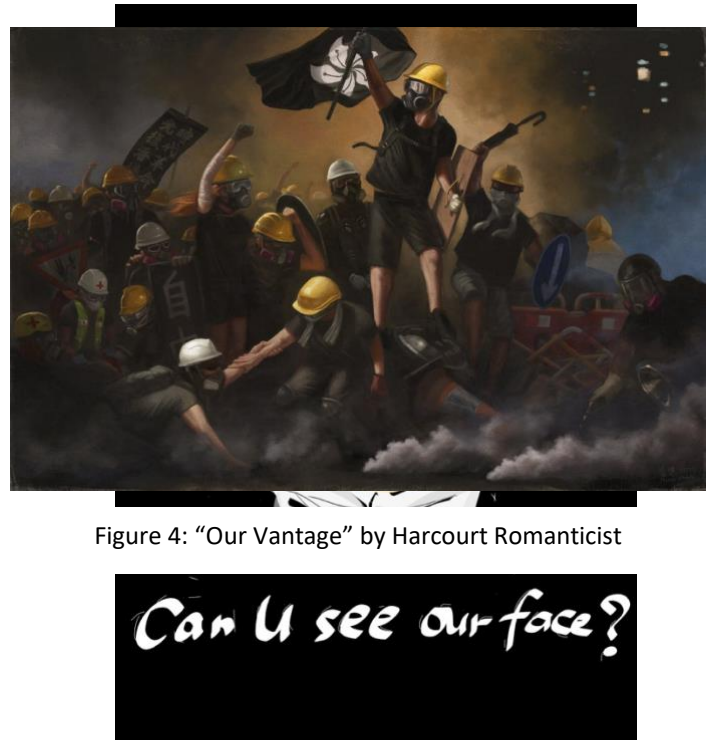
Figure 6: Untitled Artwork
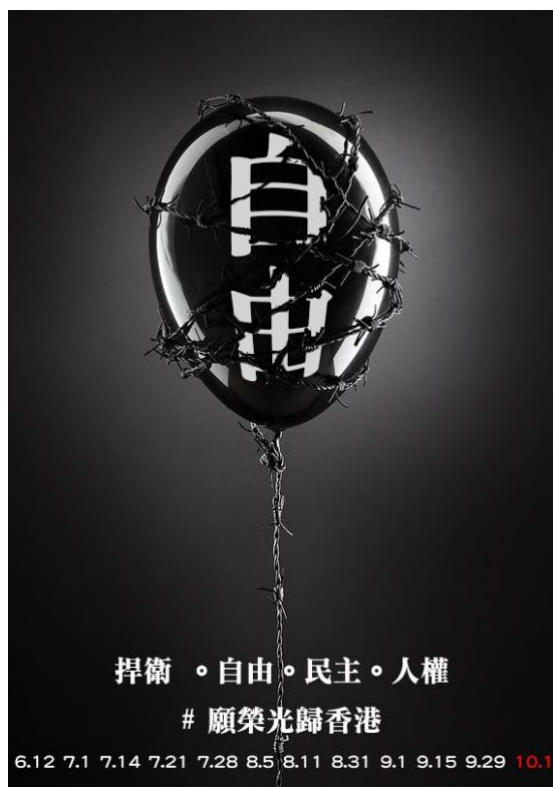
Figure 7: Untitled Artwork



Figure 8: Untitled Artwork

Figure 9: Untitled Artwork
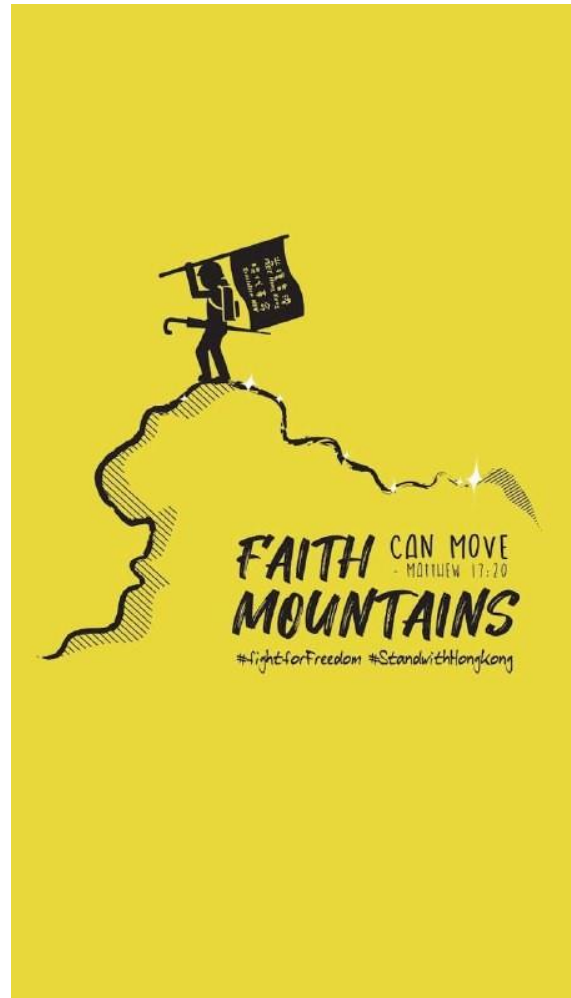


Figure 10: Untitled Artwork



Figure 11: Untitled Artwork



Figure 12

Figure 13: Untitled Artwork
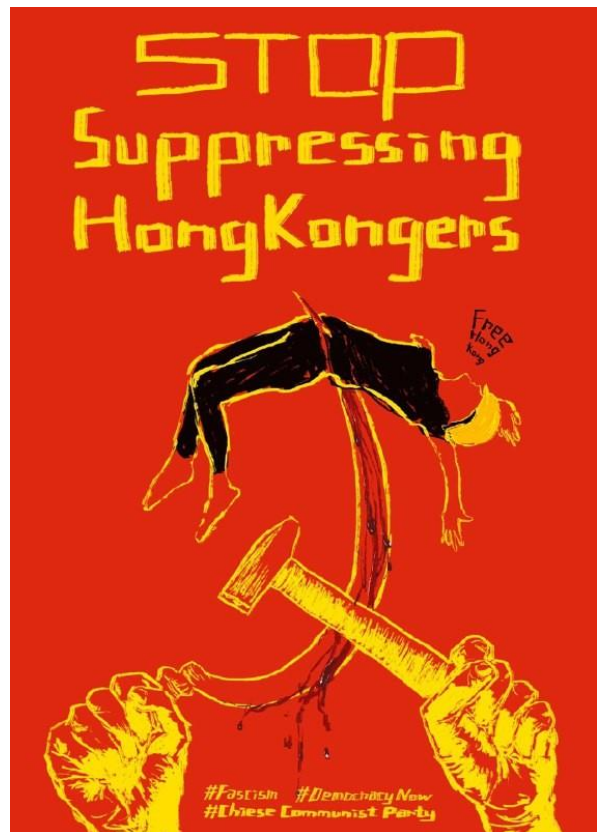


Figure 14: Untitled Artwork



Figure 15: Untitled Artwork



Figure 16: Untitled Artwork

Figure 17: Untitled Artwork



Figure 18: Untitled Artwork



Figure 19: Untitled Artwork
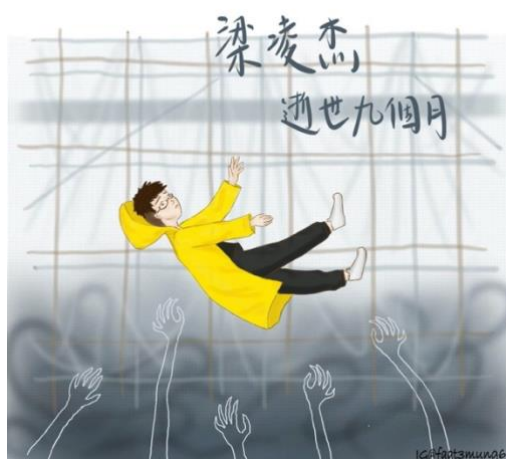


Figure 20: Untitled Artwork

Figure 21: Untitled Artwork



Figure 22: Untitled Artwork



Figure 23: Untitled Artwork



Figure 24: Untitled Artwork

Figure 25: Untitled Artwork for Airport Protests
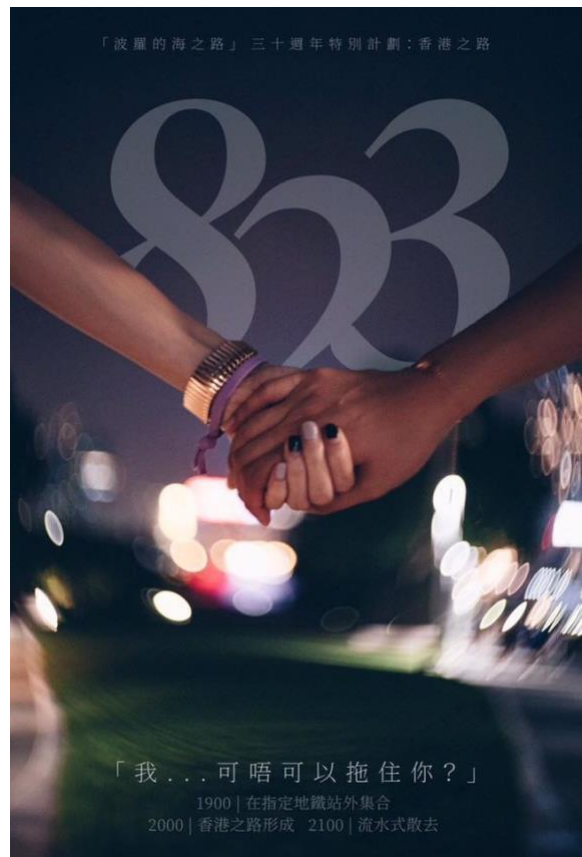


Figure 26: Untitled Artwork for Hong Kong Road



Figure 27: Untitled Artwork for 和你唱



Figure 28: Untitled Artwork for District Council Elections

Figure 29: Untitled Artwork for District Council Elections



Figure 30: Untitled Artwork for District Council Elections

Figure 31: Untitled Declaration in Chinese



Figure 32: Untitled Declaration in different languages



Figure 33: Untitled Declaration



Figure 34: Untitled Declaration

Figure 35: Untitled Zine



Figure 36: Untitled Zine

Figure 37: Untitled Zine



Figure 38: Untitled Zine
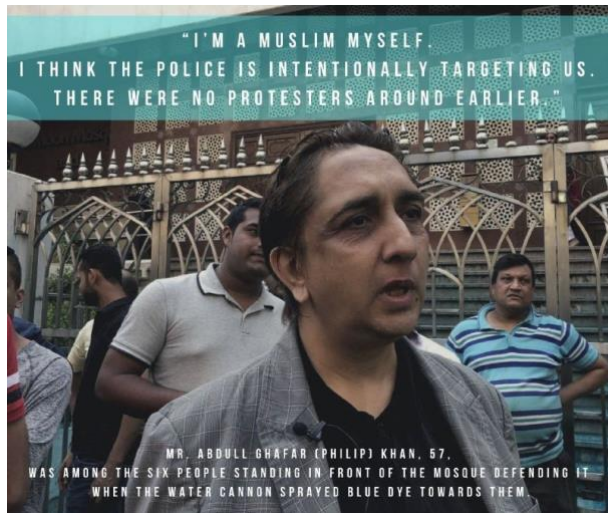


Figure 39: Untitled Zine

Figure 40: Untitled Artwork



Figure 41: Untitled Artwork


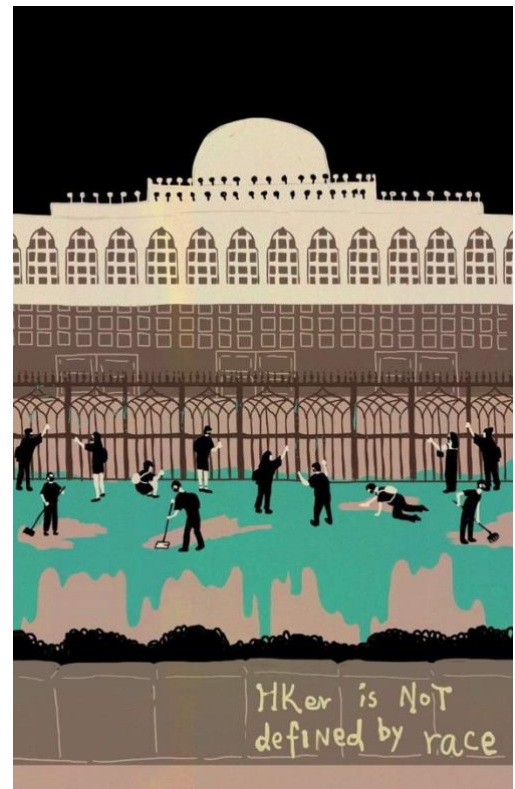
Figure 42: Untitled Artwork



Figure 43: Untitled Artwork

Figure 44: Untitled Notice
for Chungking Mansions Day



Figure 45: Untitled Notice for
Chungking Mansions Day



Figure 46: Untitled Notice for 和你唱



Figure 47: Untitled Notice for
Chungking Mansions Day

Figure 48: Zine made by Jeffrey Andrews

# Appendix Three: Interview Transcript for Jeffrey Andrews

*Interviewer: Gabriel Lei*

*Interviewee: Jeffrey Andrews*

*Language: English*

*Date: April 7, 2020*

*Venue: Facebook Messenger call*

*Attendees: GL = Gabriel Lei (Interviewer), JA = Jeffrey Andrews (Interviewee)*

[Interview starts]

GL: Thank you for conducting this interview. Before I get into the details of asking you about your thoughts on the social movement, I would first like to know more a bit about you and your experience. So, the first question is, as Hong Kong's first registered ethnic minority social worker, what kind of difficulties did you experience along the way?

JA: In Hong Kong, there are NGOs that specifically serve ethnic minorities, but none of them have our own people. Having the same cultural background helps in dealing with the cultural sensitivities. To be a social worker in Hong Kong, you have to pass both spoken and written Chinese. For most of us, we can speak Cantonese perfectly fine, but it is challenging for us to write in Chinese. It was a huge policy error and mistake. Here, I really wanted to thank Fermi Wong because it was her that sent a lot of letters to the institution, hoping that English proficiency could be an equivalent and sufficient prove of ability. My case then loosened up the bureaucracy of specifically requiring written and spoken Chinese for becoming a social worker. Now, there are more than 10 social workers that are of ethnic minority background.

GL: In an SCMP article that I have read, you mentioned that you experienced an identity crisis. If you were to rate yourself by an arbitrary, relative number, how Indian are you and how 'Heunggongyan' are you? And Why?

JA: A very good question. If I got asked this question 20 years ago, I can tell you that I was very confused. But for now, I definitely say that I am a Heunggongyan because of the experiences that I have gone through in Hong Kong. For ethnic minorities, it is very tough for people to get a sense of Hong Kong identity, and most people did not buy into the Hong Kong identity before due to the low community acceptance. Maybe for the last 10 years the government policies had made ethnic minorities more visible in policy debates, but people use to think that all ethnic minorities are immigrants and are just in Hong Kong work and leave.

GL: Now we move on to some question about the participation of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong's civil society. From your observation, has ethnic minorities been active members of Hong Kong's civil society and its social movements? For what reason they are/aren't active?

JA: Again, it is a good question. In the past, ethnic minorities were not that involved, because we are not even sure what is our role in society. We used to get a sense from people in Hong Kong that "these people are foreigners" but no, we are born and raised in Hong Kong. For the 7.1 protests we usually are there but not really for other protests. But there was a big change since 2014. We took an active role in the Umbrella Movement because we believed that we got to step up and protect our home. We need to safeguard the Hong Kong values because it is important to us as well. I believe it was the watershed moment of us stepping up and starting to engage in media and dialogue for the participation of ethnic minorities in social movements. Also, we worked hard to do policy submissions. It took a bit of time to learn how all things work because we were not sure how the system stuff. It was definitely a slow learning curve. The District Council was also an unprecedented moment. I would never imagine I would see that that election results. I called everyone I know and told them to register as an electorate and vote on the elections. Many of them were first time voters. For the first time, Philip Khan also represented the ethnic minorities to participate in the elections as well, as you might aware.

GL: How and in what ways ethnic minorities understand the cultural symbols of the social movement?

JA: LIHKG was fantastic and I can see there are lot more English efforts to connect us with the Cantonese speaking majority. I believe the new generation of Hong Kongers wanted to make it inclusive and unity. Before you have to prove that you are part of the community.

GL: What is your own interpretation on the protest slogan 光復香港，時代革命?

JA: I think it is about reclaiming the old Hong Kong. It is about what we knew about the city and the ability that we are in control of our own destiny, about collective unity and respecting liberal values. We should fight for it until the system is fixed and reclaimed in a just way, through elections or social movements. The older generations say that the people are idealistic on the democracy, but I do not necessarily agree. The term "Hong Konger" has a very unique position where everyone can claim to be a Hong Konger if they believe in the same set of values. Even refugees can also claim that they are a Hong Konger. It is like the American dream but not just economically, it is much more than how the Americans has framed it. If Hong Kong fails then there seems to be no hope for the world for democracy and liberty. Now is the time for a value change in society.

GL: What made you to decide to join in the social movement on the day of Kowloon protest, and how did you initially come up with the idea of organising the tours for people to visit the Chungking Mansions? How did you advertise the event and through what means? Was there anything memorable that you have experienced on that day?

JA: I have been following on the updates of the protest and I heard that Jimmy got beaten up. I checked what people were saying on social media about people who wanted to take

revenge for Jimmy. Ethnic minorities are always being labelled and blamed on for crime, but this time it was serious. It was the first time where the people in the Chungking Mansion was scared of the hatred on the internet. People were planning to close the shops for the Kowloon Protest, fearing that they would get targeted. So I thought that we could actually do something to solve the crisis. We decided to visit Jimmy in the hospital. Even we didn't do anything wrong, but I thought it was good to pass our greeting to him. Later, the Civil Human Rights Front invited us to lead the Kowloon march. It was a huge honour because it may be the first time that ethnic minorities lead the march. We also wanted contribute to the solidarity of the movement. Unfortunately, the march was not given permission and we rejected the offer as I do not want to expose people to an illegal march, especially for their first time. Threats still existed, so we changed our plans and agreed that "lets stand outside Chungking and give out snacks and water bottles." Luckily, it turned out greatly during the protest. The act of giving out water went absolutely viral. Of course, the risk was still there, but it was the most intense moment of solidarity that I ever felt. I believed that history had been made. Many Hong Kong people were shouting "Thank you" to us. As you are also aware that the protest that day ended up with the mosque being dyed blue by the water cannons. So, we decided to hold some tours in hoping that more local can appreciate the qualities of the Chungking Mansions and ethnic diversity. It is not just a place to go and eat curry. I heard reviews that people wanted to 'punish' us and I was a bit confused [laughs] like why would they want to punish us when we are doing good? My Hong Kong friends then explained to me that to 'punish' is to support by consumption. On the day, I was shocked by the numbers. Some of the shop owners told me that they had opened the shop for more than 15, 30 years and they have not seen so many locals in the Chungking. The power of people is so remarkable. It was so popular that we continued the tours up until the coronavirus, but we heard from deaf and blind groups that they want to do the tours, kindergarten that they want to do the tours. It is a service that we would want to continue to do.

GL: So, you do feel that ethnic minorities are part of the Hong Kong identity?

JA: We believe in the same Hong Kong spirit as you all do, but I can see that it's slowly degrading. The extradition bill can also affect us as ethnic minorities as well because of the issues of passports. I think we need to be visible in the society and be part of the movement, protecting the unique, vibrant, metropolis city. We need to be there and it's so important for us to do so. For the election, I have been calling everyone to register and to vote, messaging everyone that I know. People in this district used to be pro-DAB but we got a change now.

GL: To what extent do you agree there is a fundamental change within Hong Kongers in attitudes toward ethnic minorities? Is it just temporary strategy or could it be permanent?

JA: Yes, I believe there is a complete change in attitudes and perception. I have seen a lot of young people really actually came in to see the building and not just come to eat curry. They would look around and explore the different floors of the building and talk to people around. A few days ago, we were actually giving out masks outside Chungking as well. Ethnic minorities can also help others in society. Of course, there is no better moment to participate in the LegCo elections if ethnic minorities want to step up to the mainstream

society. Even for the District Council Elections, there are people that actually voted for Philip Khan and giving him a chance to prove that minorities to also lead the district.

GL: What can ethnic minorities do to sustain their membership as part of the Hong Kong nation?

JA: I believe ethnic minorities need to play an active role. This includes being more attentive with the news, voting and civic participation, social responsibility, and learn the language better. Minorities should do a bit more and integrate better. Now we have civil servants that are ethnic minorities and having a department that deals with ethnic issues. A lot of first generations they are part of the British army and policing, but these histories are not reflected in the education curriculum. I am just pointing out that for locals not to have double standards. Why do white expats have more respect and ethnic minorities do not? We are always lacking of people of stepping up to fight for our own rights when in the past we need others to help us voice our opinions.

GL: Ok this is the end of my questions. Thank you so much once again for taking this interview. If I get to come back to Hong Kong later in the year, lets hang out and tour me around as well.

JA: Sure. Let's keep in touch.

[End of interview]

# Appendix Four: Interview Transcript for Gordon Mathews

*Interviewer: Gabriel Lei*

*Interviewee: Professor Gordon Mathews*

*Language: English*

*Date: April 7, 2020*

*Venue: Skype call*

*Attendees: GL = Gabriel Lei (Interviewer), GM = Gordon Mathews (Interviewee)*

[Interview starts]

GL: Good afternoon Professor. Thank you for conducting this interview. Do you want to take a look at the questions beforehand?

GM: It's okay, just ask your questions here and make sure you're ok with the recording.

GL: Ok then. I will start by asking the question that in your opinion, what has been the crucial element or turning point that had made more people, including academics, to discuss Hong Kong nationalism. In your point of view, is there evidence of Hong Kong nationalism in practice?

GM: First of all, how do you define civic nationalism yourself?

GL: I define civic nationalism by emphasising that anyone that believes in the same values and are willing to safeguard those values as someone that is part of a civic nation.

GM: Okay. That's fine. I would say that Hong Kong people have gone through a process to learn to love the country, but its Hong Kong that they had learnt to love, and not China. In China, there is a mix between patriotism and nationalism. It is something that Hong Kong people have not come to believe that it is true.

GL: Many scholars like Amitai Etzioni has mentioned that Hong Kong is in the development of civic nationalism. If civic nationalism is the model for Hong Kong nationalism, how is it different from other nations that base their nation on the notion of civic nationalism?

GM: Amitai Etzioni is a great scholar and I'm sure that he has his viewpoints on the topic itself. I believe Hong Kong's civic nationalism is not defined by the state but by the people themselves. It is starkly different to how China defines nationalism. China does not have an active civil society and it does not allow foreign NGOs to operate. It has an NGO law to regulate domestic NGOs. The Chinese government will not allow the development civic nationalism under the China. I don't know how long does it go for Hong Kong nationalism,

but I am surprised that Hong Kong nationalism came to its form. Back in the 2000s, I predicted that Hong Kong identity will die out when Hong Kong assimilates into Mainland China. I expected Hong Kong to be more Chinese, but I was wrong.

GL: In your book on "Learning to Belong to a Nation," you described Hong Kong's market-based national identity as "patriotism of the rational.' From your observation, does this framework still apply in today's time-space?

GM: I think the rule still follows. There is still this ongoing mindset that people will choose to emigrate if Hong Kong is no longer 'livable.' The influence is still more on the market than on the state. But as I just said, Hong Kong people were taught to learn to love a country, but people has learnt to love Hong Kong and not China. The movement has gained more traction and much more of the population are willing to support the protest because people view themselves as part of a bigger political community.

GL: So, applying Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities," if there is a Hong Kong nation, who is included and excluded from this imaginary construct? Where and how the boundary is drawn to segregate the insiders/outsiders?

GM: You should read an article that I have written in Critique of Anthropology and China Perspectives.

[Door knock]

GM: Come in. Sorry Gabriel, can we pause for a moment?

GL: Okay.

[Interruption by another student]

GM: Sorry, where was I? Yes. The definition of a Hong Konger has fundamentally changed over time. The general assumption in the past is that Hong Kong is defined by ethnic identity. You can see these characteristics from the lamenting for the Tiananmen Square Incident. Clearly, the whole commemoration is for the Chinese. There was only Cantonese and Mandarin spoken in the ceremony. In the language setting, it isn't really for foreigners that don't speak the language.

The changes in the conception of identity has changed so rapidly in the few years. There was a turn from an ethnic to a civic emphasis on identity. At the start of the Umbrella Movement, I asked Chan Kin Man whether I should participate in the movement. Chan Kin Man said yes and he think it was ok to join. I was flooded also with private messages. Those from Hong Kong said "Of course you should join. You're a Hong Konger." I also have friends that are from Mainland China. Although they were sympathetic to the movement, they said, "Do not join. You will be seen by the Chinese government as a foreign agitator." There is this contrasting perspective from the people in Hong Kong and Mainland Chinese on who should be part of wider society.

I think the narrative now has changed from anyone but the Mainland Chinese. I teach a class of asylum seekers and young Hong Kong activists also occasionally attend. Not long ago, a Pakistani asylum seeker asked an activist, "Can I become a Hongkonger?" "Of course!" the activist replied. "We need people like you in Hong Kong!" "Can I become a Hongkonger?" an asylum seeker from East Africa then asked. "Of course!" the activist responded. "We need people like you in Hong Kong!" Then a mainland Chinese student attending the class asked, "Can I be a Hongkonger?" The activist hesitated about the answer.

GL: Yes, this story rings some bells. I think I saw this post in the South China Morning Post article.

GM: [laugh] Then I might saying the same stuff over and over again. But you get my point. I used to think it was language that defines the us and them in society. People would need to speak fluent Cantonese to be included in the membership. Twenty years ago, when I started teaching here in CUHK, some of the students were not that used to foreign teaching staff and would alien me and start talking in smaller groups. But it has been changing. Now, I am like a minor celebrity as an old, white professor. They do not treat me as a foreign outsider. They wanted to talk to me and know more about me. As a white person in Hong Kong, I am considered as an expat, and that gives me more privilege. But that term is not used for ethnic minorities or the asylum seekers. The perception is still changing though. I have got a friend that is an asylum seeker from Africa and when he goes to play basketball at the courts, people use to run away from him. Now, he's like a local celebrity. People wanted to be involved with him and invited him to play basketball with him.

GL: From your observation, has ethnic minorities been active members of Hong Kong's civil society and its social movements? For what reason they are or aren't active?

GM: When we talk about ethnic minorities, there are different groups under the same label. South Asians are a slightly different group. The Africans in Hong Kong are asylum seekers so automatically they have to be civic in nature. There is more appreciation now than before on the ethnic minorities. Again, its shifting, but I don't fully understand the mechanism that is changing in place.

It used to be that national identity was not trained in Hong Kong. The movement, however, made the Hong Kong identity apparent. The resistance is carried out quite smartly. The emphasis of the movement is that Hong Kongers wanted to preserve Hong Kong. Hong Kong values is also really being a middle class. People used to opt for the stable path of getting a good job and that's it. Now, people think twice of what your values are in living in Hong Kong. It is not just about getting a good job, but also about promoting Hong Kong values.

GL: How and in what ways ethnic minorities understand the repertoires of the social movement?

GM: The South Asians actively participated in the movement and shown support for the protest. On the day of the protest, how surreal it was! They started singing protest songs and cheered for the protests. For Chungking Mansion and that constituency, it used to be in the hand of DAB. It was a conservative constituency. The day of giving out snacks and water

154

was organised by Christian Action, which is more liberal and would be more active in participation. But for many people that I know in Chungking, they were not really the ones that go out to the protests. Some are not really interested in Hong Kong because they just come here to make money. Even for some of them that have stayed here long enough, they are not intrinsically interested in getting their kids to be educated in Hong Kong. They can't really be civil servants in Hong Kong because do not speak Cantonese well enough. But again, it's changing, and more people are aware of the things going on in society.

GL: To what extent do you agree there is a fundamental change within Hong Kongers in attitudes toward ethnic minorities? Is it just temporary strategy or could it be permanent?

I think it's more than just a strategic alliance. We have the incident on Jimmy Shum and the Mosque being painted blue by the water cannons. There is solidarity seen from the events. On the other hand, some ethnic minorities still don't see Hong Kong as home. Some merchants in Chungking lived have lived in Hong Kong for many years, yet they don't know much about Hong Kong. They have greater association to the place that they were born, even if they have not been there. How about the ABCs (American born Chinese) and CBCs (Canadian born Chinese)? A lot of them look like the same as Hong Kongers but they are culturally distinct from Hong Kong. I just wanted to pointed out that the wall is not that distinct.

GL: In your article saying that South Asians and Africans are no longer the 'others' but the Mainland Chinese. What does that indicate for the inclusivity of Hong Kong's civic nationalism?

GM: The inclusivity of the membership depends a lot on how people behave. Many new immigrants are fluent Cantonese speakers and they do not really experience problems in daily life. Some South Asians too speak fluent Cantonese, but by colour they do seem like outsiders.

I don't think Hong Kong will be inclusive. They dislike the Chinese more than the English, even if they have the same language abilities. I don't think discrimination is so much of an institutional problem but about the daily interactions of people. There is this ongoing prejudice that the Chinese government is trying to destroy Hong Kong and the influx of new immigrants to Hong Kong are part of the plan. But they are benign and would just want to live in Hong Kong. The ones that I'm mainly dealing with are the MA students here in CUHKs and they are the liberal ones from Mainland China. It might not be an accurate representation of the whole picture. Some elements of Hong Kong civic nationalism, I think, is the fear of being part of Mainland.

GL: As a prediction, how will the Hong Kong nationalism discourse evolve in the future? Will there be any other alternative political imagination for Hong Kong as a nation?

GM: Well, I am not going to make another prediction as I was wrong the last time [laugh]. It should not fit in perfectly. Nationhood should indicate the loss of life and there are collective memories on the tragedy. If there is considerable loss of life during the protest, like 20 people died from protest, then probably yes there is a strong national consciousness.

Worldwide, democracy is tarnished for other places. The world looks at Hong Kong from idealistic eyes and might have cynicism if Hong Kong can achieve democracy from the hand of Beijing. I have to say that people in Hong Kong held it really, really strongly. Unless China becomes democratic, otherwise it is going to be a continuous problem of having a Hong Kong nation resisting the Chinese government.

GL: Ok this is the end of my questions. Thank you so much once again for taking this interview.

GM: No worries. Do you mind if you can send me a copy of a version of your thesis when you're finished with it?

GL: Absolutely. I'll send you a copy of my thesis maybe around mid-May. I have to hand it in by then.

GM: May? You don't really have a lot of time left.

GL: Yes, well I already writing up the research so it should be fine.

GM: Alright. Keep in touch.

[End of interview]

# Appendix Five: Interview Transcript for Vivek Mahbubani

*Interviewer: Gabriel Lei*

*Interviewee: Vivek Mahbubani*

*Language: English*

*Date: April 10, 2020*

*Venue: Facebook Messenger call*

*Attendees: GL = Gabriel Lei (Interviewer), VM = Vivek Mahbubani (Interviewee)*

[Start of Interview]

GL: Thank you for conducting this interview. Before I get into the details of asking you about your thoughts on the social movement, I would first like to know more a bit about you and your experience. Why did you want to become a comedian and what were the difficulties that you experienced along the way?

VM: I enjoyed sit-com and watching these shows since I was a kid. I then developed an interest and wanted to try stand-up comedy, something cool that I can do one day. Then there was a competition so I thought why not give it a shot and just try it. Luckily, I won the competition and I suppose it was the moment that transferred from a hobby to a profession that I wanted to do. The market is not that big in Hong Kong, as comedy is kind of new in Asia. But there is funny stuff in Asia as well. It is just that comedy in Cantonese was so unheard of and people aren't really aware of the culture. So, I decided to do something new and bring this culture to Hong Kong.

GL: How did you understand the subtleties of Hong Kong culture in the first place?

VM: English comedy is different and it cannot be directly translated into Cantonese. It's just a matter of trial and error and see what are the reaction of the audience. In other countries, you can joke with the audience and its totally fine. In Hong Kong, you cannot randomly pick on someone and play with that guy, because the audience just doesn't know how to react. It about learning to blend in the culture, not just making insulting jokes but to make a good laugh. And it's not just about taking materials from hot topics, for example '三萬 thx' and probably people will laugh but it's not that novel. My jokes usually comes from the small habits and laughing about the general life living in Hong Kong, not able to catch the bus and those sort of giggles when you think back in life.

GL: Have you ever experienced an identity crisis? If you were to rate yourself by an arbitrary, relative number, how Indian are you and how Heunggongyan are you? Why?

VM: I would say using race to label one's identity is quite old fashioned. I believe that being a Hong Konger is not about race but the Hong Kong mentality, the '香港精神.' Why is it not possible to have a dual identity? My Indian roots and the Hong Kong mentality run in parallel.

GL: From your observation, has ethnic minorities been active members of Hong Kong's civil society and its social movements? For what reason they are/aren't active?

VM: Yes and No. Ethnic minorities have been in Hong Kong for a long time and have participated in various fields of civil services. But after the Handover, the government is more pro-Chinese in culture. You see, ethnic 'minorities' [emphasis] as a label makes people feel detached and outcasted. It makes people feel being left out which meant that policies are for the majority people. In Hong Kong, there is a weird intermix generation, where a lot of them have been in Hong Kong long enough but are not born here. Sometimes they feel that they cannot contribute to the civic culture and are culturally misplaced. But for the newer generations, they would emphasise that it is my home and I am Hong Konger. More and more non-Chinese are making a change and trying to change the typical image of ethnic minorities. We cannot pretend ignorant and we want and are willing to participate. We should not just wait for the government to do something as they probably won't going to move anyway.

GL: How and in what ways ethnic minorities understand the cultural symbols of the social movement?

VM: It's a very Hong Kong phenomenon, using some kind of slang to replace some simple terms. Words like '懲罰' (punish) won't make sense if it's out of context. Either you get it or you don't. It is quite exclusive of being the members of the club, but that's what special about the culture in Hong Kong. Social media helps a lot in understanding the context of the slangs, and I would check Facebook and LIHKG to keep myself up to date. There is a channel called Be Water HK also helped to clarify the stuff by translating some of the local discussions into English. There is actually a lot of people that wanted to participate but not a lot of people bothered to translate the stuff for the ethnic minorities. The terminology used is typically Hong Kong. That's the running joke, an inside joke. Many of the older generations don't really follow what's going on but younger generation does. It's entertaining and the jokes keep people more motivated to participate in the movement.

GL: It's just like 澳洲牛奶公司 then.

VM: Absolutely. The 茶餐廳 is very typically Hong Kong. You go there deliberately to get shouted at while getting your food. It's something exclusively Hong Kong in culture but you have the experience and the fun from the interaction.

GL: What is your own interpretation on the slogan 光復香港，時代革命 and terminologies such as 手足?

VM: For me, '手足' is making sure that everyone is part of it. It is a positive thing to keep people motivated and feels important. There is a positive mindset of taking part, a certain

bond that we are all trying, a family that would always support you. As the literal meaning suggests, it's your hands and legs, and it's an inseparable part of the whole body.

GL: What made you to decide to be part of the social movement on the day of Kowloon protest as well as the idea of organising the tours for people to visit the Chungking Mansions? How did you advertise the event and through what means?

VM: We took the first step, the bigger step so that more locals are aware that the South Asian communities also support the movement. We have to display confidence to welcome the people, giving a nice gesture to make you all feel welcome and conveying the message that we trust you guys. On the day, people cheered "we are Hong Kongers" and there were much more people willing to approach us than I expected. It was historical. I think the activities had a bigger impact in helping the ethnic minorities than the government had done so far. It about breaking the myth that we are not bad people and we care for society as well. The next day, Jeffrey and other friends told us about the positive comments on LIHKG about us giving our snacks and water to the crowd. We thought that it's a great opportunity to do something even further. So, we came up with the idea of making tours for Chungking Mansion. Jeff and his other friend that knows Cantonese put the description of the event on LIHKG, hoping that people will be aware of the event that we created. On the day, we did not expect the turnout to be that many people. There was one moment that the building was too full that we had to stop the queue and not let people in. A lot of local media came to interview us about the event as well. And I have received fantastic reviews by the locals. The day was a whole brand-new moment. The impact was so big. Previously, the government would just hold some carnivals or ethnic minorities day and hope that racism will end. No, racism does not end that way. It is just going to reinforce the stereotypical images that ethnic minorities hold as if they dance and eat curry the whole day. Nothing was really done by the government compared to the stuff we did for those few days.

GL: Was there anything memorable that you have experienced on that day?

VM: A lot of people shouted and echoed "香港人加油" and "we are Hong Kongers." People were giving thumbs up to us and seeing people walk up and hugged each other. Hong Kong is not because one particular person is here but everyone is here together. Hong Kong is about "we all are in this together" this kind of spirit.

GL: To what extent do you agree there is a fundamental change within Hong Kongers in attitudes toward ethnic minorities? Is it just temporary strategy or could it be permanent?

VM: The Handover has passed 23 years, and it's like a person growing and became 23 years old in age, as if the person is no longer a child and it is not the king of the world anymore. People have grown up and explored more of the world. The newer generation with social media and the Internet is more connected to the world and are more open to new ideas. I use to think interracial relationships are unthinkable, but now it is a normal phenomenon. So, what is our identity then? Why can't we be both?

GL: What can ethnic minorities do to sustain their membership as part of the Hong Kong nation?

VM: I think it is important to take the first step to understand each other better. But who is willing to be the first person? The Hong Kong society is very utilitarian as nobody wants to waste their time if they cannot guarantee success or reaping benefits. Taking the initiative is not easy in Hong Kong, but the tours and the activities that the ethnic minorities have done have shown that they are willing to take the first step.

GL: Ok this is the end of my questions. Thank you so much once again for taking this interview.

JA: Sure. No worries.

[End of interview]

# Appendix Six: Interview Transcript for Au Nok Hin

*Interviewer: Gabriel Lei*

*Interviewee: Au Nok Hin*

*Language: Cantonese*

*Date: April 10, 2020*

*Venue: Facebook Messenger call*

*Attendees: GL = Gabriel Lei (Interviewer), A = Au Nok Hin (Interviewee)*

GL: Thank you for conducting this interview. I will be asking you about your experiences as lawmaker and more broadly a core member of the society. In your opinion, what has been the crucial element or turning point that had made more people, including academics, to discuss Hong Kong nationalism. In your point of view, is there evidence of Hong Kong nationalism in practice?

A: I believe the trend is highly related to the changes in Hong Kong-China relations. Back at the time of the Beijing Olympics in 2008, it was the honeymoon period for Hong Kong and China. There wasn't a lot of conflict between the two, at least not surfaced in society. However, the Sichuan Earthquake undermined the trust of Hong Kong people, when the money donated were not accountable. The reflection of the conflicts post-Olympics lead to the evolution of Hong Kong nationalism. It was '民生問題' (problems from people's livelihoods) at first that brewed the sentiment. Also, Hong Kong has always lacked the autonomy to decide on its own stuff. For example, the degree of economic integration and policy making. The Umbrella Movement provided a burst of ideas in thinking about the ways in which Hong Kong can achieve autonomy or other alternative political arrangements besides independence. The construction of Hong Kong identity will change over time.

GL: Many scholars like Amitai Etzioni has mentioned that Hong Kong is in the development of civic nationalism. If civic nationalism is the model for Hong Kong nationalism, how is it different from other nations that base their nation on the notion of civic nationalism? e.g. civic virtues etc

A: The basic principle of civic nationalism is that if you agree with the same values then one is considered to be part of the same nation. For Holland, it was mercantilism that brought the nation together, while the English nation is the legal principles, such as ideas that stemmed from Magna Carta. Yet, I think that the nature of civic nationalism is merged with the debates of identity politics on Hong Kong and China. Is nationality based on race and skin colour? I personally don't think so as phenotypically distinguishing someone's identity is not scientific, but that is how Chinese nationalism is manifested. Identity it is socially constructed. Hong Kong nationalism is still in observation but we can already easily

differentiate the us and other based on whether one believes in the same Hong Kong values. It is still in the making.

G: Applying Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities," if there is a Hong Kong nation, who is included and excluded from this imaginary construct? Where and how the boundary is drawn to segregate the insiders/outsiders?

A: I think the way in which the boundary is drawn depends on how one views Hong Kong as a system. For example, how does one view the institutional system and its associated rights and duties? I have heard people saying that "if you do not think that Hong Kong deserves democracy, then go back to the Greater Bay Area." This reflects a particular value system of how Hong Kongers want Hong Kong to become. Also, the modes of living would differentiate between us and them, especially for Hong Kongers and Mainlanders. How does one understand the movement? There is a historical process that makes it hard for one to change its identity, but I believe the current social movement is the watershed moment of making that change.

GL: What are your first impressions of 文宣 and their function in the social movement?

What do you think are the differences between making a political banner and 文宣? When you were still a political representative, did you use the icons that are popular in the protest?

A: Personally, no, because it is better the segregate the materials that are used online and the ones used to distribute to the community. I hope to be more direct in telling the things that I wanted to convey to the community and not add specific the political symbols. But I do think that it is an effective transmission media of bridging the information gap in society. Many protesters believe that not a lot of people, especially the elderly, would receive information from the Internet, or they believe that people get biased information from traditional forms of media. 文宣 allows the diversification of political campaigning.

GL: As an ex-convenor of the Civil Human Rights Front, from your observation in the civil society, has ethnic minorities and new immigrants been active members of Hong Kong's civil society and its social movements? For what reason they are/aren't active?

A: I would say quite limited. Hong Kong Unison, which does work on ethnic minorities, would sometimes participate in the 7.1. Occasionally they would come to have a meeting together, but not frequent. Domestic helper groups rarely contact with us as an organiser but would participate in the march itself. 同根社, which does work on new immigrants, come out even less frequent. It is quite hard to be visible in the protest, and a lot of the ethnic minorities do not have the motivation to come out to the march.

GL: To what extent do you agree there is a fundamental change within Hong Kongers in attitudes toward ethnic minorities? Is it just temporary strategy or could it be permanent?

A: I was quite relieving that there were leaders of the ethnic minorities trying to solve the crisis. That crisis converted to an opportunity of letting the locals understand the ethnic community are equally in line with the movement.

GL: On the incident of 光榮冰室, does the rejection of Mandarin-speakers be considered as discrimination or xenophobia? What does that indicate for the inclusivity of Hong Kong's civic nationalism?

A: There is an interesting situation for the new immigrants in Hong Kong. The official census data does not differentiate between Hong Kongers and new immigrants, purposely emphasising the connection based on blood ties and not divide between the two. The left-wing supporters hope to end discrimination against the new immigrants through legislation. But then in reality, that would provide a distinguished category between Hong Kong locals and new immigrants from China.

GL: From your observation, what has been the biggest problem for ethnic minorities and new immigrants face in Hong Kong?

A: Ethnic integration is very poor in Hong Kong. If you have to prove that you are not the 'others', you have to be fluent in Cantonese. Previously, people would also factor in skin colour into the consideration. It is also about the institutional and structural problems of ethnic minorities trying to integrate into society. For the new immigrants, it is definitely language. Social practices do affect as well. If you don't know Cantonese and behaved in the same customs, then it is likely that one is marginalised in society.

GL: Lastly, as a prediction, how will the Hong Kong nationalism discourse evolve in the future? Will there be any other alternative political imagination for Hong Kong as a nation?

It depends how different parties view the issue now and the future. Hong Kong was originally defined just by a political community. But when the population experiences similar hardships, then it creates collective memory. This memory will effectively distinguish between the us and others of the Hong Kong nation. If China continues the same policies on Hong Kong, it will breed hatred. It will develop a very strong national identity and ultimately lead to a nationalist movement. This national consciousness would also depend on the age group. The transmission of media highly affects the ways in which one belong to the same political community. Media and the Internet tends to create an echo-chamber that reinforces particular values and identity.

GL: Ok this is the end of my questions. Thank you so much once again for taking this interview. If you don't mind, is it possible if we grab a meal when you come to Tokyo in September?

A: Sure. See you soon.

[End of interview]

# Interview Transcript for Wu Rwei-ren

*Interviewer: Gabriel Lei*

*Interviewee: Professor Wu Rwei-ren*

*Language: English*

*Date: May 7, 2020*

*Venue: Telegram call*

*Attendees: GL = Gabriel Lei (Interviewer), W = Wu Rwei-ren (Interviewee)*

[Interview starts]

GL: Thank you for conducting this interview. I will start by asking the question that before the release of book *Hong Kong Nationalism*, most scholars focused on the study of Hong Kong identity. What was the critical moment/event that made you to realise that the Hong Kong nation has been materialised?

W: I specialise on comparative nationalism and colonialism. My job is to compare different experiences of empires and how nationalism in nation-states came to its being. I focus a lot on European nation-state while trained as becoming a social scientist and for some reason, I never placed Hong Kong in the category on understanding nationalism and empires. In 2012, however, the outburst of the anti-national education protests shocked me. During the movement, the editor of Ming Pao Monthly approached me and asked me to interpret the causes behind the movement through the theories of nationalism that I am an expert on. I noticed something emerging in this movement, some kind of social force that tried to resist the official narrative of Chinese nationalism. I believe that was the starting moment.

You see, both Hong Kong and Taiwan are late comers to nationalism. The 19th century was the crucial period to the formation of Chinese nationalism, but Hong Kong and Taiwan was out of China. We were missing, we were not there when the Chinese people developed its national consciousness. For Hong Kong, there was a rise of a distinctive national identity from the movement. From the view of Beijing, Hong Kong are not yet Chinese. They have to be trained and they have to be remade. But a sense of being has to be something voluntary.

GL: So, what was your reaction when Brian Leung and others from HKU undergrad invited you to write a section of the book? What message did you initially hoped to convey to the readers?

W: Brian Leung was not the first one to approach me on this matter. There was another student from Hong Kong who paid me a visit and hoped to learn more about nativism in Taiwan. At the time, localism has just entered in the public discourse in Hong Kong. They

were aware of the changing political environments and people would like to know more about the Taiwanese experience.

Later in the year, Brian Leung and others from HKU Undergrad approached me. When I checked the background of the student association, I came across with the initial version of *Hong Kong Nationalism*, where the posted online on their website. I was amazed by the ideas written by HKU Undergrad. For a Hong Kong national consciousness, the day had to come but I did not expect the day to come so soon. From a purely academic perspective, I was very excited by the new phenomenon, but as a human being, I felt sympathetic towards the things that they wrote on, the things about Chinese oppression on Hong Kong society.

The Sunflower Movement then broke out and I was too busy to get back to Brian. At the end of the Sunflower Movement, I received an invitation from Undergrad, hoping that I can write some commentary on nationalism so that they can make pamphlets or brochures and that they can distribute them during the 7.1 march. However, I suggested that Undergrad should actually make a book rather than just a brochure. They then invited other authors as well to write longer pieces on the same subject. For me, I hoped to write a serious academic paper styled commentary and so I began to read stuff on Hong Kong history to set things in context. I remember the book was published on the very same day when Joshua Wong and other protesters climbed over the fences and went into the Civic Square, bringing to the start of the Umbrella Movement. It was an interesting coincidence.

My main purpose for the book was to give a social scientific perspective to the rise of Hong Kong nationalism. I was intellectually very curious and the subject should deserve some serious consideration as a new phenomenon. I'm in outsider, and between me and Hong Kong there is a distance. But I could help out and let more Hong Kong people to understand their own historical situation and help clarify some confusions. I also wanted to encourage Hong Kong people to face the uphill fight. That's what history have taught us. It is an example of anti-colonial nationalism, and the enemy is not the Hong Kong Government but the Chinese regime. China is a centralised state and China will never let Hong Kong be autonomous. As I have quoted in the writing, "I cannot go on, I will go on" as way to show my support to Hong Kong people.

GL: Reading Hong Kong Nationalism in 2014 and now actually feels different. It feels that the things that were said in the book were in the making during this movement. I guess for other scholars they find it interesting as well. At the same time, more scholars have mentioned that Hong Kong is in the development of civic nationalism. If civic nationalism is the model for Hong Kong nationalism, how is it different from other nations that base their nation on the notion of civic nationalism?

W: When I first looked at the narratives written in the initial copies of *Hong Kong Nationalism*, I didn't see things about ethnic nationalism but rather it mentioned on civic virtues. By writing a portion of the book, I wanted to refute the accusations that the 左膠 ('Leftards') have posed on localism in Hong Kong. In the typology of nationalism, ethnic and civic nationalism comes to be natural for us as social scientists. Probably some people didn't read enough on the literatures of nationalism and made sweeping statements of that the

165

localism movement is being racist. I had to help defend the perspectives and refute from some of the mistaken or even malicious accusations on the authors of the book.

You see, Hong Kong nationalism is still in the making and it is actually hard to underpin. The nature of nationalism of a nation depends on the experiences during nation formation. They did not deliberately choose the path but are subjected to the conditions of the environment. For France and the US, a lot of migrants came and merged into the society, which helped to form a nation based on civic virtues. These principles are embodied in the American constitution and the people are defined by the conviction. For nations in East Asia, China and Japan are both based on ethnic nationalism. The Chinese are very racial and bases the notion of the Chinese people from the Han population. It reflect the historical path of the place. So, there is no predetermined path of how the type of nationalism is formed.

Also, by looking at the language of defining a political community hints the experience of nation formation. For France, the French word for nation means the people of this country. That's why the French people understand the idea of civic nation very well. But in German, the German for nation is die nation, and it almost 100% indicates that it refers to a concept based on racial instincts. The meaning of the word in different languages would reflect the different historical experiences of each country. For the word nation in Chinese, it also indicates a communal relationship based on blood and cultural commonality. What is also important to understand the nation is that it is not just a characteristic of the past, but also an aspiration and hope for the future, a vision for the future, especially for civic nation states. The main difference between Taiwan and Hong Kong is that Hong Kong does not have its own nation-state. You guys don't have a state to govern your own people of the nation. It is fair to say that Taiwan has a nation-state, but people have chosen to engineer the nation to the form as it is now.

GL: Ethnic minorities are the subaltern in Hong Kong. Through the actions that they have displayed support to the movement, have the subaltern spoke?

W: You're asking that whether the subaltern spoke and I would say yes they spoke out perfectly. They joined actively in the movement and by the way that they joined the movement, they have joined the Hong Kong civic nation. Rather than letting people defining their identity, they actively defined the identity for themselves. Do you know if they have some kind of written text that they are inclined to the movement?

GL: I got the responses from interviewing some of the participants during the movement. One of them told me that he believes in the same Hong Kong values as the locals and motivated him to do a bit more to help out. He placed the event on LIHKG and hoping that people will be aware of the tours for Chungking Mansion. There was limited protest art by them but there are graphics made by them to promote the event. So I guess there isn't a concrete written text from them but their actions do say that they are in support of the protests.

W: Written text is one type of manifestation. The subaltern can speak from different types of practice. They proved that they consciously wanted to participate in the movement. As

long as you have transcribed the interview then that converts into written text that is useful for analysing the phenomenon. I think the aspect of the South Asian people deserves a deeper analysis and it is very crucial to show the nature of nationalism. I realize that people in this international city are trying hard to turn itself into a civic nation and demonstrate the cosmopolitan aspect of Hong Kong. It may well be an very important part of your analysis.

G: Yes, speaking of which the South Asians are left out in the Chinese nation-making project. The emphasis on bloodline and cultural commonalities excludes the South Asians as an active citizen in Hong Kong.

W: Right. It also reminds me that you can also compare to how the Africans in Guangzhou got treated in a racialised way because of the pandemic. That's how Han Chauvinism works. But in contrast, Hong Kong's civic national consciousness will have included them.

G: Actually, some new migrants from Mainland China also support the movement. Through the pro-democracy movement, have they proven that they deserve to be included in the Hong Kong civic nation? Can they ever be included in the political franchise?

W: So, you're asking me that where and how the boundary is drawn to segregate the insiders and outsiders of the Hong Kong nation. The boundary of nation is dependent on historical process. You have to look in the history that leads to the present situation in Hong Kong. I would guess that migrants would get localised in the long run because in theory they have volunteered to live in Hong Kong and should get naturalised. In principle they should become Hong Kongers, but in a reality, under the tyranny, the Beijing government would want to intervene and preventing the new migrants to accept Hong Kong values. Hong Kong is not free, you don't have your own state, so you cannot design citizenship tests to filter the migrants coming into Hong Kong. The social movement is an anti-colonial movement, an opposition movement against the intervention of an outsider, and unfortunately, the new immigrants are considered as the outsider in the nation framework.

You have the understand that the creation of a nation comes in two ways, either created by a state or a common struggle and resistance. For Hong Kong, it is formed from the bottom-up. The current path of Hong Kong is facing a lot of difficulties. You don't have your own army to protect yourself and fight against the regime. You don't have state institutions to govern the nation. Very clearly it is hard for Hong Kong people now to delineate the boundaries to include which groups and which populations into the nation. The prototype of Hong Kong identity started from British colonialism but the real form of the nation formed during the movement. The act of starting protest in different districts in Hong Kong, everywhere and every time is an attempt to demonstrate others that the political struggle is ongoing, and it enables people to reconfirm the Hong Kong identity. Similarly, singing the national anthem in shopping malls and the Hong Kong Way is also a way in which the nation can be imagined.

GL: Lastly, what is the role of the Internet in shaping the imagined community in nations of late nationalism?

W: Well, I am not an expert on the Internet, but I guess that as modernisation progresses, the medium in which people imagine that they are together will change as well. The technology that is used to imagine the nation is not the press but now the Internet. I could only say one thing is that the Internet has created an active Hong Kong diasporic population that feeds into the national consciousness. Gabriel, do you mind we call it a day for now? I'm quite tired from today's work.

GL: Ok it is the end of my questions anyway. I can feel that you are quite tired as well [laugh]. Thank you so much once again for taking this interview.

JA: Sure. No worries. I will get back to you for some of the questions that I have not fully covered.

[End of interview]