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# Repertoire, framing and visions : the occupy movement in Hong Kong

Ho Man LEUNG

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REPERTOIRE, FRAMING AND VISIONS  
-- THE OCCUPY MOVEMENT IN HONG KONG

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MPHIL

LINGNAN UNIVERSITY

2016

REPERTOIRE, FRAMING AND VISIONS  
-- THE OCCUPY MOVEMENT IN HONG KONG

by  
LEUNG Ho Man

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Philosophy in  
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ABSTRACT  
REPERTOIRE, FRAMING, VISIONS  
-- THE OCCUPY MOVEMENT IN HONG KONG

by

LEUNG Ho Man

Master of Philosophy

The Occupy Movement is one of the most significant civic events in recent Hong Kong History. This thesis is an attempt to make a comprehensive understanding of the movement by analyzing the actual movement activities and illustrating occupiers' justification of actions. Three major issues are of concern here. First, what actually happened during the movement? Second, why did the occupiers join the movement? Lastly, how did the occupiers justify their actions during the movement? In this regard, the concepts of repertoire, framing and vision, will be employed to guide this study. Considering the three main factions of the movement, including the left, localism and non-aligned occupiers, a series of in-depth interviews with occupiers of various factions are conducted to collect data. I argue that different factions share common instrumental tactics and strategies generally during the movement. Yet, different ways of interpreting the tortuous progress of democratization in Hong Kong have brought changes to the prevailing pattern of the actions which emphasized the tranquility and non-violence, and led to an internal strife between the localist occupiers and the others. Moreover, the non-aligned and leftist occupiers justified and identified their actions and reasoning with the communal and the economic visions of society respectively. However, instead of a vision of society, localist occupiers' actions and rationales disclosed a vision of violence. That is the major difference between the localist faction and other factions of the movement.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL OF THESIS

REPERTOIRE, FRAMING AND VISIONS  
- THE OCCUPY MOVEMENT IN HONG KONG

by  
LEUNG Ho Man

Master of Philosophy

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this is an original work based primarily on my own research, and I warrant that all citations of previous research, published or unpublished, have been duly acknowledged.



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LEUNG Ho Man

Date: 3/10/2016.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The Occupy Movement in the fall of 2014 was, without a doubt, one of the most contentious, significant and high profile civic activities in Hong Kong. The longing of democracy flared up onto Hong Kong's street – protests staked their democratic demands by barricading the main thoroughfares for more than two months.

The campaign can be traced to British's rule of the city until 1997. When the territory's return was confirmed, there was an arrangement to assure the current social and economic systems in Hong Kong would remain unchanged through the establishment of the Basic Law. In it, the right of the people of Hong Kong to elect the Chief Executive<sup>1</sup> and all members of Legislative Council<sup>2</sup> by universal suffrage was assured. Yet, the promise has not been honoured more than 15 years after the territory's return. In this regard, initiated with the aim of persuading the government to keep the promise and striving for universal and equal suffrage in the election of Chief Executive in 2017, two academics, legal scholar Benny Tai Yiu-ting and sociologist Chan Kin-man, and a Baptist minister, Rev. Chu Yiu-ming, proposed a plan of civil

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<sup>1</sup> Article 45 of the Hong Kong Basic Law: "The Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be selected by election or through consultations held locally and be appointed by the Central People's Government. 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."

<sup>2</sup> Article 68 of the Hong Kong Basic Law: ".....The method for forming the Legislative Council 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 election of all the members of the Legislative Council by universal suffrage."

disobedience titled “Occupy Central with Love and Peace” in early 2013 to put pressure on the government to compromise and establish a “real universal suffrage” proposal (Tai 2013a). Simply put, it was a campaign attempting to pursue a more democratic political reform package.

On 31 August 2014, the nation’s top legislative body, the Standing Committee of National People’s Congress, spelled out the decision for the 2017 Hong Kong Chief Executive election system. The decision stipulated that all candidates were to be elected by the present 1200-member Election Committee before presenting them for a territory-wide ballot<sup>3</sup>. Beijing’s decision sounded to pan-democrats to be very unsatisfactory as the reform package allows only two or three potential candidates to obtain the support of at least half of the nominating committee members to get on the ballot. The pan-democrats deemed that the reform package had failed to give Hong Kong people a genuine choice of candidates and ruled out an open election of Hong Kong’s chief executive.

The conservative reform proposal triggered Occupy Central with Love and Peace. The key organizers then announced a “banquet” – the code word for the campaign – to be held on October 1, the National Day. In response to the upcoming Occupy Central, students also led a series of campaigns against Beijing’s decision and to gain momentum for the Occupy Central. The Hong Kong Federation of Students and Scholarism launched a five-day class boycott campaign before the national holiday. More than a thousand students joined the campaign.

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<sup>3</sup> See “Decision of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress on Issues Relating to the Selection of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region by Universal Suffrage and on the Method for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the Year 2016” at [http://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclawtext/images/basiclawtext\\_doc23.pdf](http://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclawtext/images/basiclawtext_doc23.pdf)

Students made a dramatic gesture at the end of the campaign. On the night of 26 September 2014, the last day of the class boycott campaign, the members of Hong Kong Federation of Students and Scholarship suddenly climbed over the fence of the forecourt outside the government headquarters in an attempt to seize the “Civic Square” which is usually an open area outside the government headquarters but was walled off by the government for no reason. Unexpectedly, the abrupt ambush action prompted a vast number of protesters overnight. The student demonstration surprised the organizers of Occupy Central. Until the small hours of the 28th September 2014, the organizers of Occupy Central rode the wave of student protests to commence the long-awaited campaign.

The streets of Central and Admiralty were in a state of chaos after that. Police in full riot gear, carrying shotguns and wearing gas masks, used tear gas to disperse the protesters. The tear-gassing, however, did not scatter the pepper-sprayed protesters. Instead, as many as 30,000 demonstrators armed with nothing but umbrellas to prevent themselves from the pepper spray and tear gas, started building barricades to block a number of main roads – first the thoroughfares outside the government headquarters complex in Admiralty, then in Causeway Bay, the business districts on the Hong Kong Island, and across the Victoria Harbor in Mong Kok, the busiest commercial area in the western part of Kowloon Peninsula. The 79-days-long civic activities then began.

## **Defining Terms: “Occupy Central”, “Occupy Movement” or “Umbrella Revolution/Movement”**

Public media usually name the movement “Occupy Central”, “Occupy Movement” or “Umbrella/ Revolution”. People probably prefer to use the title “Occupy Movement” and “Umbrella Movement/Revolution” because protesters did occupy in Admiralty, Mong Kok, and Causeway Bay; and, “umbrella” is the main tool for the occupiers to shield themselves against the police. At any rate, there is a variety of titles of the movement that have been used both in Hong Kong itself and in the international media, thus requiring some conceptual work defining our terms. It is important to highlight the difference in these terms since the succession from Occupy Central to Occupy Movement or Umbrella Revolution/Movement was not merely a replacement of the movement title. Rather, it represented distinctions within and phases of the movements.

First of all, it marked the changing composition of participants. Apart from the key organizers of the Occupy Central, its major devotees were social activists, students and professionals but not rank and file participants. Yet, the student action transformed the composition of the movement’s participants. The ambush action that stormed the Civic Square unexpectedly gathered thousands of people outside the government complex. The actors of the movement then became heterogeneous. Alongside the original social activists of the campaign, it contained students, professionals as well as a flock of general public who came after the ambush action.

Second, it marked a transformation of leadership. Originally, there was a clear leadership of Occupy Central that drew up the action plan and guidelines. From the day they raised the plan, they unremittingly put effort



into the campaign. Not only did they promote the movement in various media platforms, but they also did many preparations for the campaign including organizing a series of deliberations to collect public opinion, approaching other pan-democracy organizations, arranging occupy workshops and recruiting supporting staffs for the movement. This series of prior preparations apparently indicated that the initiators were leading the movement forward. However, the student strike marked a turning point in the change of the leadership. The unpredictable echo urged the movement to start earlier and loosened the leadership of Occupy Central. Since most of the protesters were not motivated by the organizers of Occupy Central but by the students, it made sense that students would take up the principal role and supersede the original leadership. Later when the sites were occupied, people even reckoned that the movement had no leadership. When people started to call the movement "Occupy Movement", it actually implied the supersession of leadership.

Third, "Occupy Movement" went beyond the script of "Occupy Central". The strategy of the movement deviated from the original plan of Occupy Central. Although occupation was designed as a tool to paralyze the financial center, the 79-day occupation and the expansion of the occupied site was not included in the plan. Only a protest rally with a non-violent sit-in in Central was proposed. The loose leadership of the movement made the movement uncontrollable. It made the original design of Occupy Central unmanageable and yielded a novel script for Occupy Movement. In this regard, the succession from Occupy Central to Occupy Movement was a substitution of an impromptu collective action for a structurally constructed design of civil disobedience action.

A final remark is that the use of the term “umbrella” was not invented by the occupiers themselves. It was dubbed that by the western media. As protesters used umbrellas to shelter themselves from the tear-gas and pepper-spray by the police, western media converted these scenarios into the icon of the movement and labelled the campaign “Umbrella Revolution”. Considering the term “revolution” is so sensitive to the Chinese government which can relate to colour revolution, occupiers suggested using “Umbrella Movement” instead of “Umbrella Revolution”. Since then, umbrella became the emblematic symbol of the movement. Local media sometimes would describe the occupiers as “Umbrella Soldiers”. Protesters created many artworks with the theme of “umbrella” during the movement. The term “Umbrella Movement/Revolution” is impressive and iconic. It captured the chaotic scene and produced the most symbolic figure for the movement.

Certainly there is no consensus on the usage of these terms. Here in this thesis, I prefer to use “Occupy Movement” when I discuss the entire movement and “Occupy Central” when I refer to the original civil disobedience action before the student’s ambush action.

### **Research Objectives**

To be clear from the outset, with a call for “real universal suffrage” for the election of the next Chief Executive of Hong Kong and all members of the Legislative Council, it is plausible for analysts to define the Occupy Movement as a democratic movement.

The main objective of this dissertation is to clarify the nature of the movement and thus understand it better. Describing the entire campaign simply as a democratic movement is where the difficulty begins. Although

the ambition of chasing for democratic political reform was exhibited by the original purpose of Occupy Central and later persisted during the Occupy Movement, there witnessed a great deal of episodes during the entire campaign and it is an obvious mistake to merely attribute all events happened during the movement to the demand for a more democratic electoral system. In particular, the movement became more complex and heterogeneous as the movement spun out. The diverse usage of the tactics and strategies, the critical bifurcation within the de facto occupiers, the impacts outside the political dimension and other latent and concealed causes of the movement are not amenable to a simple explanation. That is to say, just defining the Occupy Movement a classic democratic movement is at risk of oversimplification. A more in-depth study of the whole Occupy Movement which looks at the details and niceties of the movement so as to provide a more sophisticated understanding of the Occupy Movement is the main purpose of this dissertation.

Apart from the intention of providing an advanced understanding of the Occupy Movement, this dissertation also intends to contribute to the existing scholarly work on social movement and politics in Hong Kong. Comparing it to previous collective movements and campaigns with a similar intention, it is apparent that there are many unusual elements that are unheard-of such as the unprecedented long-term occupation. Since the territory's return in 1997, there were waves and waves of collective actions urging the authorities to carry out a democratic election for Chief Executive and all Legislative Council members. Yet, the Occupy Movement was much different from the previous waves of action. Disentangling the details of the Occupy Movement precisely will disclose the nature of this remarkable campaign and show the distinction

between it and the preceding operations.

### **Sociology of Social Movement**

Speaking of the Occupy Movement as a massive social movement, it is reasonable to locate the movement in the field of social movement study. This concept suggests that society is mutable in various discursive practices and social transpositions, and that social changes are possible and probable through cooperative and collective actions (Gusfield 1978: 126). Unlike other factors of social change such as technological innovation, climate change and wars, social movements are unique “genuinely modern phenomena” (Eder 1993: 108) as they are guided by groups of people with one or more cherished values or objectives, purposively and strategically, to make social changes in the modern world so as to alleviate people’s grievances and promote justness, equitableness, and righteousness.

The occurrence of social movements is a feature of “the era of enlightenment” (Neidhardt and Rucht 1991: 449). While the phrase – “the era of enlightenment” – refers to the evolution of the modern political and social institutions, this utterance suggests that the emergence of social movements is an attempt to tackle the problems of the modern world. Its major characteristics – the confluence of capitalism, state making, and urbanization – gestate social movements providing networks, resources, identities, and grievances for the rise of social movements. In an age of modernization, people can problematize their way of life and the extant structure of the society in term of different dimensions and call for changes through the involvement of movements. Social movements are one of the most prevalent and extensive subjects in sociology as they come back to the very basic and

ontological question of society itself (Touraine 1971, 1981).

Generally speaking, there are two main approaches to social movement study. Alberto Melucci (1985), in his analysis of social movements, offers a useful taxonomy. He looks at those prevailing interpretations in the field of social movements since the early 1970s. He argues that the major approaches to social movements respectively emphasize the questions of “Why?” and “How?” - the former refers to the meaning of the action of movement and the latter refers to the organization and maintenance of movements. This categorization exhibits the two main strands of studying social movement including focusing on the causes of movements and concentrating on the progress of the organization of movements.

In recent times, a wave of occupy movement emerged such as the Arab Spring in North Africa, the Spanish Indignant Movement, Occupy Wall Street in America, Gezi Park Protests in Turkey to name a few. Although the recent wave of global protest showed up in different times and countries, and aspires to various political and economic goals, they share some common features. They all involved a considerable number of autonomous protestors in engaging in the implementation of relatively contentious and reculant performance and physical occupation of public spaces (della Porta and Mattoni 2014). Occupation becomes a prevailing form of protest and tactics in recent years. Unlike other traditional protest tactics and strategies, occupation attempts to paralyze an area in order to persuade, or somewhat coerce, the authority. The perspectives and concepts of social movement theory are instrumental in this research for making a rigorous analysis of the Occupy Movement in Hong Kong.

## **Outline of the Thesis**

In the above paragraphs, I have provided the background information of the Occupy Movement in Hong Kong, indicated the research objective of this thesis, and also briefly introduced the study of social movement in the field of sociology.

The key aim of this dissertation is to broaden the understanding of the Occupy Movement. The next chapter will review relevant literatures on social movement theory and political participation to help us delimit the research problems and gain methodological insights. The concept of vision will be explained.

Moving on, Chapters 3 and 4 will provide an analytical framework. The former examines the research framework. The concepts of repertoire, framing and visions will be adopted as the guiding concepts of this dissertation. The latter examines methodology. It provides details of the research methods, sampling process and information of interviewees.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are devoted to the analysis of the Occupy Movement. They are based on the data I collected. Chapter 5 is on the repertoire of Occupy. A depiction of the entire movement will be presented chronologically. Chapter 6 is the analysis of framing. It explains the selection of movement activities through the analysis of how the occupiers interpreted the movement. Chapter 7 argues that the movement's interpretations embody various kinds of visions. The analyses of these can give an insight into the investigation of the future social movements in Hong Kong.

The conclusion, Chapter 8, summarizes the dissertation and proposes some further questions based on its findings.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The profusion of studies on social movement in recent decades, together with the expansion of social movements in visibility and in importance since the 1960s (Tarrow 1998; Meyer and Tarrow 1998) informs my own analysis. Scholars define social movements in various ways. For instance, Anthony Giddens (1989:624) defines social movement as “a collective attempt to further a common interest, or secure a common goal, through collective action outside the sphere of established institutions”; Herbert Blumer (1939:199) sees social movements as “collective enterprises seeking to establish a new order of life”; John Wilson (1973:8) claims that social movements are “a conscious, collective, organized attempt to bring about or resist large-scale changes in the social order by noninstitutionalized means.” The list of definitions can go on. Put succinctly, along with these various broad definitions, we can say that collective action and common goals are two key and salient features of social movements; be that as it may, a more precise definition is useful to conduct a scientific research.

This chapter begins with an overview of several principal theoretical approaches to social movement study, namely the collective behaviour approach, resource mobilization theory and political process approach, and new social movements theory; and some particular concepts of social movement study. This is followed by the second section which examines the idea of vision. I will rely primarily on the work of Thomas Sowell (2002) where the concept of vision is discussed at length. Simply put, vision is a primitive sense of reasoning. This concept helps to understand occupiers’

conducts and ways to make sense of the movement.

### **Major traditions of social movement theories**

There are many ways to make sense of social movements. The understanding of social movement had been influenced by the changes in the disciplinary matrix of social science and prevailing movements (Buechler 2011). Collective behavior approach, resource mobilization theory, and political process approach are, plainly, the dominant perspectives of the American schools of movement analysis in the mid-twentieth century (Singh 2001; Crossley 2002; Staggenborg 2011; Buechler 2011).

#### *Collective behaviour approach*

Collective behaviour, according to Robert Park and Ernest Burgess (1969: 865), refers to “the behavior of individuals under the influence of an impulse that is common and collective, an impulse, in other words, that is the result of social interaction.” Social unrest is the elementary form of collective behavior as it is “a breaking up for the established routine and a preparation for new collective action” (Park and Burgess 1969: 866). The notion of collective behaviour advances the study of social movement and puts movements forward as a kind of collective behaviour to study.

There are many perspectives and theories that belong to the collective behavior camp including Blumer’s collective behavior theory (1951), Smelser’s value added theory (1962), relative deprivation theory (Freeman 1975; Davies 1962, 1971; Gurr 1970), mass society theory (Hoffer 1951; Kornhauser 1959) to name a few. Taken collectively, social movements are seen as a kind of collective behaviour which comes from a period of social



disruption (Jenkins 1983; Marx and Wood 1975; McAdam 1999; Coleman 1990). In this regard, the most fundamental tenet of this approach is that social movements are a psychological phenomenon. Here I am going to briefly examine Blumer's and Smelser's account which are probably the most persuasive and leading formulations.

Herbert Blumer (1939; 1951) is perhaps the first scholar to explain social movement in term of collective behaviour. As a pioneer of symbolic interactionism which suggests actors produce meaning through interaction (Giddens 1989: 700-701; Joas 1987), Blumer pays attention to how social change affects the norms, values, and traditions that usually control people's interaction, pushing people to engage in a social movement as a kind of organized collective action to establish a new social and cultural pattern. He points out that social movements emerge from a state of unrest which causes people's psychological unsteadiness and oscillation. The rise of collective behavior, including the emergence of social movements, is considered as a quick and direct reaction to those unstable conditions.

Another significant version of collective behavior approach is Neil Smelser's (1962) value-added theory, also known as social strain theory. His focus is rooted on how the strain and breakdown caused by rapid social changes within a society generates social movement and other types of collective behavior. Smelser provides a model with six components. The social movement is an aggregation of these six components – structural conduciveness, structural strain, the growth and spread of a generalized belief, precipitating factors, mobilization of participation, and operation of the social control. It is noted that these components determine whether the collective behavior ensues, if so, which kinds of collective behavior it will be.

Social movements are a possible outcome of these components being added.

The psychological factor is heavily emphasized in Blumer's account. He underscores how psychological instability caused by social unrest evolves into the social movement and other types of collective behaviour. Yet Blumer devotes only little attention to social fields and structures. Accordingly, Smelser's account can be seen as a remedy for this weakness. He locates the analysis of movement and collective behaviour in a larger understanding of social systems. He provides a systematic structural approach to understand the emergence of movements.

As with Blumer and Smelser, and other collective behavior theorists, society is assumed to be relatively stable. Movements are a direct reaction to and side-effect of a rapid de-stabilizing development. The actors' conduct is envisaged as the disruptive psychological state caused by structural strains.

Yet, the focus on the role of generic grievances has been questioned in at least two ways. First, grievances and resentment are too common. In fact, discontent more or less exists constantly. In the case of Smelser's account, for instance, it is always possible to find some 'strains' to explain the rise of any kind of collective behavior and without a clear definition of 'strains' the model is tautological. Moreover, the collective behavior approach fails to explain the political nature of social movements, a point mentioned by many authors (e.g. Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978; McAdam 1999; McAdam et al 1988). In this regard, explaining the occurrence of social movements in terms of existing grievances sounds inadequate to provide a full explanation (Jenkins and Perrow 1977).

Another challenge to this approach is posed by the sheer number and persistence of movements in existence. Since collective behavior theorists look

at social movements as a response to unstable conditions, it is supposed the unrest and grievance could be mitigated. Movements very often, however, increase in a time of economic prosperity and steady employment (Eisinger 1973). Viewed in this light, the role of grievances is considered not a crucial determinant to spark movements and protests (Snyder and Tilly 1972).

#### *Resource mobilization theory and political process approach*

The weaknesses of collective behavior approach lead to new paradigms. Especially, since the 1960s, waves of social movement around the world revealed the incapability of collective behaviour approach. It contributed to the rise of resource mobilization theory and political process approach. Putting these two theories together is not a coincidence. Rather, it is because they were both developed in the wake of collective behavior approach and to look up its deficiencies. Crucially, both of these approaches posit similar ideas. First, unlike the collect behaviour approach which defines social movements as merely a kind of collective behaviour under a state of cognitive dissonance and normative ambiguity, scholars from these two camps claim that social movement is a particular field of study and specific modes of analysis and specific tools are necessary to understand it (McAdam 2007: 421). Furthermore, participants of social movements, under these two approaches, are viewed as “at least as rational as those who study them (Schwarz 1976:135).” In this regard, individuals are rational to engage in a purposeful and organized movement (Zald and Ash 1966; McCathy and Zald 1977; Oberschall 1973, 1978; Tilly 1978). Even if the resource mobilization theory is similar to the political process approach, there is an essential distinction between them— the former notably looks at the influence of social networks

and organization on a movement but the latter focuses on the role of political opportunity.

In the resource mobilization theory, the main argument is that organized network and construction are inevitable preconditions for the occurrence of movements. This expression can be traced to the “free-rider dilemma”. The work of Mancur Olson (1971) threw out a question about the rational participation of social movement. In the rational choice theory of collective actions, people may take a ‘free ride’ on the back of the efforts of others without joining in as people are supposed to enjoy the achievements of movements in any case. This dilemma is provocative and directly impels the investigation on the participation of movement. Anthony Oberschall (1973), in response to this problem, developed, unofficially, the first account of resource mobilization approach. He reckons that the power and responsibility of distributing resources—material and non-material— by the role of organization can overcome the dilemma. It stresses that the role of leaders and organized network and construction are prerequisites for a movement.

Besides, John McCarthy and Meyer Zald (1977) contribute a more sophisticated and consolidated version of resource mobilization theory. In fact, they are the first to propose the term “resource mobilization” (McCarthy and Zald 1973). They define the terms “social movement sector”, “social movement organizations” and “social movement industries”. With that, attention is focused on the interaction between movements, resources and organizations. They define social movements as “a set of opinions and beliefs in a population representing preferences for changing some elements of the social structure or reward distribution, or both, of a society” (McCarthy and

Zald 1977:1217-1218). For the authors, the most critical determinant of the generation and sustenance of movements are not the deprivation and disruption but, rather, the resource availability as it determines the interaction within different social movement organizations.

At any rate, they maintain the importance of the role of resources, networks and organizations for social movements. Both the account of Oberschall and of McCarthy and Zald provide us a systemic and rational analysis on social movement while, obviously, the latter one is more complicated and detailed than the former. Elements of the model are scattered in others' work (e.g. Aveni 1977; Breton and Breton 1969; Handler 1978; Jenkins 1975; Jenkins and Perrow 1977; Leites and Wolf 1970). However, some scholars criticize this theory for overemphasizing the influence of formal organizations (Piven and Cloward 1979). Resource mobilization theory also fails to capture the political aspect.

In regard to this point, political process approach is an alternative to resource mobilization theory and pays more attention to the political environment and the interactions of social movement actors. Similar to resource mobilization approach, in contrast to the various classical accounts, political process approach does not see social movements as a mere reaction against the disruptive psychological phenomenon. Rather, it holds a view that movements are political and a continuous process of growth to decline.

The term comes from an article by Charles Tilly and James Rule (1975), but elements of the model are developed in the works of others (e.g. Tilly 1978; McAdam 1999; Tarrow 1998). Scholars under the flag of political process approach present considerable theoretical variations. Yet, generally, all of the models embody two core tenets.

First is the fundamental assumption that there is a substantial unequal power distribution between elite and excluded groups. Social movements, under this perception of power disparity, are rational ways by excluded groups to seize collective interests through noninstitutionalized means. For instance, Peter Esinger (1973) is interested in the use of protest among minority and excluded groups to figure out the influence of these events to the degree of openness of the local political system.

Second, both external and internal factors are crucial for the generation and the likelihood of success of movements. Since the deprived groups supposedly lack resource and prerogative, calculations on existing political arrangement, environmental factors, and internal factors to the movement are important for the excluded groups to possess greater leverage to spur the campaign on particular occasions. For the external elements, the larger sociopolitical environment restricts the available choices of action and potential impacts of the movement. Peter Esinger (1973) and Herbert Kitschelt (1986) introduced "open and closed system" and "input and output structures" respectively to indicate that the openness of political systems determines citizens' political participation. Apart from the political system, the sociopolitical circumstance also influences the occurrence of movements. In the sense of collective behaviour approach, disruption and strains create a state of psychological instability and lead to direct irrational collective unrests and insurgencies. By contrast, political process approach does not chiefly recognize the dramatic functions of disruptions and strains. Rather, it pays attention to transformations of the structures of power for a longer period of time of disruption and strains. The accumulation of tensions and pains expand political opportunities through blunting the stability of the entire

political system and enhancing political leverage of any single social movement, political or insurgent group. Unlike collective behaviour approach, social movements are, paraphrasing Gary Marx (1979), a continuing process of the interplay of both larger sociopolitical environment and the internal capacity of the groups. The external factors offer political chances to increase bargaining power and mitigate the discrepancy of power between deprived groups and the authorities, and thereby to bring movements to arise and develop.

For the internal factors, political process model concerns the influence of more elements on the occurrence of collective actions rather than put the specific focus on the role of resources or organizations. Theoretical variations of the political process model encompass various resources that precipitate collective actions such as members, leaders and communicative networks. It sounds similar to the focus of the resource mobilization theory. It is crucial to note that political process approach does not deny the importance of the existent networks or organizations. Yet, instead of attributing the occurrence of movements to existent networks and organizations, this model prefers to see such organizations as a facilitator of the generation and development of movements.

Political process approach explains the significance of political environment on the occurrence of social movements. This strength, however, is in the meanwhile the weakness of this model. The focus of political structure and environment seemingly tends to contain cultural elements included in contemporary movements (Rupp and Taylor 1987); and, borrowed phrase from Alberto Melucci (1989), becomes “political reductionism.

Here we have examined two prevailing models of social movement studies. In a nutshell, resource mobilization theory and political process approach embody an alternative to collective behaviour theory. Considering social movements as a rational choice of action, both of them point out the determinants and crucial elements which give rise to social movements. The main difference between these two perspectives is that the former focuses extensively on the role of resource and organization while the latter emphasizes the political structure and describes collective actions as a product of both internal and external factors.

#### *New social movements*

Apart from the American traditions of studying social movement, the European trajectory provides another view of understanding social movements. In this strand of social movement study, the development of social movement is deeply influenced by Marxism (Crossley 2002; Staggenborg 2011; Buechler 2011). Marxism offers a structural theory of social movements as it pictures a configuration of the society with an inevitable conflict between capitalists and proletariats. The rise of new social movements theory is a shift of paradigm from the Marxist tradition which maintained the fundamental class conflict to cultural, symbolic and sub-political domains in contemporary society.

Marxism explains the rise of industrial society in terms of capitalism and the class struggle between capitalists and proletariats within industrial society. In the analysis of Marx, there is a concentration of the means of production in a monopolistic form by the bourgeoisie. The other classes which have no possession of the means of production are compelled to sell



their labour power to the capitalists (Mandel 1973). Workers, therefore, produce products for the capitalists who own the means of production, but not for themselves. The bourgeois class can accumulate capital through exploiting the fruits of labour of the working class. Following from this, society is polarized into these two opposing classes—bourgeoisie and proletariat. In this regard, in the theory of Marx, labour is assumed as the key agent of social movements due to the workers are regularly being exploited. In accordance with this idea, social movements are essentially labour movements in capitalist society.

New social movements theory tends to reject this specific Marxist historical thesis. They argue, following Alain Touraine (1971, 1981), that society has changed from an industrial society to “post-industrial society”, or what he terms as “programmed society”. Its characteristic is “all the domains of social life—education, consumption, information, etc. – are being more and more integrated into what used to be called production factors” (Touraine 1971: 5). The focus of the Marxist tradition on the class conflict between bourgeois and proletariat is therefore not applicable anymore. But in the programmed society, new social classes will replace the original conflicting social classes and tackle circumstances relevant to today’s programmed society. Social movements, according to Touraine (1981: 29), are “not a marginal rejection of order, they are the central forces fighting one against the other to control the production of society by itself and the action of classes for the shaping of historicity.”

There are some ritual differences between the “new” and “old” movements. First, they concern the diffused basis of new social movements. Some scholars assert the increasing importance of middle classes to the new

social movements (e.g. Eder 1993; Offe 1985). Others argue that class relation is no longer mainly economic but rooted in different realms such as gender, sexual orientation or citizenship (Dalton, and Kuechler 1990). It leads to the second significant concern of new social movement: the focus on collective identity (Gusfield 1994; Klandermans 1994; Melucci 1989, 1996). The engagement of the movement is inevitably tied to the formulation of identity since the traditional endowment of class identity within the Marxist class conflict is abandoned. Ernesto Laclau (1994), as a political philosopher, mentions that there is a “proliferation of particularistic political identities” and urges the importance of political identity construction to the mobilization of contemporary movements (Laclau 2005). Attention to the plurality of values is the third concern. In contrast with the traditional workers’ movements which developed a political critique of the social order and challenged the institutional structure, Clause Offe (1985) stresses the fluid organization and greater attention to the political and economic transformations are more appropriate to response the contemporary industrial society. Scott Hunt and his colleagues, on the other hands, argue that the concrete material value was the core of conventional movements but new social movements pursue post-materialist value (Hunt, Benford and Snow 1994). Dieter Rucht (1988) elaborates that individual autonomy and democratization is intertwined with the emergence of social movements. This concern is discussed by Jürgen Harbermas (1981). With his account of “the colonization of lifeworld”, he claims that the perseverance of plural value within movements is an attempt to redeem the corrosion of freedom and meaning caused by the penetration of individuals’ lifeworld by the economic and political systems.

New social movement theory, then, sees the movements as responses to new forms of social control in various aspects of the emerging advanced capitalist society. It is said, however, that most of the new social movements theories share a common problem, which is the neglect of analytical mechanisms. This is a strong critique put forward by political process theorists. The movements posit as an absolute reaction among the repression from the contemporary society but leave the problem of the emergence of action resolved.

Moreover, the break between “old” and “new” social movement is also not that clear. From the historical perspective, Charles Tilly (1988) argues that the formation of old and new social movements is nearly the same, whether it is in terms of the action of repertoire or the forming of organization and petitioning. Craig Calhoun (1993) mentions that the old social movement also involved the issue of culture and identity.

### *Summary*

These principal approaches to social movements throw light on understanding them in various ways - collective behaviour approach construes social movement as contention resulting from dysfunctions in the working of society; resource mobilization theory and political process approaches see movements at the organizational level and political level; and, new social movements theory makes over the legacy of Marxist tradition of social movement study in European School. In short, all provide suggestive elements for understanding social movements. This dissertation intends to draw on some of their ideas to understand and analyse the Occupy Movement.

## **Concepts of social movement**

Apart from these major frameworks of social movement studies, recent studies on social movement develop various concepts to study social movements, such as the concept of contention of repertoire (Tarrow 1998; Tilly 1978, 1986, 1995; Traugott 1995a, 1995b), framing (Diani 1996; McCarthy 1994; Snow and Benford 1992; Snow et al. 1986; Tarrow 1998), protest cycle (Brockett 1995; Della Porta and Tarrow 1987; McAdam 1998, 1995; Tarrow 1989, 1995, 1998; Zolberg 1972), identity (Laclau and Mouffe 2001; Laclau and Zac 1994; Melucci 1986; Touraine 1981) to name a few. All of these concepts are valuable and useful in revamping the existing paradigms.

### *Repertoire*

Social movements always have tactics, methods and strategies to persuade, or sometimes coerce, the existing authorities. In this regard, movements include a wide variety of actions. Academically, scholars use the concept of repertoire, or namely “repertoires of contention” or “contentious repertoire” (Tarrow 1998; Tilly 1978, 1995; Traugott 1995a, 1995b) to study movements’ selection of activities and strategies. Simply put, the repertoire is “a way that people act together in pursuit of shared interests (Tilly 1995: 41)”. Under this definition, movement activities including public meeting meetings, solemn processions, vigils, rallies, demonstrations, petition drives, statements to and in public media, and pamphleteering are all examples of repertoire. Based on the work of Charles Tilly and other scholars (Tilly 1978, 1986, 1995; Tilly and Wood 2009), three tenets are central.

First of all, the concept of repertoire indicates the rational choice of movements’ action. Movements include a lot of cherished values and

interests and then derive from their specific demands and goals. In this regard, the selections of actions is an attempt to achieve the goals. Generally, aims of the movement can be classified in terms of social change or personal change (Gusfield 1963; Breines 1989; Jenkins 1983). This in turn represents a fundamental distinction between 'strategy-oriented' and 'identity-oriented' direction of movements (Cohen 1985), and 'instrumental' and 'expressive' (Steinberg 1995; Bernstein 1997; Goodwin, Jasper and Khattra 1999; Buechler 2000). An example is sit-down strikes used in labour movement. Seeking the improvement of working condition and security, sit-down strikes and labour walkouts are widely used in labour movements. They are a means to disturb the factory production by increasing costs and deficits (Fatasia 1998; Fonow 1998; Lichtenstein 2002). In this way, sit-down strikes and labour walkouts are a kind of strategy-oriented tactic for labour movements to fight for their rights and benefits. Moreover, Turner and Killian (1987) indicate that movement activities generally involve four operations, namely persuasion, facilitation, bargaining, and coercion, depending on the movement aims and the tactical choices of movement activities. In short, the concept of repertoire shows that the selection of movement activities is not arbitrary but accords with the intention of the movements' actors.

Second, the concept of repertoire situates the choice of tactics and actions in the context of the movement and society. Theorists of contentious politics state that the choice of tactics and strategy is conditioned at a particular period of time (Tilly 1978, 1986, 2002; Tarrow 1989, 1998; Traugott 1995a; McAdam et al 1996, 2001). Choices of movement activities, according to Tilly (1995: 26), are "a limited set of routines that are learned, shared and acted out through a relatively deliberate process of choice." Strictly speaking, there are

patterns and standards for the selection of movement activities in the various historical, political and social contexts. The choices of movement tactics are subject to the acquired common form of actions. Notably, Charles Tilly (1978, 1986) studies the features of repertoire at a particular historical period of time which indicate that the sociopolitical circumstances domesticated the general forms and patterns of action for collective actions and insurgencies. For instance, repertoires before the nineteenth century were parochial, bifurcated and particular (Tilly 1986:391-6).

The last feature of the concept of repertoire is that the general pattern of movement activities changes over time. The factors that change the pattern of movement activities can be external and internal. Charles Tilly (1978, 1986, 1995), writing on the repertoire in the United States, Britain, and France between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, points out how macro-historical conditions influenced the repertoires. He argues that the rise of the nation-state and centralized decision-making, the development of capitalist society and the generation of modern forms of communication that emerged in the nineteenth century drastically changed the form of repertoire for collective movements. Tactical repertoire became cosmopolitan, modular and autonomous after the nineteenth century – which is what he calls the new repertoire; whilst parochial, bifurcated and particular repertoires before the nineteenth century were “old repertoire” (Tilly 1986: 391-396). Moreover, scholars show how the growth of national authorities (Tilly 1995; McAdam et al. 2001), geographic reach of political power (Fraser 1997; Ferree et al. 2002) and new forms of mass communication (Gouldner 1975; Chartier 1991; Tarrow 1998; Carty 2002) all influence pattern of repertoire.

Other than the external factors, internal movement processes are also

recognized as factors that are capable of changing the pattern of repertoire. Scholars identify three internal features that have impacts on the tactical choices. The first feature is level of organization. A set of debates is done to figure out if the level of organization is related to the use of disruptive tactics rather than conventional tactics. For instance, in the study of 'Poor People's Movement' by Piven and Cloward (1979), they suggest that a greater and more formal organization would more likely avoid the use of disruptive tactics and choose conventional tactic instead because of the inevitable consideration of interests and security of positions over the goals and benefits of the members. Some scholars support this argument with various studies of cases (e.g. Staggenborg 1988; Kriesi et al. 1995; Koopmans 1993). Other studies supplement previous arguments on the impacts of organizations to the tactical choice and indicate further elements which would influence the selection of repertoire (Rucht 1999; Cress and Snow 2000). The second feature is framing. A way to legitimate collective action and gain support is to select tactical repertoires which can resonate with public beliefs and ideas (Snow and Benford 1988; Gamson 1992; Jasper 1997; Benford and Snow 2000). Hence, the way participants make sense of the issue and the movement becomes an important consideration in the choice of repertoire.

The last feature is the structural power of participants (Schwartz 1976; Tilly 1978, 1986; Gamson 1989; Taylor 1996). The knowledge, capacity, sense of rights, relative position in the larger social structure obtained by movement participants in social movement organizations are all included in the consideration of tactic repertoire. Some studies point out that socioeconomic status would influence participants' choices of action within a movement (Piven and Cloward 1979; Scott 1985). Frances Piven and Richard

Cloward's study (1979), for example, shows the unemployed people are more likely to participate in riots and disruptive action because of limited institutional alternatives for expressing their grievances. Cultural resources are one of the determinants to affect the selection of repertoire. Employing Pierre Bourdieu's idea of habitus (1990), Nick Crossley (2002) analyses how habitus influences the repertoires used by different sectors of the psychiatric survivors' movement in the United Kingdom. In this case, protesters who have prior participation in radical form of protest used public demonstrations while another branch of activists with competence in academic psychiatry, and the media embraced a different set of tactics by using their skills and knowledge to process the campaign in their related fields: publishing books and articles and making films and documentaries about the mental health system.

The concept of repertoire expresses the idea that the set of actions is not simply an aberrant conduct and is associated with a specified period of time and concrete circumstance of the movement. It involves "not only what people do when they are engaged in conflict with others but what they know how to do and what others expect them to do (Tarrow 1998:30). At any rate, it is a set of tools and actions available to a movement at a given time.

### *Framing*

In the early 1980s, a variety of social movement scholars argued that critique to the major perspectives on social movement study as on overly structural and failed to capture the micro level of social construction processes that give rise to a movement (Gamson, Fireman and Rytina 1982; Klandermans 1984, 1992; Cohen 1985; Tarrow 1992). Hereafter, framing as a



social-psychological process for mobilizing people to join the movements was then widely studied and recognized as one of the central concepts to understand social movements (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; Benford and Snow2000).

Snow and his colleagues define frames as “schemata of interpretation” that enable individuals “to locate, perceive, identify and label” occurrences within their life space and the world at large” (Snow et al. 1986: 464). Framing refers to ways people read the events. Scholars use ‘framing’ to describe a process of meaning construction in social movement (Gamson et al. 1982; Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988). It captures the process of cognition and interpretation.

The earliest appropriations of framing within social movement studies came from the resource mobilization camp. As mentioned above, resource mobilization theorists indicate the importance of accessible resources and social network at their disposal to the rise of social movements. Framing is then used to explore how social movement organizations present a particular situation in an effort to mobilize people to act (Snow et al. 1986). In short, it is a concept to understand how “collective processes of interpretation, attribution, and social construction.....mediate between opportunity and action” (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996: 2)

It is argued that social movement organizations have to make their constituents accept their frame— the way they interpret the situation and meanings of the movement and organization—in order to secure their resource and support (Snow et al. 1986). Four steps of framing are identified by David Snow and his collaborators (1986). They are frame alignment, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation. Put succinctly, the

process addresses how a social movement organization connects with others by using a congruent frame (the steps of frame alignment, frame amplification, and frame extension) and elaborates to the public (frame transformation) in order to gain more support and resource. Plus, some studies figure out the elements' influence on the interpretative processes. Examples include studies of how emotion affects the process of interpretation (Tarrow 1998); how media interpret and present political issues and events (Gitlin 1980; Ryan 1991; Scheufele 1999); how state officials promote demobilizing frames (della Porta 2002; Zuo and Benford 1994); and how counter movements present an antagonistic frame and interpretation to a similar issue. (Staggenborg 1991; Meyer and Staggenborg 1996).

David Snow and Robert Benford analyze the basic functions of framing process more precisely in their subsequent work (1988). Three foundational framing tasks are identified—diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing. Firstly, diagnostic framing “identifies a problem and attributes blame or causality.” (Snow and Benford 1988: 200) The second task is prognostic framing. It gives a solution to the problem identified in the diagnosis. It changes in accordance with the attribution of diagnostic framing. The third task is motivational framing. It is a call for action. It provides reasons to persuade people to join the movement. Besides, William Gamson (1992) proposes another list of framing function with three elementary tasks—identity, agency, and injustice. In accordance with this account, a framing process should be able to identify an aggrieved group with shared interests and benefits, and specifies as ‘we’. Followed with this, the movement organizers should provide a frame that convinces ‘we’ to believe the dire conditions can be changed in order to encourage those in the ‘we’ to

become the agents of them. Finally, it is said to locate the blame of resentment on an opposing institutions or authorities as a composed 'them' and motivates members to act. The main difference between these accounts is the role of injustice. According to Benford and Snow (2000), the role of injustice is not applicable to all kinds of movement such as religious movements. These accounts, even they are not the same, figure out the basic functions of the framing so as to embellish the enormity and urgency of a social issue and then make diagnostic and prognostic attributions. It enables activist to concatenate events and experience for giving rise to movement.

The idea of framing indicates the subjective component of bringing adherents around. Beyond that, scholars make reference to its relationship with the emergence and decline of the protest cycle and tactical repertoire. David Snow and his colleagues, particularly, explain an idea of master frame:

What we call master frames perform the same functions as movement-specific collective action frames, but they do so on a larger and articulation..... Master frames are to movement-specific collective action frames as paradigms are to finely tuned theories. Master frames are generic; specific collective action frames are derivative.

(Snow and Benford 1992: 138)

These are less specific frames which may be appropriated and adopted by any number of other social movements organizations in their campaigns. In light of the master frame, Snow and Benford (1992) illustrate its constraint and clout of orientations and activities movements. More specifically, it is an explanation for the relationship between master framing and emergence and decline of protest cycle, and tactical repertoire.

For the relationship between the master frame and emergence and

decline of protest cycle, along with an array of observation to movements in the 1980s, Sidney Tarrow (1983) has showed the role of framing in relation to the rise and decline of cycles. Snow and Benford (1992) further discuss the additional feature the master frames constitute to the protest cycle. They suggest that the development of an innovative master frame is associated with the emergence of a protest cycle and an absence of a resonant master frame would be a reason for failures of mass mobilization. The master frame also creates tactical innovation and constrains the choice of repertoire (Snow and Benford 1992). An innovative frame contributes to the start of the cycle. It also encourages inventiveness of the repertoire. Thus, the development and selection of movement activities and tactics are consistent with the diagnostic and prognostic components of a movement's frame. The interpretation of a problem directs the movement and then orients the selection of repertoire.

Conversely, impotence of the anchoring master frame and the emergence of competing frames leads to decline. The movement recedes as the master frame is challenged and then may be incapable of convincing adherents to join (Snow and Benford 1992). The process from beginning to dissipations of the frame is shadows with the process from beginnings to the decline of the movement. Frame resonance is central. As Valocchi (2005) argues, "the key to framing is finding evocative cultural symbols that resonate with potential constituents and are capable of motivating them to collective action." To mobilize adherents, a social movement organization has to offer an attractive frame in order to resonate with members. Otherwise, with the emergence of competing frames promoted by the state or the counter movements, the movement may fall short.

The idea of framing indicates the importance of providing an

interpretation to the grievance and resentment for mobilization of the movement. The follow-up discussion of framing goes a step further to uncoil its impacts on the development and dynamics of movement and the tactical repertoire.

### *Summary*

In this section, I have illustrated some of the important concepts of social movement studies. All of these concepts are useful to understand social movements and supplements to the major social movement perspectives. In this dissertation, they provide various ways to understand the Occupy Movement. Particularly, the concept of repertoire and framing will be employed to analyse the movement.

### **Visions**

One of the most significant premises of social movement study, especially for those current accounts, is that movements are a rational choice of collective action rather than merely a result of psychological disruption. A detailed discussion of this kind of analysis is impossible within the confines of this thesis. Instead of offering a detailed discussion on this wide topic, I will extensively focus on the concept of vision for an analytic reason. It is a concept with implications for the rationalization of action. I will rely on the classic work of Thomas Sowell (2002), *The Conflict of Vision*, in which he discusses the concept of the vision intensively. While the Occupy Movement had a very clear goal, this concept connects the purpose of the movement with its evolution.

### *The concept of vision*

Other than the commonly accepted usage of the term, vision is used by Thomas Sowell to scrutinize the history of ideas, controversies in politics, and the persistence of ideological differences. As Sowell says:

A vision, as the term is used here, is not a dream, a hope, a prophecy, or a moral imperative, though any of these things may ultimately derive from some particular vision. Here a vision is a sense of causation. It is more like a hunch or a "gut feeling" than it is like an exercise in logic or factual verification.

(Sowell 2002:6)

Describing visions as "a sense of causation", it implies a surreptitious connection between causes and outcomes. The notion of causation helps to explain intentional and motivated conducts of people in everyday life. Through processes of rational reasoning and thoughts, purposes and interests are people know what they are and people know what they are intending and trying to do. For example, a farmer farms; and normally he will reap a harvest in every season. After a farmer crop, he may sell all the farmed products in the markets. In that matter, the purpose of selling the products can be simple and apparent that he wants to earn money through selling the agricultural products. The reason can be so straightforward that the farmer wants revenue to sustain his life. People can then understand the subjective purpose of the farmer to reap the harvest; and, the reason the farmer provides in explanation of his action. The notion of causation is for the identification of actions of the farmers here. People can provide reasons to vindicate, and motivate, their intentional conducts and actions with purposes.

Yet, as referred to as a "hunch or a gut feeling", the concept of the vision does not sounds like glaring logical reasoning. Visions are related to a veiled

rationalization which is a lurking in people's mind to justify and countenance particular behaviours and intentions. It does not belong to the explanation of how people apply knowledge and experience at any point in time; of how people consider interests and concerns of their own or of other people; and, of how people create purposes or intentions for actions and practices. Instead, more appropriately, visions are intuitions about the nature of a particular process of causation. No matter what kinds of reason are offered by an actor to validate and explain one's conscious conduct, a vision mirrors a connection between the sense of the particular issue and the identification of action:

For example, primitive man's sense of why leaves move may have been that some spirit moves them, and his sense of why tides rise or volcanoes erupt may have run along similar lines. Newton had a very different vision of how the world works and Einstein still another. For social phenomena, Rousseau had a very different vision of human causation from that of Edmund Burke.

(Sowell 2002:4)

In this regard, I shall refer to visions as another concealed layer of causation which is a visceral sense of rationalization of action. Visions embody an instinctive sense of what things are and how they work for purposes and interests for the identification of action. A vivid metaphor to illustrate visions borrowed the phrase from Sowell (2002: xi), is "the silent shapers of our thoughts.

The ideological differences in political struggles are what Thomas Sowell tends to consider. He does not see political struggles merely as a conflict between contending powers, values, interests or benefits. On the contrary, it should seem as a conflict of visions as he finds that very often the same familiar groups of people line up alongside on a wide range of topics from

opposite sides of politics (Sowell 2002:3). That people hold similar standpoints on different public issues and controversies is derived fundamentally from different kinds of premises and assumptions. More specifically, it seems to be proper to say that visions are at the root of political struggles.

*The features of the concept of the vision*

From the account of the vision offered by Thomas Sowell, we see two key tenets. The first one is that a vision always exists. The formulation of visions, at the beginning of his book, is used to unravel the essence of political contests. This implies that the role of vision is mighty in assembling groups of people with compatible and coherent assumed facts and causes of something. Yet, the concept of the vision does not merely apply to political struggles. Rather, it is argued that visions can be found in all social theories. Taking a wide range of Western ideas and theories collectively, Sowell deems that all of them imply an assumption about human nature. Fundamentally, there are two types of vision - one is the unconstrained vision which assumes that human nature is malleable; the other one is the constrained vision which assumes that human nature is fixed and flawed. They separately underlie an enormous amount of the Western social and political traditions. In this regard, the existence of the impact of visions is appropriate to political struggles as well as to the construction of social theories and other ideas like equality, justice and power. Besides these intelligible legacies, visions are implied in collective actions. It is exemplified in the two great revolutions in America and in France in the eighteenth century, the actions and propositions of these revolutions embodied the constrained and unconstrained visions respectively.



These two ends of revolutions were demonstrated to show that the significance of visions is also applicable to direct collective actions and events. In accordance with the examples of other theories and ideas mentioned by Sowell and cited above, the operations of the vision can be said underlie and direct the construction of thoughts and rationalizations, as well as individual and collective decision makings and actions.

The second feature of the vision is that it exists more or less inadvertently. According to Sowell, visions act as “hunches” “gut-feelings” and “silent shapes”. While theories are sets of commonly accepted and tested principles that attempt to provide rational and logical understanding and explanation to the perceived reality, visions offer a concealed sense of causation to actions and thoughts. Vision is a way to understanding how people provide reasons and purposes to justify their actions and decisions. The veiled impact of visions is pretty understandable to these purposive actions and constructions of ideas and thoughts.

### *Summary*

Considering vision as a kind of covert assumption of something which, most of the time, is inadvertent and which guides the construction of theories, thoughts and ideas, we can apply it the study of Occupy Movement. It helps to understand the tacit and covert purposes and intentions of actions of participants and the ways they think about the movement.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, examining the three major traditions of social movements study, namely collective behaviour approach, resource mobilization theory,

political process theory and new social movements theory, together with specific concepts on social movement study, the general trend of social movement literature have been reviewed. All of the literature is relevant to social movement in Hong Kong. The second part of this chapter has reviewed the concept of visions. As a concept to illustrate implicit reasoning process, it helps us interpret the justification of collective actions.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

As an unprecedented mass movement in Hong Kong, it is reasonable to locate the Occupy Movement in the field of social movement theory. However, my study will not locate the movement in any specific paradigm or explain the movement in terms of any particular dimension. There are two reasons.

First, this study is an attempt to better understand the entire Occupy Movement instead of just simplifying the movement as a political movement or pan-democratic movement. Considering this central objective, this study intends to disentangle the details of the movement and disclose the scope of the movements. Given the complexity of the whole movement, it is pretty inept to provide merely a single type of explanation for it and overlook other significant elements of the movement.

Moreover, instead of focusing on only one aspect of a movement, scholars suggest to construct a broad analytic perspective on social movements to stress the determinant and interactive effects of the structure of political constraints, mobilizing structure and collective process of interpretation and attribution (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; Mueller 1992). Apart from these three sets of factors, recent formulations also concern the meaning of the events and structures for the movement participants themselves (Miethe 2008). In this regard, I seek to sketch the relationship between these factors and thus yield a fuller understanding of the dynamics of the Occupy Movement.

To better understand the movement, it is best to show the concrete

episodes of the movement and investigate the meanings and significations of the movement in detail and through the actions of the participants.

### **Strands of understanding**

A point stressed repeatedly in this work is the objective of achieving a better understanding of the Occupy Movement. How best to do that? In this regard, it is appropriate to look at a rigorous approach to the concept of sociological understanding.

One of the brilliant theorists of understanding is W. G. Runciman (1983). He offers a lucid and scrupulous account to illustrate the concept of understanding which divides methodology into three levels. In the following, I will briefly introduce his tripartite system of understanding.

First of all, the practice of primary understanding is regarded as reportage (Runciman 1983: 57-144). This refers to the identification and observation of sequences of actions, events or happenings in a particular period of time. The reportage of human conduct is a response to a question "what happened?" Successful reports of human conducts should fulfill at least two conditions. The first one is that the reports have to record the events or happenings copiously and accurately as well as the corresponding purposes and intentions in the context of the happening; the second one is that the reports should contain the least explanatory and evaluative bias even though presuppositions influence the observations of human conducts more or less inevitably. Provided that the accurate reportage of human conduct is acquired as factual, it is supposed to be accepted by observers who are from different, or even rival, theoretical schools (Runciman 1983:95).

The second strand of understanding is the explanation (Runciman 1983:

223-300). If the primary level of understanding is an attempt to answer the question: "what happened?", the secondary level of understanding answers another question: "why did it happen?" In this task, reasons should be offered to figure out why the events happened in the way they did. Different students of the social science would probably provide various types of explanation for the reported human conducts. In general, it is an attempt of giving an account of and making sense of any chosen event, process or state of affairs. Two requirements have to be fulfilled - the specification of causes and the expression of how and why the causes have these effects. For instance, one who tries to explain the tidal flow accurately should not simply point out that the rotation of the earth with relation to the moon is the cause of this natural phenomenon; rather, one must show that in what way it has the effect it does.

Description is the practice of the tertiary level of understanding. In a special usage of this term, it does not mean a simple statement in words or an account of representation. Notice that the first two strands of understanding operate similarly in the natural sciences and the social sciences, but the description in such a usage is a unique task for social scientists. This responds to the question "What was it like?" It aims to convey an accurate impression of what an action feels like to those who were involved in the chosen event, process or state of affairs. It is an attempt to capture the senses of actions and events for those who enact them. To be sure, there is a difference between reportage of human conduct and description of human conduct although these two terms seem to have a similar meaning in daily English usage. The core feature of the description is that it does not merely involve a recapitulation of actors' thoughts, feelings and actions, like the accurate

report of the events or happening in the given context. Rather, it contains a reinterpretation of the meaning of what the actors say about their thoughts and feelings. Describing the sense of actors helps to understand the influence of causes. To take a classic example, in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1992), Max Weber illustrated that religious was an important factor to create the spirit of hard work and progress which influenced the development of capitalism. To understand the connection between religious and the working ethic, the way Protestants (particularly the Calvinists) perceived the salvation is crucial. Otherwise, we cannot realize how the religious belief provided the sense of hard work, discipline and frugality for the rise of capitalism at that time.

This sophisticated and thorough account of understanding exemplified in W. G. Runciman suggests three strands of rigorous operation of understanding (see Table 1). It definitely helps this study to achieve an accurate and meticulous understanding of the Occupy Movement.

Table 1: Strands of understanding

Levels of understanding	Operations of understanding	The responding question	The practice of the understanding
1. Primary	Reportage	What happened?	To depict the human actions or the events.
2. Secondary	Explanation	Why did it happen?	To illustrate the causes of the human actions or the events.
3. Tertiary	Description	What was it like?	To analyse the people's subjective states of mind of the events.

### **Repertoire, framing and visions as the guiding concepts**

Having now reviewed the tripartite system of understanding W. G. Runciman develops, the analysis of the Occupy Movement will focus on "reporting" the detail of the events of the movement, "explaining" the events, and "describing" the feelings of actors towards the events. In this regard, the concepts of repertoire, framing and visions which capture various parts of the movement can aid the tasks of understanding.

#### *The concept of repertoire*

The concept of repertoire refers particularly to the selection of movement activities. An analysis of the repertoire for Occupy Movement, then, identifies the actions and events that occupiers performed during the course of the movement. In this regard, the study of the repertoire for the movement can sketch its process and operation, and list what happened over that period of

time. In such a way, this performs the function of primary level of understanding which requires a rigorous detail of events. From a scrupulous illustration of the repertoire of the movement, an integrated picture of Occupy Movement can be drawn.

Moreover, the study of the repertoire of Occupy Movement can also perform the function of the second strand of understanding in at least two ways. First, the proposition that the selection of movement actions is not capricious generates capacity for serving the functions of explanation. The concept of repertoire lays stress on unraveling the elements that bridle the participants' choices of actions in a movement. This highlights influences on the options of movement activities from the internal operations of movements and the sociopolitical situation. The study of the repertoire of the Occupy Movement, by this point, does not merely contain the list of the actions appearing in the movement. It also considers how the progression of the movement and the cultivated pattern of organizing movements affect the choice of movement activities. This implies that actions of movements are imbued with various components. Considering the second level of understanding which requires explanations for the actions and events, the analysis of the repertoire of Occupy Movement is capable of accounting for the reasons for participants' selection of actions in this way.

Second, the assertion that movements are purposive also has a capability for making an explanation of actions. This assumption is widely developed by resource mobilization theory and political process theory as they rebuff the assumption of collective behaviour approach as a result of collective psychological disruption. This suggests that movements are purposive and led by assorted cherished values. In this way, the option of movement



activities is supposedly in accordance with the goal of the movement. In this connection, the aims of the Occupy Movement and the purposes of the actions are able to offer an explanation for the movement activities as well. Put simply, the analysis of the variety of the repertoire can broaden the understanding of Occupy Movement since it is able to tackle the tasks of the primary and secondary level of understanding.

### *The concept of framing*

I remarked in the previous section that the study of repertoire of Occupy Movement can only perform the function of the secondary level of understanding in part. Indeed, as I have demonstrated, the concept of repertoire can help to explain movement activities in two ways. Even so, literature on the study of social movements indicates different ways to explain what happens within movements. Particularly, the factors influencing the selection of actions mentioned by the concept of repertoire more or less highlight the structural and organizational aspects of the movement only such as the acquired order of actions and the intentions of the movement.

The concept of framing, in contrast, pays attention to the micro-level ways of mobilization. It reveals how the movement entrepreneurs offer interpretations of the problem, solutions and reasons to recruit movement participants. Considered more closely, framing processes are ways of meaning construction to persuade people to accept their utterances and join the movement. This points to the way that occupiers are convinced to take part in the campaign. It can offer a way of explaining the progression of Occupy Movement that the concept of repertoire does not capture.

Furthermore, the analysis of framing can also serve the tertiary level of

understanding. Identifying problems and suggesting corresponding solutions, frames are movement organizers' definition of situation. The analysis of framing is capturing the organizers' subjective perception of the movement. Also, an important criterion of framing is whether the interpretation of problems can create resonance with the public; otherwise it means the failure of recruitment. While people choose to accept, or not to accept, the frame, it is a posture towards the establishment of that particular frame, frame generator and even the represented factions. Since the tertiary level of understanding, description, refers to the "feeling" of the events, the analysis of the framing can then capture how the actors "feel" the entire movement and the participated factions of the movement by disclosing their attitude towards the frames of the movement.

#### *The concept of vision*

The concept of vision also serves as a guiding concept since it can accomplish both the tasks of the explanation and description for understanding the Occupy Movement.

An important feature of the concept of vision, perhaps the most crucial one, is the proposition that visions perpetually exist to direct human conducts and thoughts inadvertently. This helps to explain the occupiers' actions and their expressions of the movement as well as other actors in a way which the analysis of the repertoire and the framing process of the Occupy Movement do not.

How does the analysis of visions of occupiers aid the tasks of explanation and description? Basically, my contention relies on the difference between the traditional and contemporary account of studying human conduct. In this

connection, a brief elaboration on these two formulations is in order.

Max Weber suggests that sociology is a “science concerning itself with the interpretive understanding of social action and thereby with a causal explanation of its course and consequences. (1968: 4)” In his account, actions are not reactive behaviour but attached with meanings and significances. The meaning linked with social actions can be determined by benefits, beliefs, feelings and traditions in general. Although the line between them is often obscure, it is important to notice that Weber’s account denies an idea that individuals act senselessly but attach subjective meanings to their action.

By contrast, recent formulations tend to explicate the internalization of the social action. As an illustration, Ann Swidler (1986) likens culture to a tool-kit, a set of habits, skills, and styles which people employ in their conduct. The metaphor of the tool-kit connects human conduct in terms of action to practice. Individuals’ conduct is not simply guided and supervised by our orientation and subjectivity or structure and system. Rather, it is subject to a covert aggregation of culture in a particular time and specified context. Pierre Bourdieu’s account (1977) of habitus also shows how human conduct is affected by inherent and underlying social order and by class. Any type of the human conduct is somehow projecting an understanding of the issue, and intrinsic perception of the context and condition of the background. Another instance is Michel Foucault’s account of discipline (1977). Pinpointing the effect of power through with modern regimes like prisons and asylums, Foucault reckons human conducts are tamed and channeled by disciplinary power through diffuse and circulated forms of governmentality and centralized control. In this regard, individuals learn to regulate and rectify their conducts and practices bodily and unconsciously.

These two dominant formulations of studying social action can capture the subjective meanings of movement activities. However they fail to grasp implicit meanings and presumed causation of those actions and thoughts. In this regard, an analysis of the visions of factions of Occupy Movement can correct this weakness. Referring to the hidden reasoning process, the concept of vision can help explain the occupiers' actions and describe their "feelings". Put it differently, together with the analysis of the repertoire and the framing process of the Occupy Movement, the study of visions can complete the task of the explanation and the description through investigating the implicit gestation of those occupiers' actions and feelings towards the events and other actors.

## Research Questions

The concepts of repertoire, framing, and vision inform the research questions as formulated below:

- 1 What happened during the movement?
  - 1.1 What did the movement organizers do during the movement?
  - 1.2 What did the movement participants do during the movement?
  - 1.3 Was there any difference in the conduct of both the movement organizers and movement participants when the movement moved on? If any, what caused the changes?

(This seeks to capture the repertoire of the movement. Inquiring the movement activities, the task of reportage can be fulfilled.)

- 2 What caused the occupiers to act in the way they did?
  - 2.1 What were the purposes of the actions of the movement organizers?
  - 2.2 What were the purposes of the actions of the movement participants?
  - 2.3 What were the factors that influence the actions of the occupiers (both the movement organizers and the movement participants)?

(This seek to identify factors influencing the selection of movement activities, and can aid the task of explanation partly by indicating the causes that generated and led to the evolution of the movement.)

- 3 How did the movement participants perceive the events and the circumstances?
  - 3.1 What interpretation of the issue did the movement organizers make?

- 3.2 What did the movement organizers suggest to do to tackle their noticed situation?
- 3.3 What motivation did the movement organizers give to draw the support from the public?
- 3.4 What did the movement participants think about the movement organizers' interpretation of the issue, suggestion about the noticed situation and the motivation they gave to draw support from the public?

(This relates to the interpretation of the movement. Demarcating the movement organizers' perceptions set forth the frames they construct for the movement. It aids the tasks of explanation and description.)

- 4 What assessment of both the Occupy Central and Occupy Movement did the movement organizers and other movement participants make?
  - 4.1 What did the movement participants think about the Occupy Central and the Occupy Movement?
  - 4.2 What did the movement participants think about the movement organizers and their fellow participants?
  - 4.3 What criteria did the movement participants use in the assessment of the Occupy Central and the Occupy Movement?

(This tries to disclose actors' vision projected to the movement from their judgement of the movement. This aids the tasks of explanation and description through disclosing the underlying assumption of their actions and perceptions.)

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the formulation of understanding W. G. Runciman develops is useful for this study as it offers a tripartite system to understand the Occupy Movement. The operations of understanding, notably reportage, explanation and description, contribute to a sociological analysis of the movement. With reference to this approach, the analyses of repertoire, the framing process and visions of actors of the movement can aid the tasks of understanding in different ways. Also, they can capture the structural constraints confronting the movement, the collective processes of interpretation that legitimate and motivate collective action, and the presumed causation of movement participants respectively. In this regard, my research framework for the study of Occupy Movement takes up these three concepts as the guiding concepts. In the next chapter, I will discuss how I conduct the research concretely on the basis of this framework.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology selection should be based on the topic and objectives of the study. The primary objective of this study, again, is to offer a comprehensive analysis of the Occupy Movement by discerning its multi-faceted nature. To this end, it discusses the repertoire and framing process of the movement and tries to disclose the implicit or explicit meaning and visions of the movement. In the light of this objective, instead of employing the quantitative approach to generate an empirical observation and a statistical expression of the movement, the qualitative approach is more appropriate to tap the occupiers' experience and perception so as to capture the complexity and intricacy of the movement.

#### **Research Methods**

In accordance with the research framework I have constructed on the basis of W. G. Runciman's formulation of understanding, the question arises as how to collect data for analyzing the repertoire, framing process and visions of the movement. Documentary and in-depth interviews are of special relevant here.

#### *Documents review*

Document review in this study is an attempt to provide basic information about the factions of the movement. Documents are written by the engaged organizations in order to announce their views of the issues, their aims and their sense of grievance. Documents capture the political



stands and attitude of occupiers. In this regard, this part of the method focuses on the message that the documents encode. This helps us to figure out the general standpoints and claims of the participant organizations in order to outline the context of the movement.

Documents reviewed in this study include mainly the official statements of the organizations of the movement. These explicitly state positions and demands. In addition, other unofficial materials like the internet articles, propaganda, leaflets and handbills which elaborate standpoints and demands will also be considered in this study.

#### *Semi-structured interviewing*

As a form of “face-to-face verbal interchange (Maccoby and Maccoby 1954: 499)”, in-depth interviewing enables the researcher to get into the respondents’ episodes through eliciting their involvement and participation in, as well as expression of opinion, feeling and beliefs.

Considering the complexity of the Occupy Movement, semi-structured interview is the suitable type of interview for this study. The semi-structured interview uses an interview guide to include all questions and information required from each informant to conduct an interview. Unlike structured interview, it allows flexibility for the free expression of all kinds of ideas and experience from the respondents. Simply put, it enables the informants to digress and deviate from a path of the guidance of the conversation. At the cost of the weakened systematic comparability of the data, it extends the breadth and depth of data as this type of interview gives an opportunity to the respondents to express their experience and interpretation on the object of study, and gives the researcher access to the subjects’ ideas, thoughts and

memories.

There are three reasons for this choice. First, this type of interview has the flexibility to allow the respondents to describe their personal and prolonged involvement in the movement more fully and clearly so as to capture the details of the movement. There were three occupied sites. If the occupier stayed over the demonstration zone in Admiralty mainly, the experience or involvement might be very different from occupiers who had their days and nights at the occupied site of Mong Kok or Causeway Bay. The prolongation and the huge scale of the movement make their experience distinctive and probably dissimilar from the others' in different periods of the movement and other occupied areas. A more flexible form of interview is more suitable to include unique experience and feelings of involvement and capture the difference in various locations and time from their information. Second, it allows informants to give descriptions of their differences. Like other movements, the Occupy Movement contains factions. Nearly all pan-democracy parties and organization were involved in the movement. An occupier may be a member of participating organizations. He or she may obtain higher or lower position within the factions. Their political background would affect how much information the respondents have. In this regard, a highly rigid form of interview might overlook additional information of various movement factions. It makes semi-structured interviewing more preferable in this study in term of its ability to modify the interview content whenever it needs to match up with the informants' political background and position within the faction. Third, semi-structured interviewing is proper to examine the meaning of the movement. By "meaning", I refer to how the participants regard their involvement and how

they make sense of their circumstances. One advantage of semi-structured interview is that it is free to improvise with the follow up questions and sequence for the purpose of seeking more information (Gilbert 2001: 124), it enables the researcher to gain insight into the respondents' view and mentality by follow-up questions. Asking a series of follow-up questions properly is a way to further disentangle the informants' visions and imagination of the present, and expectation of the future. In short, this type of interview with less rigidity can encourage the occupiers to share their personal prolonged involvement in the movement, and their thoughts and feelings toward the movement. Their unique and personal experience and observation in the movement provide additional information to draw the whole contour of the movement.

#### *Interview guide*

Kahn and Cannell (1957: 131) suggest that the question in either in-depth interview or survey questionnaire should be able to wed the research objectives with the research questions and motivate respondents to elicit the necessary information. For this purpose, my interview questions are structured around the guiding concepts of this study.

There are four sections in the interview guide. The first section concerns the demographic information of the respondents. The second and third section refers to the section of repertoire and framing respectively. The section of overall assessment to the movement is the last section of the interview guide.

In the section of repertoire, I ask the informants to describe their participation in the movement over all three periods of its life and give as

much detail as possible. By doing so, I can access their involvement and find out the exact movement activities within the movement and, at the same time, figure out the changes, if any, of the repertoire when the movement dragged on.

In the section of framing, I ask the informants to tell me the motivation of their participation and their views on various factions of the movement and particular movement activities and events. This solicits their interpretation of the movement and justifications of their involvement.

The movement lasted more than 70 days. For analytical purposes, I divide the movement into three stages (see Table 2). The first stage was from the class boycott campaign in late September to early October when the protesters set up street barricades. After the Beijing government nixed the public nomination for the election of chief executive in 2017, the students' organizations planned to boycott classes in late September to protest Beijing's decision. Students stormed the government headquarters' forecourt to seize the Civic Square on the last day of the campaign. The week-long class boycott finally ended with chaotic scenes. While the student leaders were dragged away and police used pepper spray on protesters, thousands of students and their supporters were gathering outside the government headquarters. This sparked the Occupy Movement. After that, police fired tear gas at thousands of protesters hours after the official announcement of the commencement of Occupy Central. Yet the use of pepper spray, batons and tear gas could not disperse the protesters. More than 30,000 protesters blocked a number of main roads and set up the occupied sites in Admiralty, Mong Kok and Causeway Bay. This was how the Occupy Movement occurred (South China Morning Post 2014a). This was the beginning stage

and the most riotous and rowdy period.

Table 2: Stages of the movement

Stages	Length	Brief description
Stage 1	From the class boycott in late September to early October the protesters started barricading the thoroughfares and set up the occupied sites.	The beginning of the movement; The most chaotic period of the movement;
Stage 2	From the setup of the occupied sites to mid-October when the Hong Kong government representatives and leaders of the Hong Kong Federation of students held their first talks.	The government refused to make any concession but offered a talks with students leaders; The talks were postponed as the students leaders accused the police of “double standards” in dealing with the anti-occupy protesters;
Stage 3	From the talks between Hong Kong government representatives and leaders of HKFS to the end of the movement in early December.	The movement was in stalemate after the talks; The movement was impeded by internal conflicts which became intense until the end of the movement.

The second stage was from the period in which sites were occupied to when the riot police retreated in mid-October and when the Hong Kong government representatives and the leaders of Hong Kong Federation of Students held their first talks. The riot police pulled back “after road-blocking citizens had mostly calmed down” (South China morning post 2014b) the day after the 87 volleys of tear gas were fired. Yet the protesters did not move. They continued to shout out their demands for the resignation of Leung Chun-ying and the retraction of Beijing’s August decision.

However, Leung refused to resign and insisted the August Decision was unchangeable. The Chief Executive then offered talks with the student leaders to try to resolve the issues. He entrusted Chief Secretary Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor to have a conversation with the student leaders. The talks might be a way to resolve the problem. But it was postponed due to the fracas in the occupied sites in Mong Kok and Causeway Bay. Although the riot police withdrew, anti-Occupy activists attacked the occupiers and made a scene of chaos in the occupied sites again. The anti-Occupy activists kept violently clashing with the occupiers and brought in a crane to scoop up the barricades in Admiralty and the police failed to protect the occupiers and just let the anti-Occupy activists attack the occupiers. Student leaders accused the police of a “double standard” in dealing with the anti-occupy protesters. The talks were then called off until the mid-October. This stage was still a little bit chaotic due to the attack from the anti-Occupy activists.

The last stage of the movement was from mid-October to the end of the movement in early December. While the government stated clearly that the Chinese government would not bow to occupiers’ demands and the political reform must be conducted according to the Basic Law and the August Decision and the students leaders also made clear they would not leave their demonstration zones, the long-awaited dialogue between the government representatives and students leaders failed to reach any agreement to fix the problems that triggered the occupation. After that, the movement was in stalemate. People stayed in tents on the streets but the government still did not make any concessions. The movement fizzled out. The deadlock to some occupiers was very unsatisfactory. The goal of universal suffrage seemed to be far away. Meanwhile, the attack from anti-Occupy activists carried on; the

government tended to remove the occupation by legal strategy; public support continuously dropped; and the police tried to clear the occupied zone with the use of violence against the protesters. The occupiers became demoralized. Some radical protesters then requested to expand the movement. It deepened the split among occupiers. Radicals accused the marshal team of overruling the participants in the movement and others described the radicals as “troublemakers”. Several members of Civic Passion, a radical localist group, together with other radicals challenged the leadership and confronted the main stage located in the center of Harcourt Road. In response, the founders of Occupy Central and some leaders of pan-democracy party planned to turn themselves into the police. In this stage, the movement was in stalemate and the internal conflict between factions were intense.

Dividing the movement into these three stages helps me to construct the interview guide. It helps me to describe respondents’ involvement chronologically. In the section of repertoire, the stages help me to identify if there is change in the selection of movement activities more systematically, and is better than asking the informants to depict their engagement day by day. In regard to the section of framing, I select the key events and issues in each stage for the set-up of the questions. Also, the stages represent a decline of the movement. The informants’ understanding of the rhythm of the movement is drawn out as well.

The last section of the interview guide focused on how the interviewees assess the entire movement in order to disclose their possible vision of society which could covertly influence the reasons for their involvement and the choice of action.

*In combination with document reviewed and semi-structured interview*

The two research methods are complementary in two ways. First, the documents review provides information and context to create the interview guide. An adequate preparation is the first point of achieving a successful interview (Thompson 2000:222). The documents reviewed provide basic information about the factions of the movement and help the construction of the interview guide. Second, the interviews can revamp the possible bias of availability of documentary material about the social movement. The documentary sources do sometimes have bias. The propaganda and statement of social movement organizations are often produced by the leaders officially to represent the standpoint of their organization. But it might exclude the views of rank-and-file participants. The document can never show the diversity of opinion within the group. Interviewing is a way to counteract the possible bias of documentary material.

### **Designing Samples**

Unlike a quantitative approach which requires a large sample size for generalizing population, the qualitative approach focuses upon a small but purposively recruited sample instead. However, before the selection of samples, the first step of the sampling process is to define an appropriate population which fits in the research (Berg 2007:39-41; Gilbert 2001: 29). It is problematic.

*Defining the population*

Many movements do not maintain a list of participants. But the Occupy Central did. The potential participants of Occupy Central had signed a letter



of intent in advance. People who signed the letter indicated they agreed with the basic conviction of Occupy Central and would support or join the campaign. However, when the movement expanded and turned into the larger scale of occupation, it did not follow the original plan of Occupy Central and became a self-motivated campaign as protesters went out on the street spontaneously. The original list of participants of Occupy Central obviously cannot include all members of the movement.

Actual occupiers who engaged in the movement activities are regarded as the population in this study. Considering the extent of the participation in the movement, only the occupiers who were involved in the movement intensively are considered as potential informants. By intensive participation, I refer to the length of time of their involvement. Within the three periods I have set out, the first period is relatively short. Selecting occupiers who were involved in at least two stages of the movement as informants would ensure they have a large extent of involvement in the movement. In this regard, informants have to engage in at least two of the three stages to be seen as intensive participants.

### *Sampling process*

In order to select appropriate samples to study, I did three rounds of sampling. The first and the second round are purposive sampling and the final round is the snowball sampling.

Known as judgmental or subjective sampling (Hagan 2006), purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling technique. In it, samples are selected on the basis of knowledge of the population and the objective of the study. In the first round of sampling, I selected the members of student

organizations for interviews. Hong Kong Federation of Students and Scholarism were the most iconic student organization in the movement. They launched the class boycott which sparked the movement and turned the movement into the larger scale of occupation. They wielded a lot of influence and made the student leaders the effective leaders of the movement – the government offered dialog with student leaders; the student leaders made speeches on the main stage of the demonstration zone in Admiralty every night; the student leaders were feted as celebrities at the protest site of Admiralty. Even so, the leadership of the Occupy Movement was not clear. Protesters in Mong Kok split with student leadership - students were taunted and heckled by other occupiers while the member of Hong Kong Federation of Students hoped to do more communication work and reconnect with the protesters in Mong Kok. At any rate, considering the leverage of the ambush action, student organizations were crucial units to transmit the campaign from Occupy Central to Occupy Movement. The first round of interviews, then, concentrated on members of student organizations.

In the second round of sampling, I selected active occupiers from factions of the movement to conduct interviews. During the movement, I visited the occupied zones very often. Rather than simply stop and take a quick look at the sites, I set up a tent, just like other occupiers, at the Admiralty site, outside the Legislative Council Complex. I spent two to three nights every week from late October to a week before the occupy clearance in early December in Admiralty. Spending more than a dozen nights in Admiralty, I became a kind of participant. This facilitated access to the movement. I witnessed, and was sometime involved in, the movement

activities in the occupied site. Certainly I could not capture every event within the movement, but still, I could get a preliminary understanding of the context and concrete circumstance of the movement. In my participation of a few weeks, I found that the occupiers could generally be classified into three factions by their political creed and position within the movement.

Table 3 indicates the various factions. The first faction is the Left. This faction includes social movement organizations and political groups like League of Social Democracy and Labour Party. Also, it embraced social movement activists who specifically placed themselves on the Left of the political spectrum. Most of them have long been involved in social movements in Hong Kong. As veterans, some of them were invited to organize the Occupy Central and in alliance with the student organizations. Although left-wing thought is diverse, its common political creed is a belief in social equality and a critique of the capitalist system.

The second faction is Localism. It is a burgeoning political faction in Hong Kong in recent years. It positions itself against pan-democracy parties, Leftist and social movement organizations. It holds strong views about "Hong Kong autonomy" and opposes the intervention of Chinese Government in the governance of Hong Kong. It even calls for the overthrow of the Chinese Communist Party. The extreme view towards the Chinese Government and anti-mainland sentiment make them radicals in pan-democracy camp. At the same time, they oppose the use of peaceful and tranquil way to protest and contend that protest should be "valiant (勇武)". Civic Passion is possibly the most renowned localist political group in Hong Kong. During the movement, adherent of Localism constantly stayed at occupy sited in Mong Kok. Alongside with Civic Passion, a group of fiery

localist occupiers were named “Green Camp” as they set up a resource station with a booth in green colour. After the movement, they were officially established as a political group and renamed “Hong Kong Indigenous”. Most of the members of Hong Kong Indigenous were active in the occupied area of Mong Kok during the movement.

Other than these two factions, there were a considerable number of spontaneous occupiers who were neither motivated by the Leftist nor the Localist but self-motivated to join the occupation. I categorize this type of participants as the non-aligned faction. Most of them were novices. They did not have much previous experience in participating in protests. During the movement, they set up a resource team, a medical team, a barricade team and a marshal team. They were not affiliated to any organizations but became more organized when the movement developed. For example, they would select a representative to communicate with student leaders and other participating organizations. Media sometimes dubbed them as “Umbrella Soldiers (傘兵)”.

Table 3: Factions of the Occupy Movement

Factions	Characteristics	Representative(s) of the faction
1. Left	Considered as “radical” within the pan-democracy camp; Oppose wealth inequality; Believe in social equality.	Social activists; League of Social Democrats; Labour Party
2. Localist	Position itself against the traditional pan-democracy camp and the leftist; Emphasize local benefit; Opposes the intervention of Chinese Government in the governance of Hong Kong; Call for the downfall of the Chinese Communist Party; Radicals.	Civic Passion; Green Camp (the members of the green camp established a political party, Hong Kong Indigenous, in 2015)
3. Non-aligned occupiers	Neither an advocate of the Left or Localism; Self-motivated; Organized non-aligned resource team, barricade team and first-aid team.	The self-organized resource team, marshal team and barricade team in the occupied sites.

In accordance with the factions of the movement, I started the second round of purposive sampling. I recruited initial informants by contacting the participating organizations and inviting the leaders or core members to have an interview. Also, I approached the well-known non-aligned occupiers. All informants were purposively chosen in this study because of their political background. I tended to invite respondents from each faction in order to

solicit and compare information from occupiers of various factions.

The final round of sampling was snowball sampling. It is another nonprobability sampling strategy and also known as chain referral sampling (Biernacki and Waldor 1981) or respondent-driven sampling (Heckathorn and Jeffri 2003). This sampling method asks initial informants to nominate other potential informants through their network and associations (Gilbert 2001:63-64). I have two ways to do the snowball sampling. First, I contacted the occupiers I have met during the movement and asked referrals from them. During the movement, my involvement enabled me to get into conversation with protesters and provided me opportunities to get initial contact with them. I kept approaching them and invited people who match the eligibility criteria to be informants of this study after the movement. At the same time, I asked them to nominate their comrades who meet the criteria to be informants. Second, I ask for referral from respondents of the first two rounds of interview. It enables me to get more contacts with occupiers from various factions.

All interviews were conducted in face-to-face in open-ended questions with the interview guide. I gave everyone pseudonyms to protect their anonymity. I audio all interviews and transcribed them verbatim.

### **Respondent Characteristics**

The data collection spanned March 2015 to December 2016. I conducted 26 interviews in total. The details of the informants are listed in Table 4. All interviewees were persons engaged in the time for at least two stages of the Occupy Movement.

In three rounds of sampling, I targeted the members of student

organizations and occupiers of various factions for conducting interviews. However, the proportion of members of student organization is relatively small. As the main participating student organizations were the Hong Kong Federation of Students and Scholarism, I invited core members of these two groups to be interviewed. As for the interviews with occupiers of the main three factions of Occupy Movement, I tried to obtain a good balance of them.

Table 4: Respondent Characteristics (N=26)

Characteristics	Frequency	%
<u>Ages (years)</u>		
15-20	4	15.4
21-25	11	42.3
26-30	8	30.8
31-35	2	7.7
>35	1	3.8
<u>Gender</u>		
Male	17	65.4
Female	9	34.6
<u>Factions</u>		
Student Organization	2	7.7
Left	7	26.9
Localism	7	26.9
Non-aligned	10	38.5

Up to now, there is no particular research to show the major characteristics of the occupiers. The recruitment of interviewees, in this regard, does not have any specific bias on their personal characteristics. The main criterion of selecting interviewees was their political creed.

Yet, there were two interesting points I found from the process of interviewing. First, the biggest proportion of interviewees was aged between 21 and 25 (42.3%). Considering the movement was mainly caused by the students who were in university and aged from 18 to 22, most of the interviewees I got in touch with were also in that age range. Moreover, the post-80s generation constitutes a proportion of my research subjects. In recent years, one of the trends of political participation in Hong Kong is the increasing involvement of the post-80s generation (Lau 2014). The term “Post-80s” refers to young people who were born in or after 1980. That means young people who aged from the mid-twenties up to the mid-thirties. In fact, the second large proportion of my interviews was from 26 to 30 (30.8%).



## CHAPTER 5

### REPERTOIRE

The study of social movements was not common in Hong Kong in the 1970s and 1980s, since the colonial setting provided limited opportunity for exercising political rights, and tackling social problems through collective actions was not the first choice for Hong Kong people. Instead, political stability was a notable topic. Such stability came from Hong Kong people's passive political behavior, stemming from their high degree of apathy to politics (e.g., Hoadley 1970; Shively 1972; King 1981). To account for this, King (1981) proposed the idea of "administrative absorption of politics", which suggested that the British colonial government, in face of the problem of the colonial government's legitimacy, was apt to maintain political stability through bringing leading political activists, business figures, and other elites into the existing apparatus or elite institutions, and thus, build up a coalition of elites to prevent any possible confluence of forces capable of challenging the colonial administrative structure.

Another notable explanation for the apathetic political behaviour of Hong Kong people was during this period was Lau's (1982) "utilitarianistic familism". Amidst the political turmoil ensuing the Communist Party of China's defeat of the Nationalists in the Chinese Civil War, thousands of refugees fled to colonial Hong Kong. These refugees mostly came from underdeveloped areas of China, where regions of local communities, kinship groups, and elementary family were basic units of their social world, and whom they turn to when the colonial government declined to help. Further,

the laissez-faire (or “active non-intervention”) policy of the colonial government encouraged people to put their efforts and resources in economic enterprises with their family members and relatives. Political apathy in Hong Kong, in Lau’s portrayal, was a product of this familial ethos (Leung 1990:15-17).

Although there were critiques on these approaches (e.g., Lam 2004), the claim of political indifference was the prevalent premise in social movement studies of Hong Kong. During the period of political steadiness under the colonial governance, there was an interest in investigating the rise of specific movements, such as the student and labour movements (e.g. Leung 1992; Butenhoff, 1999; Sing 2003), and the pattern of political participation of Hong Kong people, that is, what would make people politically active or passively (e.g. Lui, 2003; Ma 2005) under the dominant proposition of Hong Kong people’s political apathy. There were also studies on the pattern of political participation in Hong Kong related to the means of action and selection of movement activities. For example, the colonial government noted in the *Report from the Standing Committee on Pressure Groups* (1981) that protesting was becoming a usual way of political participation and even a “normal way of life” since the implementation of political reform. In another instance, Wan and Wong (1997) and Wan and Wong (2005) examined social conflicts from 1987 to 2002, and concluded that collective actions in Hong Kong were mostly of short duration, initiated by pressure groups and political organizations, limited in the number of participators, rarely involved in violence (apart from those sparked by Vietnamese refugees in their protests), and self-controlled. Their studies also showed that the public greatly accepted non-violent and self-confined protest actions but strongly rejected

aggressive actions, including any kind of violent action and any types of strike. In particular, sit-ins and processions were found to be the most common modes of demonstration.

Other topics of interest in studies on social movements include the trends in social movements after the territory's return to China (So 2008; 2011), the post-materialist values and the rise of movements (Ma 2011), and particular types of movements (e.g., Lai 2000; Chan and Hills 1993; Lee 2000). Yet, studies on protest patterns and modes of demonstration in Hong Kong were mostly brief. One exception was a study on urban protests conducted by Ho (2000), which described the peaceful protest culture of Hong Kong as "polite politics" and elaborated that the protesters were culturally predisposed to avoid aggressive actions and restrained in their choice of strategy by limited resources.

This peaceful protest culture was best demonstrated in the 500,000-strong protest rally against the national security legislation in 2003. While the size of the rally surprised most people and collided with previous assumptions on political participation and pattern of movements in Hong Kong, that remarkable mass movement, like previous campaigns, was extremely peaceful and tranquil - a common character found in all 1 July marches that came afterwards, and prompting Lee and Chan (2011:11-14) to remark this annual event as "ritualistic" - referring to its relative stable and repeated nature. Even so, in the flurry of studies that appeared afterwards, the mode of protest and means of collective action were not a noticeable focus of scholars, who usually analyzed this critical event in terms of state power (Ku 2007), poor governance after handover (Sing 2009), the development of civil society (Ma 2009), the ways of mobilizing the public

(Chan and Lee, 2009; Ku, 2009), populism (Hiu 2007), to name a few.

The current chapter is an analysis of the variety of repertoire in the Occupy Movement. Activities in the movement will be documented chronologically, and, positing the analysis in previous studies on patterns of movements, factors that influence the selection of the repertoire will be presented as well.

### **Ingraining the movement into the protest culture of Hong Kong: The original plan of Occupy Central**

The concept of repertoire is based on the idea that the selection of movement activities is always subject to the historical and social context at a particular period of time and learnt from predecessors. In other words, the study of repertoire is an investigation into the factors that bring changes to the choice of movement activities. As mentioned in the previous section, the term “peaceful” has always been the adjective to describe social movements and protest rallies in Hong Kong - and the Occupy Movement was no exception. In fact, the original plan and actual movement activities for Occupy Central were infused with this mild protest culture, as will be documented in the following.

#### *The creed of “love” and “peace”*

The original Occupy Central campaign was designed with the predominant form and practice of collective action of Hong Kong in mind, as can be seen from its full title - “Occupy Central with Love and Peace”. Based on the “spirit of love and peace”, tranquility and non-violence were the

founding stones of the campaign.<sup>4</sup> The phrase “love and peace” seems to carry religious implication, which, while considering the original leadership of the campaign, comes as no surprise. Two of the three organizers of Occupy Central were in fact persons of faith - Chu Yiu-ming is a Baptist minister, and Benny Tai is a Christian. The role played by religious belief in social action (and inaction) has been well documented by classical sociologists (Weber 1964), and studies on political participation and social movement consider religion an effective tool to establish social networks and mobilize the public for collective action (e.g., Putnam 2000; Smith 1996; William 1994; Young 2002). In Hong Kong, this position is mostly filled by religious organizations, especially Christian groups, who have always been an integral part of local politics (Butenhoff 1999; Pavey 2011).

Religion aside, the emphasis of Occupy Central on non-violence was clearly a tribute to past protest rallies and movements.<sup>5</sup> Peaceful large public protest rallies are, in the words of Occupy Central’s organizers, a “strong Hong Kong tradition”. (Occupy Central with Love and Peace 2014b) Their strong devotion to the mild protest culture of Hong Kong strongly affected their choice to follow the non-violent principle and their decision to enshrine the principle as the vital creed for the movement.

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<sup>4</sup> See Occupy Central with Love and Peace 2014a: “In order to maintain our dignity, we must express our strong dissatisfaction over Beijing breaking its promise and its disregard for Hong Kong people's welfare. We will stick to the use of nonviolent direct action, for we cannot afford to lose the spirit of love and peace even with the loss of constitutional reform.”

<sup>5</sup> See Occupy Central with Love and Peace 2014b: “How do you ensure Occupy Central will remain peaceful and non-violent? We have the assurance of past events. 1 million marched in protest over the June 4 massacre of 1989. 500,000 took to the streets against the legislative enactment of Article 23. And over 100,000 assembled to defeat the introduction of national education. And through-out, on all these occasions, there was no unrest. Peaceful and non-violent protest is a strong Hong Kong tradition, which does us proud.”

*The concrete plan for the Occupy Central campaign*

The Occupy Central campaign urged its participants to uphold three fundamental convictions, as follows:

- (1) The electoral system of Hong Kong must satisfy as international standards in relation to universal suffrage. These consist of the political rights to equal number of vote, equal weight for each vote and no unreasonable restrictions on the right to stand for election.
- (2) The concrete proposal of the electoral system of Hong Kong should be decided by means of a democratic process, which should consist of deliberation and authorization by citizens.
- (3) Any act of the civil disobedience, which aims to fight for realizing a democratic universal and equal suffrage in Hong Kong though illegal, has to be absolutely non-violent.....The campaign consists of four basic steps: signing covenant, deliberation day, citizen authorization and civil disobedience.

Occupy Central with Love and Peace, 2014b

Focus should be directed to Statement (3), which not only dictated all movement actions to be non-violent, but also explicitly indicated the conditions for movement activation and evolution and process of concrete action in “four basic steps”.

To analyze the concrete actions in those “steps”, the concept of repertoire can be utilized. As pointed out previously, this concept suggests that accrued patterns and forms of collective actions are relatively stable over long swaths of time, and work to mold subsequent movements. In the case of Occupy Central, the non-violence tenet was clearly imbued by the predominantly peaceful protest culture in Hong Kong, and its proposed action plan and actual movement actions mirrored those from previous local movements.

For more than a year after the idea of Occupy Central was proposed, the

organizers focused on preparation works, putting special emphasis on the second and third steps –the “deliberation day” and the “citizen authorization”.

Three official deliberation days, staged as open meetings, were arranged by the organizers to exchange experiences, prepare for joint activities, discuss the action plan, point out potential obstacles, offer possible solutions, and most importantly, collect public opinion for the last step – the act of civil disobedience, which, according to the statement mentioned above, would happen only if the government announced an electoral reform package that could not satisfy “the international standards in relation to universal suffrage”. On this matter, the campaign organizers appealed to the pan-democratic groups, academic units, and social movement organizations for facilitation and cooperation:

I, and my organization supported the Occupy Central campaign for sure. The reason is simple. Political reform is an important thing to Hong Kong. Here someone proposed a plan to fight for universal suffrage and at the same time we cannot see any campaign which is more well-organized and efficacious than that one. There is no reason we do not support this plan? .....  
Afterward, Professor Tai invited us to give advice and organize the campaign together. We said “yes” and tried to give any support we could.

Mr Lam, interviewee, leftist,  
member of League of Social Democrats

According to resource mobilization approach, social network and interaction within affinity groups are important to the occurrence and maintenance of movements, as organizations associated with the partnership and mutuality share similar prospect and attentiveness, in this case, on the issue of political reform and democratization process in Hong Kong. As the campaign was

hinged on a strong and supportive social network, a coalition is required to coordinate the deliberation days and garner diverse opinions on a plan for collective action. Having social movement organizations, academic units, and pan-democratic groups, respectively, to assist in the preparation allow for social action veterans to share experiences in organizing a mass movement, academics to provide legal knowledge and scholarly advice on civil disobedience actions, and supporters of democracy to communicate with political groups, community groups, and pressure groups to engage in the deliberations. Such methods of acquiring knowledge or resources to support the movement are typical of facilitation work for campaigns, and, as observed by Turner and Killian (1987), one of the basic tactical repertoires.

Our organization is like an alliance. Our membership is not based on individual, but on various pan-democratic organizations.....more or less we would collect our members' opinions and reflect them to (the organizers of) Occupy Central..... Officially there were only three deliberation days only. Some of our members and I are concerned that there would not be enough time to capture the grass-root people's opinion. We organized some forums and discussions in various districts constantly to ensure that people's views could be discussed on the deliberation days.

Ms Au, interviewee, leftist,  
member of Civil Human Rights Front

On the third deliberation day, participants voted on electoral reform proposals offered by various organizations. The key purpose was to select three proposals to be used in a civil referendum, in which all Hong Kong people could select their preferred political reform proposal through a citywide ballot. This process constituted the third step of "citizen authorization", as the result could be seen as a spectacle of "the people's



power". Just like other protest rallies and demonstrations that call for people to take to the streets to express their demands and persuade the authority to make changes, the civil referendum tried to evoke people to voice their demand for political reform to the government.

The civil referendum for Occupy Central was similar to its 2012 counterpart.<sup>6</sup> The result of this referendum was an important indicator for the campaign, as it provided popular endorsement and support for the decision of commencing the civil disobedience action in case Beijing government refused to satisfy the criteria of the selected plan.

As the title suggested, occupation was the principal means of action<sup>7</sup>:

We had a lot of plans about how to occupy. People could not see what we had discussed during this period. For example, we had discussed to occupy the train. But we needed to concern the accessibility, people's acceptance, durability, and other things..... Finally, we kept the original proposal. We decided to launch a sit-in in Central

Ms Au, interviewee, leftist,  
member of Civil Human Rights Front

In the end, the finalized plan was to hold a sit-in in Central:

The week before 1 Oct (2014) was extremely hectic in that we had to negotiate with the police. Although we confirmed the sit-in in Central, we could not just ask people to stage a sit-in there by

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<sup>6</sup> It was held by the University of Hong Kong Public Opinion Programme, all Hong Kong citizens were encouraged to vote, either at the designated polling station or through the online voting system, on two referendum questions: (1) Which one of the three proposals selected on the last deliberation day should be submitted to the government; and, (2) Should the lawmakers veto the government proposal if it could not satisfy the international standards of universal suffrage.

<sup>7</sup> Occupation would be one of the various occupying campaigns happening around the world back then - the most well-known of them being Occupy Wall Street. At its height and receiving huge global attention in the fall of 2011, this occupation campaign in New York spawned a wave of occupy movement against social and economic inequality worldwide. Yet, the plan for Hong Kong's version of occupation was not similar to those in other countries.

themselves. We needed to do something first to assemble the participants and make the sit-in happen. We were thinking to ask for a permit to launch a march first. So we could gather people in the protest rally and then march to Central to stage the sit-in.

Mr Yim, interviewee, leftist,  
member of Civil Human Rights Front

The disobedient act designed for Occupy Central consisted of a march and a sit-in only. As confirmed by Mr Yim, negotiations were held with the police before organizing the march for gathering participants, as required by law. The target was to gather at least 10,000 protesters for the non-violent sit-in in Central, with the aim of immobilizing the business hub. In line with the creed of non-violence, participants were required to take an oath not to resist the law enforcement with force.

In short, Occupy Central possessed a well-established action plan with three sets of concrete activities. The deliberation day and civil authorization took almost one year to plan, and, in accordance with the non-violence tenet, contained no aggressive concrete actions and insurgent pattern or choice of actions. Rather, the choices of activities were based on experience from previous collective actions, such as the civil referendum being a copy of the one in 2012, and the way of executing the occupation being a combination of the two most prevalent patterns of collective actions.

From the concrete movement activities of the campaign, it is obvious that tactics of Occupy Central were totally strategy-oriented. Through the public deliberations and the citywide ballot, the occupation turned into a collective claims-making focused on the demand for political reform. Specifically, the way to persuade the government to implement the full universal suffrage in the election for the Chief Executive was to collect public

endorsement and present them as evidence of public support. A notable feature the campaign that made it different from collective actions in the past was the sense of menace associated with the act of civil disobedience, making it probably the only pan-democratic mass movement in the rich protest history of Hong Kong that aimed to threaten the government with a concrete action plan of paralyzing the financial center.

### *Summary*

The Occupy Central campaign, originated at least partially due to the key objective of putting pressure on the government to implement the election for CE and members of Legco by the method of universal suffrage, was guided by a well-organized plan detailing four steps of action – three of which were completed in the two years after the announcement of the campaign.

Under the tamed tranquil protest culture and acquired peaceful movement tradition, the choice of and its ethos were limited, and exhibited three prominent features. First, the campaign sought to achieve a form of deliberative democracy, as evident from the decision-making process. Deliberative democracy refers to a decision-making process that includes consensus decision-making and majority rule (Fishkin 1991). The organizers were justified to make a restrictive top-to-bottom decision by steering the rudimentary steps of the movement in the direction of their paramount idea. However, the key organizers were willing to exchange the right to make an all-powerful final decision for citizens' participation. Based on a quasi-deliberation democratic decision-making mechanism, they held several open and responsive deliberations to collect public opinion, which, along

with the result of the civil referendum, provided the conditions and justifications for commencing the disobedient act. In this case, deliberation was central to the decision-making process, giving the campaign a greater amount of public support and allowing it to draw on collective wisdom through open and productive discussion and consultation.

Second, the implementation of those actions relied extensively on assistance from formal political and social movement organizations. Partnership and alliance-building provide a web of network that links organizers and individuals, making them mighty ways to strengthen social movements by coordinating forces and factions with similar creeds and goals for political struggles. In the case of Occupy Central, internal bridging and bonding were made with pan-democracy parties and social activists, providing a web of social network and experience of involving in movements that were a crucial device to accomplishing the plan.

Third, Occupy Central was strategy-oriented in that there was a well-elaborated plan of tactics detailing steps of actions at every stage of development for applying different degree of pressure on the government. With each step of the campaign, greater public awareness on the issue of the political reform and civil authorization were gathered to justify the proposed disobedient act, and to pose a greater threat to the government. In short, the campaign was designed to progressively coerce the government into implementing the universal suffrage.

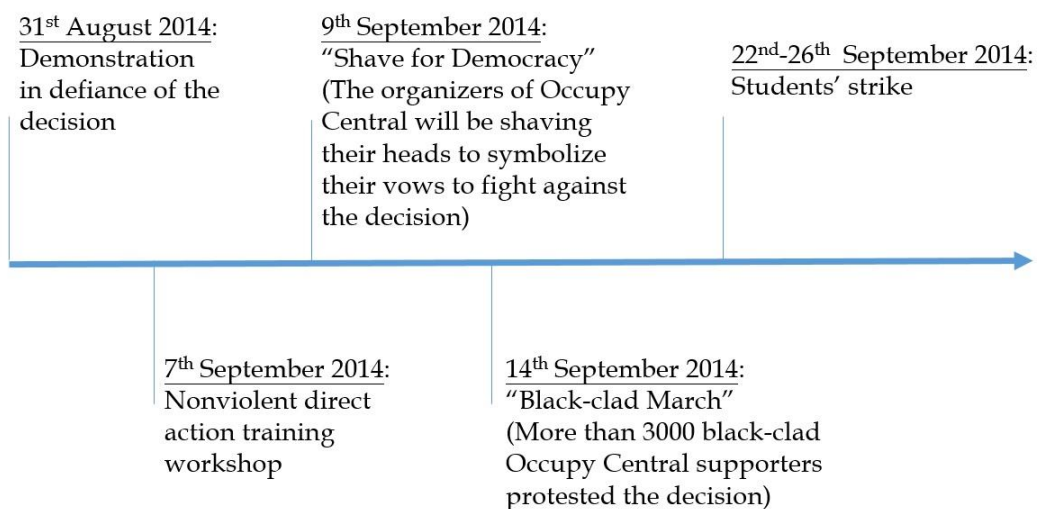
## **The First Stage of Occupy Movement: The Turning Point from Occupy Central to Occupy Movement**

It would be best if the August decision included civil nomination. Then we did not need to occupy.....Be honest, I did not expect the August decision to be so wicked. I believed many of us did not expect the decision to be so conservative and restrictive.....After the August decision was announced, we needed to think how to exactly execute the occupation.

Ms Au, interviewee, leftist,  
member of Civil Human Rights Front

The stern restrictions placed on the election for the Chief Executive announced by the National People's Congress disappointed and frustrated the organizers and adherents of the Occupy Central, as it represented a strategic failure for the campaign, as the Beijing government was unwilling to approve full universal suffrage or even make any concession, despite their threat to paralyze the financial centre of Hong Kong. It also meant that the last step of the campaign, the disobedience act, had to be launched. This prompted affinity groups and the organizers of the Occupy Central to organize a series of protests and demonstrations to gain momentum for the upcoming occupation, the most important one being the students' class boycott (Mr Kwok & Ms Au, interviewees, leftist, members of Civil Human Rights Front; also, see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Reactions to the Beijing Decision



Thousands of students took part in the class boycott, jointly organized by the Hong Kong Federation of Student and Scholarship. In an unexpected turn of events, students stormed the Civic Square on the last day of the boycott, which completely obscured, and even transformed, the original plan of the Occupy Central campaign, and in the end, triggering the unprecedented Occupy Movement.

*The turning point: the ambush action to storm the Civic Square*

Designed by the student organizations, the class boycott was a part of Occupy Central's plan, and a prelude to the disobedient act scheduled for National Day 2014. Thousands of students from various tertiary institutions flocked to Tamar Park to join the five-day strike aimed at protesting the restrictions on the nomination system for the Chief Executive election<sup>8</sup>. In addition, more than one hundred scholars were invited to give public

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<sup>8</sup> See the manifesto delivered by Alex Chow Yong-kong, the student leader: <https://www.hkfs.org.hk/strike-statement/> (in Chinese).

lectures on-site, and student activists organized additional rallies during the week.

Despite students being involved in the preparation and facilitation of Occupy Central from the very beginning (Mr Kwok & Ms Au, interviewees, leftists, members of Civil Human Rights Front; Mr Wong, interviewee, member of Hong Kong Federation of Students; Mr Lam, interviewee, leftist, member of League of Social Democrats), they expressed worries as the campaign progressed:

The first time we proposed the plan for the class boycott was in March (2014), after the annual conference (of Hong Kong Federation of Students).....Until July (2014), we launched the Occupy Central rehearsal. After the rehearsal, we came under the attack of the pro-establishment camp. But the pro-democratic camp seemed unable to react.....We realized that a one-off Occupy could not bring any change. Even through Prof Tai could call an extra ten thousand people to occupy, it would not be enough, since democracy cannot be achieved in a single bound. We need to do more. At least, we have to launch a wave of disobedient action to put pressure on the government..... not just hitting the government once.

Mr Wong, interviewee, leftist,  
member of Hong Kong Federation of Students

Other affinity groups expressed similar concerns. For example, would the punctiliousness of the organizers make them miss the best chance to begin the occupation (Mr Lam, interviewee, leftist, member of League of Social Democrats)? Would the pan-democratic organizations be united enough to accomplish the occupation, especially after the disagreement within the coalition on the Five Constituencies Referendum and the negotiation of the 2012 political reform package between the moderate pan-democrats and Beijing (Mr Kwok, interviewee, leftist, member of Civil

Human Rights Front)?

The campaign also lost heat among the unaffiliated. Specifically, the two-year long preparation made people doubt the determination of the organizers (Ms Tong, Ms Lau, and Mr Ip, non-aligned participants). This is especially true among the localist groups, who were hostile towards the campaign and continuously challenged its goal and tactics (Mr Chen, localist, member of Civic Passion). For the localists, the definition of universal suffrage had been elucidated and discussed since the territory's return to China, and the ultimate goal of the campaign, namely, demanding universal suffrage, was clear. Unnecessary deliberation during the preparation of the campaign would only make the goal obscure. In terms of tactics, localists thought that the long preparation time not only let the steam out of the campaign, but also misapplied public support by discussing something that had been thoroughly discussed and supporters had consensus on. Apart from expressing their harsh criticism on the internet, Civic Passion, an active localist group, even created a stand-up comedy to criticise Occupy Central with burlesques (Mr Wong, localist, member of Civic Passion).

Under such an anxious atmosphere, some students and social activists agreed that it was necessary to put the original plan into action<sup>9</sup>:

We need to be determined. Act seriously. We have to make it

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<sup>9</sup> Other than Mr Wong, other social activists shared the similar view. For example, Mr Yim (interviewee, leftist, member of Civil Human Rights Front) said, "We need to execute the occupation. So, we rehearsed the occupation once after the 1 July March. Simply discussing the disobedience is not enough. We need to experiment it. So, just give it a shot. An important point is we need to act but not just talk."

Mr Lam (interviewee, leftist, member of League of Social Democrats) said, "We do not act like the localist groups. We do not just criticize. While we think there are questions, we won't boycott or leave them alone. We talk over it. Let us do it! Be honest, Prof Tai acts too slowly. We need to do something beyond him. Otherwise, the occupation might not happen.....It was what the students and I thought."

Mr Ng (interviewee, leftist, member of Labour Party) said, "You never know if you don't try. The problem of Prof Tai was that they thought too much.....Just do it!"



“real”. To “act seriously” is the only way to eliminate the suspicion and seek democracy.....what we need is to develop what is useful and discard what is not.

Mr Wong, interviewee, leftist,  
member of Hong Kong Federation of Students

The class boycott campaign was a prologue to create publicity for the impending “banquet” - the term used by Tai to describe the occupation, on 1 October.<sup>10</sup> Yet, with the determination to “act seriously”, students did not intend to disrupt the upcoming occupation:

We discussed what we can do in that morning (26 September 2014). Someone just asked, “shall we rush into the Civic Square?” All of us (members of Hong Kong Federation of Students) thought this suggestion was constructive. We sent messages to the class boycott committees and other social activists to ask if they would like to join.

Mr Wong, interviewee, leftist,  
member of Hong Kong Federation of Students

In this regard, the ambush was an ad hoc action. By spreading the message on social media among the class boycott committees in the various tertiary institutions, the Hong Kong Federation of Students and Scholarism gathered a group of students to storm the Civic Square (Mr Wong, interviewee, leftist, member of Hong Kong Federation of Student). Jointly acting with other social organizations, the vanguard was a group of social activists, who led

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<sup>10</sup> Ms Au (interviewee, leftist, member of Civil Human Right Front) said, “ The class boycott was aimed to gain momentum for Occupy Central. But the problem was that 1 October (2014) was a Wednesday. It was not a good idea to hold a strike on Saturday and Sunday (27 & 28 September 2014), as it would be unconvincing. Yet, before the National Day holiday, there were Monday and Tuesday. Perhaps, we could choose to strike on these two days. But striking for just two days was not enough.....So, the conclusion was we needed to do something in order to keep the momentum after the end of the class boycott on Saturday and Sunday.”

the charge into the Civic Square by forcing their way through an unlocked gate and climbing over the security fences as the leader of Scholarism, Joshua Wong Chi-fung, was making the closing speech for the class boycott. Other students then tried to burst into the Civic Square, catching the police officers and security guards by surprise (Mr Wong, interviewee, non-aligned participant, member of Student Strike Committee). Police tried to halt the student protesters by using pepper spray on them outside the Civic Square, and many of them appeared to be hit. Students who successfully entered the Civic Square huddled around the flagpole at the centre, encircled by a ring of police officers.

This alerted some non-aligned participants of the Occupy Movement, who did not care too much about the political issues before the student strike, but had empathy for the students. Some of them described the action taken by the police as “ridiculous (離譜)”, “too much (過份)”, “unbelievable (無法相信)”, and “unreasonable (唔合理)” (Ms Tong, Mr Chan, and Mr Fan, interviewees, non-aligned participants). For many of these newcomers to politics, the sympathy towards the students was the main impetus for joining the protest. Some of them did not even know the reason for the student protests and occupation, but named “supporting students” and “protecting students” the main purposes for their first engagement in political rally.

The effect of emotion on social movements has been highly debated. While the collective behaviour approach pointed out that emotion is a crucial factor in explaining the generation of social movements, the frequently-used and highly-touted political process theory and resource mobilization approach argued otherwise. Some scholars took the middle road and proposed that emotions and thoughts are entwined (Barbalet 1998; Damasio 1994; Jagger

1989). It is an inspired notion to challenge the assumption of movements as irrational collective actions propelled by disruptive emotions under the collective behaviour approach and the ignorance of the capacity of emotions in movements under the political process theory and resource mobilization approach (Ferree 1992). In this regard, some recent studies started to reintroduce the effect of emotions on the emergence and decline of social movements (e.g., Jasper 1997; Barker-Benfield 1992; Stearns and Stearns 1986; Scheff 1994). In any case, emotion had a powerful role in Occupy Central. Many were motivated to join the campaign for the purpose of supporting the student demonstrators after seeing them being assaulted by the police led to a strong sense of anger and exasperation.

With many of the student leaders either arrested or surrounded by the police in the Civic Square, the student protest was left void of leadership. To ensure that the campaign would continue to move forward, a group of social activists, who were former members of Hong Kong Federation of Students, started a temporary rally (Ms Au, Mr Kwok and Mr Yim, interviewees, leftist, member of Civil Human Rights Front) targeting at attracting more people to enter Tamar Park to join the protest and counter-surround the police. The strategy was to have the most updated situation released through loudspeakers and circulated among the protesters, so they could distribute themselves to circle the police and put pressure on them not to hit the protesters. Umbrellas were used as a shield against pepper sprays, and aid stations were set up to help those being sprayed.

Students who broke into Civic Square were finally cleared by the police in early afternoon of 27 September. Their arrest and detainment led to a large number of protesters remaining assembled and left the police's attempt to

clear the scene in vain. Thus, the rally kept going:

We did not expect that they would be detained for such a long time. We guessed they probably would be released within several hours. But what really surprised us was they would be brought to court immediately after the detention. Under that circumstance, we had no reason to appeal to the people not to come. In fact, we had to appeal for more people came to support them (students who were arrested).

Ms Au, interviewee, leftist,  
member of Civil Human Rights Front

Heeding the appeal of student organizations and other pan-democratic organizations, people kept pouring into the protest zone in Admiralty, outside the government complex. In early morning of 28 September, the key organizer of Occupy Central, Benny Tai, announced to protesters at the government headquarters that Occupy Central would start immediately.

Figure 2: Protesters was counter-circling the police outside the Civic Square



(on 26 September 2014)



(on 27 September 2014)

Despite thorough planning, Occupy Central did not progress as designed. While the class boycott was part of the plan, the outcome and arrest of students were not. The series of contingency events that happened during the prelude to the disobedient act precipitated into the clash outside

government headquarters, which finally impelled Occupy Central to start earlier than planned.

*The turning point: the contingencies on 28 September*

After the announcement of the start of Occupy Central, people started to dissipate. This was because some non-aligned protesters thought that Occupy Central was trying to hijack the student protest by riding on the wave it created. Seemingly, the campaign organizers chose an inappropriate moment to make that announcement, and the evacuation of such a great number of protesters was beyond their expectation:

Why did Benny decide to kick off earlier? It was because of a sense of responsibility..... Students were arrested and people who came to support the students also got hit. More or less their being hurt was caused by us.

Ms Au, interviewee, leftist,  
member of Civil Human Rights Front

After a pledge to stay made by some affiliated groups, the campaign stayed alive, and the police did not take further action to disperse protesters. Instead of following the original plan to launch a march and sit-in at Central, the organizers of Occupy Central urged participants to gather at Admiralty, where the class boycott took place. People continued to gather in the protest zone outside the government complex, until late afternoon on 28 September, when some protesters suddenly took over the major thoroughfare of Harcourt Road. Originally, people thought it was an act by localist groups in light of their call for “valiant action (勇武抗爭)”, which was supposed to be more radical and aggressive than the original plan for Occupy Central, and more generally, traditional social movement organizations (Mr Chan,

interviewee, non-aligned participants). But in fact, the only localist group on the scene was Civic Passion, which set up a booth on the periphery of the protest zone near the exit of Admiralty MTR station, with no specific action supporting the student protest or the campaign in general (Mr Cao and Mr Chen, interviewees, localist, members of Civic Passion). In other words, the expansion of the occupation to Harcourt Road was an unintended consequence rather than a planned action by any political group, as witnessed by Mr Wong:

Back then I went to Admiralty through the footbridge.....a lot of policemen holding riot shields blocked our way.....suddenly the police pushed us down the street with the shields, but there were too many people on the pavement. There was no space for us but the policemen kept pushing and used the pepper spray again.....The only choice was to stride across the jersey wall onto Harcourt Road.

Mr Wong, interviewee,  
non-aligned participant and student

All afternoon, Harcourt Road was the venue of a standoff between the protesters and the police. Tension was rising, as the police kept using pepper spray, batons, and riot shields to disperse the protesters, and the protesters wore masks, goggles, and raincoats, with umbrella in hand to protect themselves from the pepper spray while trying to counter-circle the police. As the sun set, the police escalated their use of force by firing as many as six rounds of tear gas into the crowd while hitting them with batons. Protesters scattered and the organizers of Occupy Central and the Federation of Students called on protesters to retreat to the protest zone at Tamar Park, outside the Civic Square.

Chaos ensued as riot police in green uniforms carrying what appeared to

be shotguns arrived on scene, and protesters dispersed towards Wan Chai and Central. Tear gas canisters were repeatedly shot on Harcourt Road and Lung Wo Road in Admiralty, Connaught Road Central in Central near City Hall, Fenwick Street, Arsenal Street and Lockhart in Wan Chai. Despite the turmoil, an increasing number of people arrived at Admiralty, many of them were shocked and angered by pictures and television footage showing the police's use of pepper spray and tear gas on peaceful students and protesters. The sense of anger motivated them to leave their home and join the campaign (Mr Lau and Ms Tong, interviewees, non-aligned participants).

In this case, emotion performed a determining function in propelling people to join the event. Media also helped spread the emotion, as clips of the police firing tear gas spread all over Hong Kong, shocking thousands of people and stirring up their emotion. Mainstream media might be considered a two-edged sword for social movements, as Famson and Wolfsfeld (1993) documented its power in mobilizing support and raising the legitimacy of a movement's claims and endeavor, but Rucht (2005) pointed out how coverage by the mass media could lead to constraints on movements. The proliferation of social media on the Internet in recent years was found to have a strong positive influence on social movements, as it alters the process of communication within movements by connecting people in geographically dispersed areas and helping in the development of transnational networks (Myers 1994; Froehling 1997; Carty 2002). Mobile technologies also enable activists to easily and efficiently coordinate mass protests and spread information (Hermanns 2008).

By then, the situation had totally deviated from the original plan for Occupy Central. The chaos in Admiralty had expanded to Central and Wan

Chai, and even more unexpectedly, to Causeway Bay and Mong Kok, where there were also streets being occupied:

I remembered that was a street in Causeway Bay. I was pretty tired because I ran a lot. Suddenly a man stood still and shouted out, “let’s sit here and block the police from calling for reinforcement”. Not many people followed him at the beginning. But more and more people scattered by the tear gas passed by, making us dare to sit down and block the road.

Mr Wong, interviewee,  
non-aligned participant and student

People were crowded on the Performing Arts Avenue. Suddenly a young man patted my shoulder and asked, “Shall we rush out?” It was weird because I didn’t know him actually..... He brought me to Fenwick Pier Road. I thought it would work. So I called my companions and gave people a shout to ask them to stay. If there were people on the road, it could impede the movement of the police.....We blocked that road, people then could flow onto Connaught Road or Hennessy Road.

Mr Lam, interviewee, leftist,  
member of League of Social Democrats

The occupation in Causeway Bay was, in a sense, caused by the police’s continuous firing of tear gas in Admiralty and Central. As protesters moved toward Causeway Bay, they erected barricades in hope of halting the police from further pursuit, making the area an occupied zone.

Across the Victoria Harbour, protesters also gathered on Nathan Road and Argyle Street in Mong Kok:

I saw messages on the Internet, so I went to Mong Kok to see if there was anything happening.....When I arrived, it was around 1 o’clock. There were many people there and I was just roaming.....I saw some people starting to cross the road “slowly”, and policemen were trying to stop them. But there were around 10 to 20 policemen only. And there was a crowd of people there..... I tried



to cross the road slowly too. Later, all people were standing on the road, and the police were seemingly unable to stop us.

Mr Cheng, interviewee,  
leftist, member of Age of Resistance

From Mr Cheng's observation, it seemed that the occupation in Mong Kok was motivated by hearsay. People who heard the rumour from various social media assembled in Mong Kok, and the small number of policemen there gave a chance for protesters to take over the roads in another busy business district, making Mong Kok the third, and final, occupied site.

### *Summary*

A series of unexpected contingencies engendered the expansion of the occupation, knocking the original plan of Occupy Central out of place. The first stage of the Occupy Movement was a stage of transition. As protesters took over the roads in Causeway Bay and Mong Kok, the occupation was expanded, and Occupy Central was succeeded by the Occupy Movement, as the form of protest was totally transformed.

The student class boycott campaign was apparently the crux for that succession. Although it was a part of the original plan of Occupy Central, the police's actions toward the unarmed student protesters brought dissatisfaction among the people and drove them from the comfort of their home onto the streets to join the students. Even those who were not keen on politics were enraged by the police's use of excessive force after seeing the related pictures and videos on various media. In this regard, the emotion of anger played an important role to mobilize non-aligned people to join the campaign in support of the students and to condemn the police's excessive

use of force. In short, emotion was the determinant in the generation of the Occupy Movement, and the expansion of the occupation was merely an unintended consequence.

Despite deviations from the original plan of Occupy Central and the spontaneous action by protesters, the means of the disobedient act remained the same, as sit-in was still the method of occupation. While there were other activities, such as counter-circling the police to pressurize them or erecting barricades to block the roadways, the protesters still ended up in a sit-in. This was a mild form of protest, considering the state of chaos caused by the riot police's use of tear gas and pepper spray to disperse the protesters and carried what appeared to be shotguns on to the scene. In line with the idea of peaceful protest touted by organizers of Occupy Central, the protesters were equipped only with defensive and protective gears, like goggles, umbrellas, and masks. They did not intend to fight back or retaliate against the police, as they normally put their hands up in face of the law enforcement. Protesters abode by the principles of peace and non-violence, and still employed the prevailing tranquil pattern of protest in spite of the complete disarray on the scene.

### **The Second Stage of Occupy Movement: Diverse sets of actions**

The second stage of Occupy Movement lasted from the retreat of the riot police in the small hours of 29 September to the talk between government representatives and the student leaders in mid-October. By then, the occupied sites were established and long-term occupation had begun. It was a relatively less chaotic period, but protesters still established marshal teams to maintain order in the occupied sites, since anti-Occupy activists kept

attacking occupiers in Mong Kok and Admiralty violently, and rumours about the police getting ready to clear the sites were still flying around. There were two main types of marshal teams in Admiralty. One was managed by pan-democratic leftist organizations, such as the Labour Party and League of Social Democrats (Mr Ng, interviewee, leftist, member of Labour Party), and the other was formed by non-aligned protesters on their own (Mr Lau, interviewee, non-aligned occupier). Unlike Occupy Central, there was no clear leadership in Occupy Movement, as most occupiers were motivated by emotion rather than being inspired by Occupy Central. However, since the student class boycott was a critical event in moving the movement forward, and many protesters joined because of the students, they were looked up to as celebrities at the main protest site of Admiralty, and most protesters in Admiralty would follow their decision (Ms Wan, interviewee, member of Scholarism).

But this was not the case on the other side of the harbor. The occupied site in Mong Kok was loosely organized and void of control and leadership. Occupiers acted on their own, and student leaders, hailed as spiritual leaders at Admiralty, were largely ignored and heckled by Mong Kok occupiers whenever they gave speeches. Different from the tranquil scenes in Admiralty and Causeway Bay, the Mong Kok site had a harsher edge, since occupiers wrangled and traded insults with anti-Occupy activists and those living in the neighbourhood, who were affected by the paralysis of roadways. However, the muddle over the site did not break the occupation down, as occupiers at Mong Kok successfully fended off the shoving and taunting from opponents and the police.

The clamour and glamour of these two sites was a stark contrast to their

Causeway Bay counterpart, which was relatively low-key, with fewer police, protesters, and anti-Occupy activists. At any rate, these three occupied zones, each with its distinctive feature, survived. By taking over the ownership of an area for an extended period of time, occupation, a so-called new trend in protest, allows for diversity in the selection of movement activities, some of which were common among all three sites.

#### *Daily activities in occupied sites*

The second stage of Occupy Movement was characterized by a stalemate between the government and the protesters. The occupation sites were relatively peaceful, save for sprinkles of clashes with anti-Occupy activists, and this allowed a rhythm of normal life to exist. Hundreds of tents were pitched in the occupied zones, some privately-owned, some free for entry. Daily needs were covered by well-stocked supply stations along the occupied roadways, where bountiful resources donated by supporters, like bottled water, biscuits, bread, cooling packs, goggles, face masks, plastic wraps, and umbrellas, were available and given out for free. For easy access around the occupied site, which covered all lanes of Harcourt Road, occupiers even constructed makeshift staircases over the jersey walls. Most importantly, as some occupiers were students, protesters put up a study corner equipped with rows of lamps, makeshift desks and chairs, and even electricity supply for computers for them to do their schoolwork. In a sense, occupiers were like tent-dwellers more than simply protesters.

Figure 3: Tents in the Admiralty site



All occupiers, be them leftist, localist, or non-aligned, followed a similar way of life, but the rules guiding their way of living contrasted. Specifically, leftist activists and non-aligned occupiers accepted any type of activities on the sites, including football, cycling, or even barbecue. Their main concern was safety. As long as they were safe, activities were just a way to kill time. Some even considered it a chance to “rethink the way of using the space (Mr Ip, interviewee, student, non-aligned occupier)”.

However, the localist occupiers disdained such view. In the first place, they considered any type of leisure activities on the sites to be inappropriate:

You can go to a country park for a barbecue; you can go to a football pitch to play football. Hey, what are you doing? We are not trying to have fun here. We are fighting!

Mr Yeung, interviewee,  
localist occupier, member of Hong Kong Indigenous

In addition, the localist occupiers reckoned that even the daily activities had

to be able to provide strategic advantage to the campaign. An example was their acceptance of people playing video game on the occupied site in Mong Kok. Localist Mr Chen commented on a tent located at the end of Argyle Street that provided video game consoles to occupiers:

It literally could gather a group of “otaku (宅男)” in the occupied area. They were there only for the video games. Yet, they were in fact adding to the number of people staying in the demonstration area. The attendance of people in the demonstration area was always important as it made the police not dare to clear the crowd.....It could strategically benefit the movement.

Mr Chen, interviewee,  
localist, member of Civic Passion

Both of these localists expressed their view on importance of leisure activities in the protest areas being able to provide direct strategical benefit to the campaign, though the former was more intolerant than the latter. On the contrary, leftist and non-aligned protesters would accept activities without direct strategical purpose. Yet, some non-aligned protesters would still feel annoyed by some ritual and humdrum actions (Mr Ip, interviewee, non-aligned occupiers).

Figure 4: The huge podium in Admiralty

#### *Podiums and rostrums*

A huge “main podium (大台)” was set up on Harcourt Road in Admiralty, next to Admiralty Centre. It was built by pan-democratic groups (Mr Ng, interviewee, leftist, member of Labour Party). Crowds of people converged at this main podium at



(Student leaders, Lester Shum and Joshua Wong, were delivering a speech at the podium)

every night to listen to renowned leftist activists, student leaders, and representatives of marshal teams and supply stations giving speeches, circulating information on the circumstances of the occupied sites, and releasing announcements. Other than the main podium on Harcourt Road, dozens of smaller rostrums were also set up for occupiers, regardless of political faction, to speak and invite people to have discussions, debates, or even causal chats. Some scholars also offered public lectures for protesters there. Such setting was not seen in Causeway Bay, as the number of occupiers there was small.

Over in Mong Kok, there was also a big podium at the intersection of Nathan Road and Argyle Street constructed by people of unknown background. In mid-October, one of the hosts of the podium was exposed as a member of pro-establishment camp (Mr Chen, interviewee, localist, member of Civic Passion). After the police quelled the intersection, the occupiers did not follow their counterparts in Admiralty and chose not to reconstruct the podium. Rather, an immense number of rostrums were set up, mostly by localist occupiers, making the occupation zone awfully bustling. Strategically, as the protest zone in Mong Kok was constantly under attack from the anti-Occupy activists, the occupiers were more adamant and vigilant (Mr Chau, interviewee, localist, member of Civic Passion). Besides, those occupiers preferred rostrums to a main podium as in Admiralty due to what they observed:

The main podium was totally controlled by leftards (左膠) and politicians. We had no chance to say anything on the stage. Every day, I had to queue to speak at the main podium. Whenever it was my turn, they would tell me time's up. Even if I had a chance, I was allowed to speak for only three minutes.....But what about

Joshua Wong? He could speak as long as he wished, any time he wanted!

Mr Yeung, interviewee,  
localist occupier, member of Hong Kong Indigenous

In this regard, members of student organizations and some leftist social activists conceded that the arrangement of the main podium was “not perfect (唔夠完善) (Mr Wong, interviewee, member of Hong Kong Federation of Students)” and “blemished (有缺憾) (Mr Yim, interviewee, leftist, member of Civil Human Rights Front)”. After several quarrels over the settlement of the main podium, student leaders conceded that it was the marshal team members’ fault for stopping people from speaking there (Mr Ng, interviewee, leftist). Yet, most of the localist occupiers still preferred the rostrums at Mong Kok, because of the “tolerance”:

Back then I saw a famous anti-Occupy activist speaking on the podium. I was so impressed. I was sure, even if someone picked a fight with him, he would not leave the stage..... and in fact he got to finish his speech safely.....It could not have happened in Admiralty definitely, as he would not be allowed to speak in the first place.

Mr Cheung, interviewee,  
localist, member of Hong Kong Indigenous

Although there were remarkable differences in the arrangements and dispositions of the main podium and rostrums among the three occupied sites, they performed some basically congruent functions, including spreading information, deliberating about the direction and progress of the movement, and delivering seminars and lectures to the public.



### *Artistic works*

Another interesting observation about the occupied areas is their resemblance to an open-air art fair. Streets were filled with different types of public artistic production, including banners, chalks drawings, canvases, patchworks, installation art works, to name a few. Although a few radical localist occupiers felt those artistic works were unable to contribute to the movement strategically and directly (Mr Yeung and Ms Cheng, interviewees, localist, members of Hong Kong Indigenous), occupiers were generally pleased to have those art works on the sites. Occupiers generally reckoned that such artworks could attract people to stay in the protest zones. For example, from the view of a non-aligned occupier, groups of occupiers would distribute leather products and paper artworks to people, which could probably draw more people to visit the demonstration sites or engage in the movement (Ms Tong, interviewee, non-aligned occupier).

The artworks covered various themes, the most salient one being the “umbrella”. As umbrella was the main defensive tool used by the occupiers to protect themselves from pepper spray and tear gas assaults and yellow ribbon was the symbol used in the class boycott campaign, yellow umbrellas became the de facto and enduring symbol of the Occupy Movement, and were thus found in a lot of public art adorning the protest sites, from installations on the barricades to sculptures. The most eye-catching umbrella installation was perhaps

Figure 5:  
An installation in Admiralty:  
“The Umbrella Man”



the “Umbrella Man” (See Figure 5), which was a wood carving located in Admiralty. Some umbrella artworks were caricatures and burlesques, like the cardboard cutout of Chinese President Xi Jinping holding a yellow umbrella (See Figure 6), which stood among the tents outside the Central Government Office.

The second main theme for the artworks was the political motto. Despite being replaced, Occupy Central’s demand for political reform was still valid, and “I want real universal suffrage” became the major slogan for the movement, held at the same regard as the umbrella.

Figure 6:  
A cardboard cutout of Chinese President Xi Jinping in Mong Kok



Figure 7:  
Chalk drawing on Harcourt Road

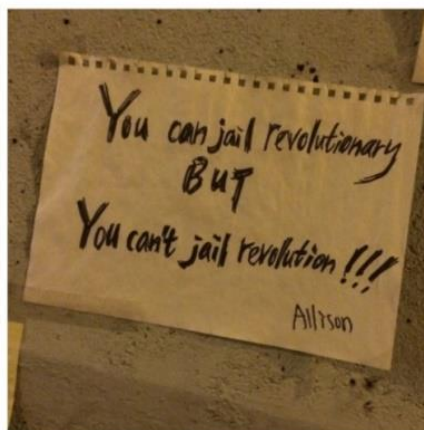


Figure 8: Placards in Causeway Bay

Banners and placards carrying this slogan were prominently displayed in the demonstration area. "Democracy", "justice", "freedom", and other words related to democratic political reform were also commonly seen.

The final prevalent theme of the artworks was the expression of feeling to the movement. The Lennon Wall was a stunning composition of an immense number of memoranda on which people's feelings were written. Aside from the Lennon Wall, people expressed their support for, and expectation on, the movement through various art products.

### *Summary*

The second stage of Occupation Movement was the stage of stalemate. Although it was a relatively stable period, in face of attack from anti-Occupy activists and irregular clearance from the police, occupiers were still on the alert.

A period of calmness enhanced the movement as it extended the choice of movement activities. Compared to the first stage of Occupy Movement, in which protesters were confronting suppression from the police and did not have much freedom to choose what they wanted to do, the relatively stable second stage allowed occupiers to manage different kinds of movement activities for the main purpose of sustaining the campaign. In this regard, the selection of movement activities was mainly instrumental and strategic. Specifically, occupiers used various tactical repertoires to mobilize people to join the campaign in order to sustain the movements.

It is noteworthy that activities in this stage were, to a certain extent, expressive. Artistic creations, in addition to their ability to gather people, were mostly expressions of the inner state of the artists. They were a way for

people to articulate their grievances, thoughts, and feelings towards the movement, though some radical localist occupiers doubted their use, as they believed that any activity held on-site had to be able to strategically contribute to the campaign.

In a nutshell, the expansion of the movement activities gave both instrumental and expressive repertoire to the movement. In addition, the prevailing tranquil requirement for protests was still applicable in this stage of Occupy Movement.

### **The Third Stage of Occupation: The Occurrence of the Violent Confrontation**

A meeting was held between government representatives and student leaders in mid-October. Unfortunately, the talks came up empty. Thereafter, the movement impeded, as the government closed the door to further deliberation by announcing that there would not be a second round conversation, despite requests from the student leaders. Instead, it resorted to using the law to quell the occupation, as some anti-Occupy groups applied for injunction from the High Court to prohibit protesters from staying on the streets any further. At the same time, violence from the police increasingly escalated. Since opponents' reaction was an element influencing the choice and pattern of movement activities, these changes brought mutations to the movement, bringing the Occupy Movement into its third and final stage.

#### *Infighting*

The last stage of movement was a period of dissensions. The split between occupiers in Mong Kok and those in Admiralty, which had existed since the very beginning of the Occupy Movement, became even more

evident. Recall that the student leaders had never been welcomed in Mong Kok, as occupiers there were disgusted by their appeal to retreat in the night of 28 September, when rumours that the police was trying to open fire was circulating (Mr Wong, interviewee, member of Hong Kong Federation of Students). Any attempt by the student leaders to set up a podium at Mong Kok would be foiled immediately by occupiers there, as they were worried that the students would attempt to ask them to retreat again (Mr Yeung and Ms Cheng, interviewees, localist, members of Hong Kong Indigenous).

As the movement stalled after talks between the government and student leaders failed, friction grew among protesters. One of the most noticeable episodes of infighting among occupiers happened around the main podium in Admiralty in mid-November, as crowds of protesters wearing masks surrounded the podium carrying placards reading “you do not represent us” (See Figure 9). Citing their dissatisfaction with the arrangement of the podium and the marshalling system of the movement, these masked protesters tried to besiege the podium and started a brawl with the marshal team. It was not until the student leaders came to mediate that the fiery flock agreed to sit down for a discussion.

It was alleged that the grumbling crowd was motivated by localist groups (Mr Lau, interviewee, non-aligned occupier). This inference was not deceptive and gratuitous, as some members of localist groups

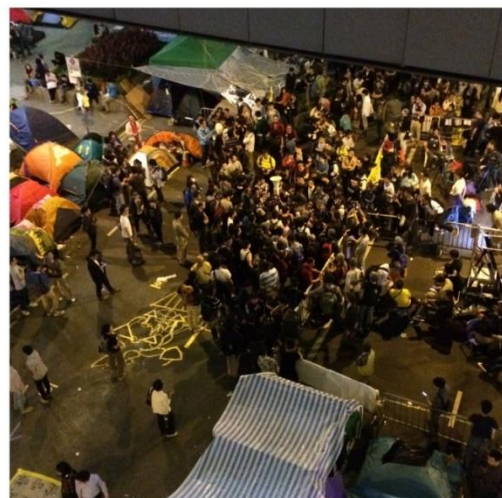


Figure 9:  
Occupiers were surrounding the main podium in Admiralty

were, in fact, involved in the disturbance (Mr Cheung, interviewee, localist occupier). As an unprecedented mass movement in Hong Kong that included almost all pan-democratic parties, incongruences among factions came as no surprise, especially since the localists were hostile to the traditional pan-democratic and leftist social activists, whom they called the “leftards (左膠)”. Yet, the disturbance during this last stage of the movement was more than a disagreement. Rather, it was a real internal conflict. Although it did not turn into explicit violent infighting, the internal dissent seemed to have outweighed the goal of the movement.

Another reason for the infighting stemmed from factions having unequal say in the entire movement. From mid-October onwards, a daily “four-party talks” was held among representatives from pan-democratic parties, some renowned leftist social activists, the organizers of Occupy Central, and student leaders for discussing the progress of the movement (Mr Kwok and Ms Au, interviewees, leftists, members of Civil Human Right Front). Often, non-aligned occupiers who were engaged in the frontline would also be invited to join the talk. Obviously, localists were left out of the talks, despite them being an influential faction in the movement (Mr Chen, interviewee, localist, member of Civic Passion), which was not surprising considering their position against the traditional pan-democratic camp and social activists. The lack of an official channel for the localist occupiers and others to conciliate, the accusation that the student leaders and leftist social activists treated them below the belt, such as limiting their chances to speak on the main podium (Mr Yeung, interviewee, localist, member of Hong Kong Indigenous), and the refusal of the appeal to escalate their actions (Ms Chen, interviewee, localist, member of Civic Passion) finally led to some radical

localist occupiers taking action to start the internal conflict at the same time the movement dwindled.

### *Escalating the movement with violence*

The peacefulness, as mentioned previously, has been a salient and prevailing feature in the protest culture of Hong Kong. This mild protest culture was a consideration when planning for the original Occupy Central campaign, and followed throughout the first two stages of Occupy Movement. Even when confronting the police during the earliest stage, the occupiers employed defensive tactics, with only umbrellas, goggles, and raincoats in hand to shelter themselves from the pepper spray assaults. The retreat of riot police led to the three occupation zones being set up by protesters blocking parts of the roadways in Admiralty, Causeway Bay, and Mong Kok. In these occupied sites, the lives of occupiers returned to “normal”, as the occupation turned into a long-term struggle for pressuring the government to respond to the political demand for universal suffrage.

The tides turned after the two-hour talk between the government and student leaders failed to work out solutions to any of the issues that generated the Occupy Movement. Thereafter, the government refused further deliberation and concession, despite student leaders’ suggestion for another round of talks and request to talk directly with Premier of the State Council. In addition, anti-Occupy groups started to impugn the occupation, starting with the Alliance for Peace and Democracy, which ran a petition to collect signatures demanding the return of the occupied streets and restoration of law and order. Although the petition was criticized for its lack of credibility, it was a fact that, by then, the number of occupiers was



decreasing, and there was an apparent decline in public support, since the road blockade was disruptive for those living nearby. Another group of opponents to the occupation was taxi and minibus operators and drivers, whose removal of road barriers in the protest zones appeared to be well-orchestrated, as cranes were brought in to scoop up and dump the barriers. The battle for barricades happened very often, especially in Mong Kok and Admiralty. Each time the opponents removed the barriers, the occupiers would re-build the barriers using whatever they could find nearby, including metal bars, rubbish bins, and scaffolding bamboo sticks.

Besides physical action, the anti-Occupy groups started a legal battle by applying to the Court of Hong Kong for temporary injunctions to prohibit protesters from continuously occupying in the streets. The High Court issued the first injunction to bar protesters in November, meaning that the occupied sites would inevitably be cleared very soon, as the police warned that they would provide full assistance in the execution of the injunction.

In fact, the police's way of dispersing the occupiers was unselective, brutal, and callous. This could be seen from their ferocity when fighting back the occupiers who tried to extend the occupation by paralyzing Lung Wo Road, a thoroughfare next to the government headquarters. A ghastly and appalling scene was when local television channels broadcasted a footage showing seven police officers assaulting one of the occupiers. The occupier was carried off with his hands tied behind his back, while a group of officers punched, kicked, and stamped on him. As the police seemingly took the law into their own hands, the relationship between the police and the occupiers became even more strained and intense. There was even news reporting the excessive use of violence by the police against reporters.



The exorbitant degree of violence used by the police, along with the impediment of the movement and the upcoming execution of the court order perturbed and flustered the occupiers, and led the occupiers, especially those under the flag of localism, to adopt a more radical and aggressive approach. A peculiar incident happened in November, when was a group of protesters attempted to break into the Legislative Council Complex by storming the side-entrance to the building with concrete tiles and metal barricades. Unlike previous events in the Occupy Movement, these protesters took the initiative to attack a target. Compare this to the first episode of the Occupy Movement, when the student protesters stormed the Civic Square. Although both were ambush action, they were different in terms of tactics used. The student ambush did not employ any aggressive use of violence in their action. When they climbed over the fence to enter and occupy the Civic Square, most of them barehanded, holding an umbrella at most. On the contrary, in the case of the storming of the Legislative Council Complex, the protesters held not defensive tools, but concrete tile and metal barricades for a purposeful and antagonistic attack on the building. More interestingly, the attack was not directly related to the Occupy Movement, but was based on a rumour that the controversial Copyright Bill, nicknamed Internet Article 23 for its power to curb personal freedom in the usage of the Internet, would be put to debate in Legislative Council. The attack was the protester's way to stop the bill from being passed smoothly:

I remembered that a lawmaker was there to try to stop the protesters from smashing the glass doors. But he was pushed aside.....I can tell you nobody can control that circumstance. They were well-prepared to storm it. They just wanted to smash the Legislative Council Building. Any rumour could be an

excuse for them to storm the building. I did not think the accuracy of information mattered.

Mr Cheung, interviewee,  
localist, member of Hong Kong Indigenous

An occupier who took part in that attack mentioned that there was not a clear purpose for the action, merely an intention to act in a relatively more violent and radical way.

The idea of using increased violence to fight back against the police and to escalate the movement to put more pressure on the government gained grounds across the occupied sites. Localist occupiers, especially those who supported using “valiant action”, agreed on the use of violence against the police for the purpose of “using violence against violence (以武制暴)”. Some non-aligned occupiers also considered a possible escalation of the movement with violence or a more radical plan to block the roads (Mr Lau, interviewee, non-aligned occupier). However, concerns were raised regarding “the safety of bystanders” (Mr Ng, interviewee, leftist, member of Labour Party), “agreement from other protesters” (Mr Lam, interviewee, leftist, member of League of Social Democrats), and “possible physical injury on people (Ms Au, interviewee, leftist, member of Civil Human Rights Front)”, in addition to other strategic considerations. Regardless, the expectation for an escalation in the movement was growing, and in early December, student organizers finally responded by calling on occupiers to surround the government complex (Mr Wong, interviewee, member of Hong Kong Federation of Students). However, they kept persuading protesters not to use any kind of violence and banned the more radical plans proposed by non-aligned occupiers (Mr Lau and Mr Chan, non-aligned occupiers). Unfortunately, the

escalation was met with the use of heavy violence from the police, and many protesters were badly injured.

### *Summary*

The final stage of Occupy Movement was a stage of internal conflict. A noteworthy feature was the infighting between the radical localist occupiers and the leading student protesters and social activists. As participants of the Occupy Movement came from almost all pan-democratic parties, cooperation and competition inevitably existed. Movements are always embedded in a web of social relations, and could seldom survive without cooperation between the participating groups and organizations. Being in an alliance does not merely mean sharing similar goals and tenets, but “coalition work” is also required to maintain linkage among organizations so as to identify the common direction and to act together (Staggenborg 1986; Shaffer 2000). This kind of coalition work was seen in the early stages of the Occupy Movement, and definitely in Occupy Central.

Yet, there is no guarantee that organizations would be mutually supportive of each other at all times, and competitions among factions are normal within a movement. Distribution of resources, strategic preferences, and social bases of the organizations can all be possible reasons to make groups engage in a competitive struggle. In the case of Occupy Movement, it seemed that the power relation between localist occupiers and others engendered the strife. Specifically, localist occupiers complained about the unequal chances for them to make speeches on the main podium, which was the main cause of the infighting. Even though the clash did not turn into violent internal conflict, it worked to deteriorate the movement and the fight

for power outweighed the original campaign goal.

Besides the internal strife, another feature of this stage was the explicit use of violence in escalating the movement. Of course, compared to social movements in other countries, this so-called violent clash was not that at all fierce and aggressive. Yet, considering the long-established importance of peacefulness in any means of action in Hong Kong, the use of violence, regardless of its degree, represented a change in the tactical repertoire. Throughout the Occupy Movement and Occupy Central, the general choice of tactics and activities was pretty similar and embedded within the prevailing tranquil protest culture. It was not until this final stage of the Occupy Movement, when failure in talks between the government and student leaders and physical and legal assault from anti-Occupy parties led to a request for escalating the movement, which some occupiers started to look at the possibility of using violence and radical actions. The turn of events, including the perturbation to the protesters, intertwined with the government's refusal to concede, court injunctions, and police's unselective use of violence, brought a significant change to the movement by transforming the dominant and enduring pattern of actions.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter is an examination of the repertoire of Occupy Central, as well as different stages of Occupy Movement. Each stage in the movement had its own features and contained various movement activities, as summarized in Table 5.

The demand for democratic electoral reform formed the basis for explaining the generation of both Occupy Central and its successor, Occupy

Movement. The original campaign transformed into the first stage of the Occupy Movement - the stage of transition, partly due to the emotional factor, when protesters, especially the non-aligned ones, decided to join the movement after seeing the use of unnecessary violence by the police on students, and partly due to unintended consequence stemming from a series of contingencies, including the police's tactics in dispersing the crowds and dealing with the students' class boycott, and the students' improvised ambush action. In this stage, the tactical repertoire dominated.

As the Occupy Movement moved into its second stage - the stage of stalemate, a new repertoire, the expressive repertoire, was added. This involved life returning to "normal" on the occupation sites, and the display of public art that expressed the internal feeling of protesters. Although the radical localist occupiers were dissatisfied with the expressive activities, this relatively peaceful stage allowed evolution and diversification of the repertoire.

According to the concept of repertoire, which indicated that the evolution of movement activities was subject to local culture, the non-violent and peaceful protest culture of Hong Kong could be construed as the explanation for the observed sequence of actions. Obviously, the choice of activities in the repertoires of Occupy Central and the first two stages of Occupy Movement was limited by the prevailing tranquil protest tradition, as evident from the movement activities following the common pattern from the past.

As the movement started to die down in the last stage of the Occupy Movement - the stage of internal conflict, two mutations were observed. First, out of a desire to escalate the movement, the acquired peaceful protest

pattern was changed. Second, a wave of infighting broke out between the localist occupiers and leftists and nonpartisans. Both of these brought the element of violence into the movement.

In a nutshell, the analysis of repertoire in this chapter showed the progress of the occupation campaign by identifying the major movement activities and key characteristics of each stage and probing the factors that influenced the variety of movement activities. By doing so, it was concluded that the original purpose, the course of the movement, and the dominant protest pattern were curbed by the choice of the repertoire. The next chapter will be an analysis of the framing process of the movement, which will help to offer deeper insights into this critical event in the history of Hong Kong.

Table 5: Summary of the repertoire of the Occupy Central and stages of Occupy Movement

<u>Stages</u>	<u>Major features</u>	<u>Major movement activities</u>
Occupy Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear steps of action</li> <li>- Tranquility and peacefulness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protests, rallies</li> <li>- Deliberations (official deliberation days)</li> <li>- Sit-in march</li> </ul>
Stage 1 of Occupy Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The stage of transition</li> <li>- The expansion of occupation</li> <li>- Chaos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-violent siege</li> </ul>
Stage 2 of Occupy Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The stage of the stalemate</li> <li>- The expansion of repertoire</li> <li>- Diverse movement activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-violent siege</li> <li>- Deliberations (podiums and rostrums)</li> <li>- Daily leisure activities</li> <li>- Art works</li> </ul>
Stage 3 of Occupy Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The stage of the internal conflict</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infighting within factions</li> <li>- Relative violent confrontations with the police force</li> </ul>

## CHAPTER 6

### FRAMING

Referring to the literature, framing processes are intertwined with the operation of social movements (e.g., Johnston and Klandermans 1995; Laraña et al. 1994; Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988; 1992), and are helpful in explaining the evolution of the Occupy Movement.

Similar to previous massive social movements in Hong Kong, the demand for democracy was the major theme for Occupy Central. The pursuit for democracy in Hong Kong has been on-going since the 1980s, when the democratization of colonies was a global trend (Herman and McChesney 1997). Particularly, Weiner (1987) made an interesting observation that most countries that have seen successful democratization after gaining independence were former British colonies, courtesy of the rule of law and system of representation brought by British colonization. As one of the British colonies, democratization was a prospective issue in Hong Kong back then, and would seemingly move along a smooth path.

Yet, contradictory to the global trend, Hong Kong did not become independent. Rather, it made the transition from a British colony to a Chinese special administrative region. In 1979, Murray MacLehose, then Governor of Hong Kong, visited China and raised the question of the sovereignty of Hong Kong with Deng Xiaoping, then leader of Chinese Communist Party. Instead of launching a decolonization process, the British government signed the Sino-British Joint Declaration with the Chinese government in 1984 after several rounds of negotiations, confirming the



return of sovereignty of Hong Kong to China. Such arrangement seemed to be an “anachronistic case of decolonization” (Fung 2004), and the democratization process was limited to ensuring that the original social and economic systems in Hong Kong would remain unchanged and the Chief Executive and members of Legislative Council would be elected by universal suffrage through the implementation of the Basic Law, as assured by the Joint Declaration.

In response to the promise for democracy in the Joint Declaration, a series of negotiations for the formulation of the Basic Law took place between the Chinese government, British government, and democratic activists in Hong Kong. The process was not smooth, and faced even greater challenge after the Tiananmen crackdown in 1989, which increased uncertainty in the bargaining. Many of the leading Hong Kong democrats were ousted from the Drafting Committee for the Basic Law by the Chinese government, as they were key members of the Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, which actively supported the protesting students in Beijing. The crackdown also shattered the cooperation between the British government and the Chinese government over the issue of democratic development in Hong Kong. Thereafter, the policy of British government shifted to that of confrontation with the Chinese government over the issue of democratization of Hong Kong before 1997 (Ma 1997). In 1992, Chris Patten became the last governor of colonial Hong Kong. He was charged with introducing a political reform package that challenged the Chinese government. A bickering over electoral rules after 1997 began, with Patten finally pushing an electoral reform proposal without seeking the consent of the Chinese government. This measure was strongly criticized by

the Chinese government, since it would probably render Hong Kong less controllable after 1997 (Sing 2004:124). By then, the Chinese government was hostile towards Hong Kong democrats, who supported the reform package. This hostility continued even after the British departed, and there was not any formal dialogue over the issue of democratic development. In the end, the Chinese government endorsed a restricted model of democracy for post-colonial Hong Kong.

By any standard, the democratic development in Hong Kong was prolonged. It was not until 2003, when the failure in governance, occurrence of various political scandals, and the conflicts over the enactment of the national-security law brought about half a million Hong Kong residents to the streets to protest, that local democrats started to organize campaigns to call for full universal suffrage in the Chief Executive and Legislative Council elections. Thereafter, the demand for full democracy and resentment towards the prolonged democratization process became the main theme for most social movements in Hong Kong. One of these was the Occupy Central campaign, which was a protest against the sluggishness in the progress of democratic development.

### **Framing Occupy Central: The Major Collective Action Frames**

The concept of framing highlights the importance of the interpretation of the problems and grievances in legitimizing and mobilizing social movements. In the case of the Occupy Central campaign, for example, the way the movement organizers frame the stagnation in the democratization process would provide grounds to gain people's support for the movement.

Basically, Occupy Central embraced four main collective action frames.

The first was the idea that the request for universal suffrage is constitutionally reasonable. Considering that the goal of implementing popular electoral system for the selection of the Chief Executive and members of the Legislative Council was clearly stated in the Basic Law, the first frame was merely a reiteration of the democratic promise. The second frame involved the idea that the implementation of universal suffrage is functionally indispensable. This argument can be seen as a remark for the first one, emphasizing the crucial role played by universal suffrage in fixing faults in the existing political institution. These two frames were employed to justify the motive of the campaign. The remaining two frames were employed to justify the campaign's action of disobedience. The third frame was the principle of "one person, one vote", which was considered a basic criterion for universal suffrage by the democratic activists. The government's ineptitude in proposing a political reform with that precept was the reason to launch acts of civil disobedience. The final one was the idea that non-violent disobedient act was useful, which justified it being the organizers' chosen means of action. These four frames will be discussed respectively in the following paragraphs.

*The request of the universal suffrage is constitutional reasonable*

The first collective action frame developed by the organizers of the Occupy Central campaign was the idea that the request for universal suffrage is constitutional reasonable. It was primitively based on the

incomplete implementation of the constitutional documents of Hong Kong.<sup>11</sup> The Basic Law, which is the constitutional documents for the city and sometime dubbed a “mini-constitution,” provides the basis for the demand for universal suffrage. Specifically, under the sections related to democratic development, it is clearly stated that the ultimate goal in the selection of the Chief Executive and all members of the Legislative Council is by full popular election. Since the democratic promise is evidently asserted in the most authoritative document in the territory, it became the bedrock for the democratic activists’ demand for universal suffrage. In addition, the Joint Declaration not only guarantees that, based on the principle of “One country, two systems”, the previous way of life and the operation of capitalist system in Hong Kong would remain unchanged for a period of 50 years after the territory’s return in 1997, but it also states that the Chief Executive shall be appointed “on the basis of the results of elections or consultations to be held locally”. Demanding the government to allow universal suffrage in elections is thus lawfully plausible according to the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law, the two crucial documents related to the territory’s return to China.

This frame provided the constitutional validity for the initiation of Occupy Central and other democratic movements. In this respect, this frame justified the inclination of the campaign, and proved that it was tenable considering the ongoing political commotion caused by the unrealized

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<sup>11</sup> See Tai 2013b: “Reform in the electoral system towards universal suffrage was stipulated by the Basic Law since its inception, and the people of Hong Kong have expected this goal to be achieved ten years after the establishment of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. But the Central government has violated this solemn promise twice, in 2007 and 2012. (普選的制度改革，其實在《基本法》內早有規定，亦是港人期望在特區成立後的十年就可以實行得到。但這莊嚴的承諾，中央政府卻兩度在二零零七年及二零一二年違背了。)”

democratic pledge.<sup>12</sup> Clearly, the delay in the process of democratization, along with the yet-to-be-fulfilled constitutional duty of implementing universal suffrage in the elections, was mounted as the motivation and the basis for the movement.

Apart from identifying the problem, a more significant function of the framing process is explaining the predicament and putting the blame. In fact, the current frame, hinged on the constitutional document, is able to do so.<sup>13</sup> From Tai's observation, it is obvious that the organizers are accusing both the Central and Hong Kong governments of failure in performing the constitutional requirement. This indictment of the governments is not spurious. A study of the text related to political reform in the Basic Law reveals the culprit(s) for the unrealized democratic pledge and slow democratization progress. According to the Basic Law, amending the

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<sup>12</sup> See Tai 2013b: "In insisting a non-violent way in expressing their determination of pursuing universal suffrage, occupiers paid with their personal freedom in hope that the Beijing government can understand and honour the promise of universal suffrage they made in the Basic Law.

(佔中者只是付上了個人的自由，堅持用非暴力的方法表達對追求民主普選的堅定決心，希望北京政府能明白而願意履行在《基本法》早已立下的普選承諾。)"

<sup>13</sup> See Tai 2013b: "The Central government asked people to wait. To the sheepish Hong Kong people, the helplessness experienced when the promise was first broken would turn into suspicion about the sincerity the Central government has in honouring its promise the second time around. It is impossible for even the most sheepish and compromising Hong Kong people to remain quiet or stay mum after breaking a promise twice. They are now taking action to request the Central government to honour its promise, which is the only way for the Central government to regain the trust of Hong Kong people. In the following year, both the Central and Hong Kong government will have a lot of chances to resolve the small crises caused by civil disobedience. As long as a Chief Executive election with universal suffrage that is up to international standard is implemented, both the crises due to civil disobedience and political impasses can be solved. This is killing two birds with one stone.

(中央政府每次都是說要多等一會。對一向珉和順服的港人來說，在第一次違諾時有點無可奈何，但到了第二次違諾時，就不能不懷疑中央政府有多大的誠意.....經過兩次的違諾，連最珉和順服及願意溝通妥協的港人也不能再靜默或啞忍了。他們現在要站出來以行動要求中央政府對兌承諾，也惟有中央政府對兌承諾，才能重建港人對中央政府的信心.....在未來一年時間內，特區政府及中央政府是有非常多的機會去化解由公民抗命所可能產生的小危機，只要能落實可符合國際標準的普選特首選舉辦法，那麼不但能化解了公民抗命的小危機，更製造了契機去進一步解決由香港管治困局所造成的大危機。那可以說是一石二鳥之法。但若在未來一年那麼長的時間，特區政府及中央政府見着危機來臨而不顧，我們就要問甚麼才是這些損失的真正成因。)"

methods for electing the Legislative Council and the Chief Executive, that is, the implementation of democratic electoral system, is the constitutional duty of the Hong Kong government, subject to the decision of Chinese government.<sup>14</sup> Specifically, it is the responsibility of the Hong Kong government to propose a plan for electoral system reform and persuade the lawmakers to support it. The meaning is two-fold for the pro-democracy camp, including the organizers of Occupy Central. On the one hand, these articles serve as strong evidence for them to accuse the government for not performing their constitutional commission and convincing the lawmakers to give support. On the other hand, the target of the movement is now clear - both the Hong Kong and Central governments are to blame for the stagnation of the democratization process.

The current frame is capable of performing both the diagnostic and prognostic functions of framing. Not only does it point out that the protracted democratization is a constitutional issue, but it also indicates that the responsibility should be placed on the governments. In addition, it can also explain parts of the concrete action of the Occupy Central campaign. According to the original plan, the most significant part of the movement was the disobedient act, which aimed to paralyze Central, the financial center of Hong Kong. The reason for targeting Central was to pressure the

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<sup>14</sup> It is clearly stated in the Hong Kong Basic Law:

“……if there is a need to amend the method for selecting the Chief Executives for the terms subsequent to the year 2007. Such amendments must be made with the endorsement of a two-thirds majority of all the members of the Legislative Council and the consent of the Chief Executive, and they shall be reported to the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress for approval.” (Annex I of the Hong Kong Basic Law)

“……with regard to the method for forming the legislative Council of the HKSAR and its procedures for voting on bills and motions after 2007, if there is a need to amend the provisions of this Anne, such amendments must be made with the endorsement of a two-thirds major of all the members of the Council and the consent of the Chief Executive, and they shall be reported to the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress for the record.” (Annex II of the Hong Kong Basic Law)

government into keeping the democratic promise and implementing the political reform with universal suffrage, and increase the cost for the government if the democratic promise was not achieved. The current frame allowed the organizers of Occupy Central to point their fingers toward the government.

*The implementation of the universal suffrage is functionally indispensable*

The main argument of this frame was that the implementation of the universal suffrage is functionally indispensable to the achievement of a democratic political system that can tackle the current governing problems.<sup>15</sup> Focusing on the weak governance since the territory's return to China, the current frame declared that the implementation of universal suffrage was imperative to tackling the existing political problems.<sup>16</sup> In fact, the problems in governance mentioned by the movement organizers can be attributed to the defects in the existing political system of Hong Kong. Economic development and political legitimacy, according to the "social requisites" of democracy recommended by Lipset (1959), are both important for democratization. Despite criticisms indicating their contradiction with the de facto worldwide trend of democratization in the 1980s, the level of maturity of the economy and legal systems were still considered important criteria for

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<sup>15</sup> See Tai 2013c " Maybe our life is not bad, it is not difficult to find out that, if we make our horizon wider, a lot of people are living in hardship.....only a fair and justice governing system, process, and method can the problems of governance be resolved.

我們自己的生活雖可能不錯，但若我們把視野擴闊一些，就不難看到社會內有不少人是活在水深火熱中.....惟有公平、公義的管治制度、程序及方法，才能真正化解香港管治上的問題。」

<sup>16</sup> See Chan 2013a" Without universal suffrage of the Chief Executive, how can people supervise these uncontrolled powers? Without universal suffrage, how can the people make the government respond to their demands, break the monopoly, and create a fairer society? (香港還不實行特首普選，如何監督這些失控的權力？ 如果沒有普選，憑什掙令政府回應社會的訴求，打破財團的壟斷，締造一個更平等的社會？)"

democratic progress (Linz and Stepan 1996). Hong Kong, as a modern metropolis with a robust economy and high level of socioeconomic development, seemingly fulfills the conditions for promoting democracy (So, 1999). Yet, the fact is that there are several apparent frailties in the existing political institution. As a result, some scholars describe Hong Kong as a semi-democracy (e.g., Overholt 2001; Sing 2009), or more precisely, a partial democracy in a constitutional framework prescribed by the Basic Law (Ma 2008).

More importantly, this semi-democratic political system is the root of the weak performance of the Hong Kong government since the territory's return to China.<sup>17</sup> A feature of the semi-democracy in Hong Kong is exhibited in the existing election system for the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council. As the head of the government of Hong Kong, the Chief Executive is selected not by popular vote, but through an Election Committee. While it is laid down in the Basic Law that the Election Committee should be "broadly representative", its composition, in fact, is mostly inclined towards pro-government parties and businessmen, with the pro-democracy activists almost totally excluded. It is no surprise that it is dubbed a "coterie election" to satirize its unfairness.

The legislature is also not fully elected by popular vote. There are two major parts in the Legislative Council, namely, the "geographically constituency", members of which are elected through universal suffrage, and

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<sup>17</sup>See Chan 2013 a:" The coterie election is dominated by the pro-Beijing parties and businessmen. In order to ensure their vote, even if a candidate running for the Chief Executive was willing to go into the community, it would only be a show. He has no way to motivate social support through his election platform. (小圈子的選舉被土共和財團壟斷，為保票源，特首候選人即使落區做公關頭上都戴規金剛箍，無法透過選舉工程動員社會力量支持政府施政。)



the “functional constituency”, whose members come from selected occupational sectors with significant interest in their respective field. Due to these non-popularly elected members, legislators returned through universal suffrage never made up more than half of the Legislative Council after 1997 (See Table 6).

Table 6: The composition of the Hong Kong Legislative Council 1991-2012

	<u>1991</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2012</u>
Ex-officio members	4	/	/	/	/	/	/
Appointed members	17	/	/	/	/	/	/
Functional constituency	21	30	30	30	30	30	35
Election committee	/	10	10	9	/	/	/
Popularly-elected	18	20	20	24	30	30	35
Total	<u>60</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>70</u>

The “coterie election” for the Chief Executive and the “functional constituency” mean that the leader of the Hong Kong government and half of the legislature are not compelled to be responsive to public demands. As a result, the policy-making process is relatively impervious to the public influence and unable to fulfill the societal demand (Lee et al. 2013:1-3). Such inability to satisfy societal demand obviously stems from faults in the existing election method for the Chief Executive and the inclusion of the functional representatives in the Legislative Council, and is deemed one of the major reasons for the weak performance of the Hong Kong government since the territory’s return to China (Poon 2007).

The argument developed by the Occupy Central organizers was

grounded on the previously-mentioned flaws in the extant political structure as well. The call for universal suffrage was to change the election system to force the head of the Hong Kong government and members of legislature to face societal demands under the direct election schemes. It rendered a hope for curing the ills in governance.

This frame attempted to convince people to join the movement by attributing the weak governance to faults in the electoral systems. Considering the functions of the framing process, it was necessary to convince people that the issues were essential and the actions were necessary. This frame served the purpose of providing an explanation for the current grievance through connecting it with the flaws of the extant political structure, thus emphasizing the claim that universal suffrage is indispensable to improving the current problems faced by the government.

This frame added to the justification for launching the campaign by figuring out the structural reasons for the poor performance of the government and vindicating the emergency of the establishment of universal suffrage, instead of simply laying the burden on constitutional reasons. In this sense, the second frame of the campaign can be seen as a remark for the first one.

#### *The principle of "one person, one vote"*

The first two frames provided justifications for the intention of the Occupy Central, namely, fulfilling the constitutional promise and fixing the existing faults in the electoral systems. Comparatively, the major function of the third and the fourth frames was to justify the use of disobedient act in the campaign, since, despite knowledge of the major purpose of the campaign,

people may desire explanation for the decision to launch a massive disobedience act. Considering the functions of the framing process, it is necessary to convince people that such action is necessary and useful, so as to persuade sufficient number of people to participate in the movement. These two frames were able to serve this function, namely, declaring the need for the using occupation as a disobedient act.

“One person, one vote”, as a catchphrase, was coined by the democratic activists and used by the likes since the negotiation of the Basic Law as the basic criterion of the universal suffrage, as this slogan represented the fundamental idea of democracy as a form of government by the people (Held 2006:1-3). The pursuit of one vote for every person embodied this form of political equality among the people. During the discussion on political reform for 2007 and 2012, “one person, one vote” was also seen on the many banners campaigning for universal suffrage.

Yet, the actual operation for “one person, one vote” remained ambiguous. For this matter, the Alliance for True Democracy, a coalition formed by 12 organizations under the pro-democracy flag in 2013 to replace the suspended Alliance for Universal Suffrage, suggested that the definition of universal suffrage should be based on international standards, namely, Article 25 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.<sup>18</sup>

For this purpose, the proposal for Occupy Central included the

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<sup>18</sup> Article 25 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: “Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions: (a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives; (b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors; (c) To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country”

disobedient act as the last step of the campaign, with the aim of putting pressure on the government to draw up a reform package providing for universal suffrage in the election of Chief Executive - in other words, to fulfill the principle of "one person, one vote". Describing the last step as civil disobedient act, the campaign leaders declared that it was a resistance against injustice:

If the democrats voted down the political reform package due to it being not up to the international standard for universal suffrage, the original method will be used in following election. The existing undemocratic election method is the injustice we have to fight against.

Tai, 2013d, translated by the author<sup>19</sup>,

Tai's words suggested that the injustice that justified the civil disobedience was two-fold. First, it was related to the distortion of the principle of "one person, one vote." In fact, before Beijing's decision on the method of the following Chief Executive election was announced, the Hong Kong government and its adherents were using "one person, one vote" to describe the upcoming political reform package. However, early in 2014, pro-Beijing parties started to circulate a message that future elections for the Chief Executive should come with some "elimination process" and include the criterion that candidates have to "love China, love Hong Kong". These made the pro-democracy parties worry about the government's definition of "one person, one vote". Thereafter, the principle of "one person, one vote", in the sense of pro-democracy camp, included equal right for eligibility of candidates, in addition to the original equal right to vote. In this regard,

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<sup>19</sup>The original text: 「按現在《基本法》及全國人大常委會的決議，若我們不能接受將來特首向立法會提出普選特首選舉辦法的方案，因它不符合國際標準，那最大可能是那方案會被泛民主派議員否決，但結果會是沿用肯定是不符合國際標準的現行小圈子選舉方法，那就是要反的不義之法。」

“injustice” in universal suffrage would mean not satisfying the above, and this explained why Beijing’s restricted electoral reform proposal was criticized by the pan-democratic parties as “fake universal suffrage”, as it only allowed a so-called equal voting right, but contained a screening process for candidates. The third frame, which was related to the principle of “one person, one vote”, confirmed the “injustice” and the organizers’ stand against the restricted proposal.

The second point was related to procedural injustice, associated with the assumption that if the pan-democratic lawmakers voted down the reform package for its failure to match the international standard of universal suffrage, the original unjust election system would stay in place for the next election, prolonging the life of the injustice brought by the current system.

Putting it succinctly, the current frame was able to perform three functions. First, the principle of “one person, one vote”, which referred to equal voting right and a fair nomination process, was the bottom line in the discussion of universal suffrage, the grounds for the Occupy Central deliberation days, and the key in proposals for the civil referendum. Second, by describing the government’s proposal, which probably would not satisfy their requirement for meeting international standard, as “injustice”, the campaign could justify their proposed plan of occupation as a mean to “fight the injustice” and resist the unrighteousness. Lastly, it was a fight back against the government and its advocates’ use of the phrase “one person, one vote”.

*Nonviolent disobedient act is useful*

The final frame in the campaign was also an elaboration for the

proposed plan of occupation as a civil disobedience. In this case, the organizers constructed this frame in two ways. One was in line with the concrete influence against authoritarian government:

*How Freedom is Won: From Civic Resistance to Durable Democracy*, written by Karatnychy and Ackerman, demonstrated the impact of non-violent resistance on improving democratization in contemporary world. In the 67 cases that an authoritarian government successfully turned into a democracy, 70% were done through non-violent civil disobedience. The united and non-violent civil society impelled the peaceful transition and strengthened the democracy. They reckoned that violence would only bring more suppression. Besides the power to fight against the tyranny, civil disobedience lets participants learn how to be responsible for their conduct, and communicate and compromise with others to achieve the goal.

Chan 2013b, translated by the author<sup>20</sup>

This shows that the movement organizers believed in the power of non-violent civic disobedient action in the promotion of democracy. It could, on the one hand, coerce the authoritarian government to make concession. On the other hand, it would help construct a more mature civil society.

Another way to construct this frame was on the basis of civil awareness, as demonstrated through the cases of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. In these examples of civil disobedience, a spirit of sacrifice was a highlight. A sense of self-sacrifice was embodied in the concrete plan of the action. Specifically, all participants of the campaign were determined not to put up any resistance, even if the authority were suppressing the disobedient

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<sup>20</sup>The original text: 「非暴力抗爭對於促進當代民主化的影響，可見於 Karatnycky 與 Ackerman 合著的 *How Freedom is Won: From Civic Resistance to Durable Democracy* 一書。在他們研究的 67 個成功從獨裁政權轉型的國家中，七成是以非暴力的公民抗命來促使國家走向民主之路。這些國家的和平轉型和民主整固，有賴一個團結、非暴力的公民社會支撐着。他們認為暴力抗爭引發更多鎮壓，而公民抗命除了有效對抗專制外，更能令參與者學習如何為自己的行為負責，並如何在達成目標的過程中尋求對話與共識。」

occupation by force, and surrender themselves afterward:

If the Central government and the pro-establish camp still want to propose an election method that violates the international standard of universal suffrage to delay the democratic reform of Hong Kong, I believe it will push Hong Kong in a state of chaos. No one wants to see gentle teenagers clashing with the responsible police force and getting arrested? I hope people can understand, what Benny Tai proposed is not an attempt to tear the society apart, but a way to awaken people's conscience through civil disobedience, thus attenuating the conflicts in society.

Chan 2013b, translated by the author<sup>21</sup>

For the sake of pursuing universal suffrage, the proposed plan of civil disobedience provided a way to sacrifice with the purpose of heightening conscience and awareness of others. The non-violent civil disobedience would have the effect of enhancing the people's moral sense so as to wield a great deal of clout across the government and coerce it to implement direct and popular elections.

In addition to illustrating the usefulness of civil disobedience, this frame also served as an allusion to the situation of political apathy at the time:

He (Martin Luther King) used to lament that the biggest rivals on the path of resistance were not extremist organizations like the Klan, rather it was the middle-class people who chose to look on with folded arms. They always say, "we agree with your goal but we disagree with your method." In fact, they did not do anything to pursue racial equality. They were just opposed to civil disobedience.

Chan, 2013c, translated by the author<sup>22</sup>,

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<sup>21</sup>The original text: "如果最後中央和香港的建制派仍想提出一些違反國際普選標準的選舉辦法，繼續拖延民主改革，我很相信香港將會進入亂局。誰願意看見善良的年輕人與盡忠職守的警察肢體衝突，然後銀鑄入獄？我希望市民明白，戴耀廷現在提出來的佔領行動，並非要加劇社會衝突，而是要透過公民抗命的方式，喚醒各人的良知，共同化解社會矛盾。"

<sup>22</sup>The original text: 「他慨嘆在爭取平權的路上最大的對手不是三 K 黨之流，而是那些緊抱表面秩序的中產階級。他們總是說：我同意你的目標但不同意你的手段。但事實上，他們沒有做任何事情去追尋種族平等而只在反對公民抗命。」

With reference to Martin Luther King's word, this final frame was an attempt to propel awareness into the middle-class people by making them understand the importance of their involvement for the campaign.

### *Summary*

The four fundamental collective action frames of the Occupy Central campaign (see Table 7) were introduced in this section. The framing process was constructed in accordance with the original purpose of pursuing a more democratic election method for the Chief Executive and members of Legislative Council. While these collective action frames performed different functions respectively, their focus were on justifying the campaign, attributing the problems to the Hong Kong and Chinese governments, and validating the use of civil disobedient act in general. In addition to these functions, the frames were used to confront the counter-frames developed by the government and the pro-establishment camp as well.



Table 7: Four major collective action frames of Occupy Central

Frame	Ideas/Messages	Functions
Frame 1 (The Basic Law frame)	Universal suffrage is lawfully reasonable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To point out the problem of slow democratization process</li> <li>- To substantiate the main intention of the campaign</li> <li>- To lay the blame of the protracted democratization on the Beijing and Hong Kong government</li> </ul>
Frame 2 (Electoral problem frame)	Universal suffrage is functionally indispensable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To figure out the consequence of the protraction of democratization process</li> <li>- To further justify the intention of the campaign</li> </ul>
Frame 3 (Democracy frame)	“One person, One vote” is the basis of universal suffrage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To demonstrate the decision of launching a massive disobedience act.</li> <li>- To reject the proposal developed by the government and its adherents.</li> </ul>
Frame 4 (Civil disobedience frame)	Non-violent civil disobedience is useful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To clarify the reasons for proposing the civil disobedience.</li> </ul>

## **Framing Occupy Movement: The Conversion of Frames**

The student class boycott was the crux of the entire movement, and helped transform the Occupy Central to the Occupy Movement. The first stage of the movement brought a great change to the campaign, as the outbreak of conflict during that stage totally converted the original leadership and the plan of Occupy Central, and evolved the campaign into its second and third stages - long-term occupation with diverse movement activities and rupture among factions respectively.

I have argued in the previous chapter that the sense of anger and a series of contingency were the impetus that led to the extension of the occupation and the conversion of the movements. The weakness of this explanation is its inability to make sense of the duration of the movement. Were emotions the only factor that encouraged the occupiers to stay for more than three months? Although the emotions and the flow of events made people take to the streets and confront police, it is somewhat implausible that such emotions could explain the insistence of the people for months afterward. In the following, I am going to discuss the reformation of the framing process, which can be useful in answering this question and explaining the evolution of the movement.

### *The Master Frame: "I want real universal suffrage"*

When the police retreated after the tumult during the night of September 28, 2014, the movement evolved into another stage, whereby apart from the complete variation in the selection of movement activities, a master frame came into being.

Master frames were first introduced to explain the clustering of social

movements during cycles of protest (Snow and Benford, 1992). To put it succinctly, master frames are broad configurations of ideas that may be employed by any number of organizations within the movement. In the case of the Occupy Movement, the demand for a democratic political reform was widely accepted by all occupiers regardless of the factions they were in, as evidenced by the wide usage of the slogan “I want real universal suffrage” throughout the occupied sites.

Figure 10: Some banners with the slogan “I want real universal suffrage” found throughout the occupied sites



This motto was a manifestation of the general thought of the occupiers, namely, pursuing democratic electoral reform, and was adopted by nearly every occupier in the movement, including the localist organizations, who were willing to put aside their hostility and unfriendliness towards the

traditional pan-democratic politicians and social activists:

We set up a booth outside the Admiralty Centre.....We did not hoist or wave our flag. It was because I didn't want other groups to think that what we did was trying to hijack the movement.....It was a critical moment. To fight for democracy is what the people wanted and why people took to the street. So I tried our best to not argue with other groups.

(Mr Cheng, Interviewee,  
localist and member of Civic Passion)

Perhaps Mr Cheng could not represent the whole localist faction, as his words did not match most of the other localist occupiers' deeds, namely, stirring up internal conflicts among the occupiers in the movement, especially in the third stage when fierce localist occupiers held the leftist occupiers in contempt and tried to dismantle the main podium in the occupied zone of Admiralty. At any rate, Mr Cheng's conversation reflected that the demand for a democratic electoral reform was a broadly acknowledged target in the movement.

The master frame and the four collective action frames developed by the organizers of the Occupy Central campaign were anchored in experiences in, and expectations on, the protracted democratic development, which, as mentioned in previous sections, has been a main theme for democratic movements in Hong Kong since the negotiations on the issue of sovereignty began in the 1980s.

A closer examination of this master frame reveals that it contained traces of the four collective action frames. First, the demand for universal suffrage was similar to the ideas of the first two frames of Occupy Central – the Basic Law frame and the electoral problem frame (see Table 7). Both of them were used to endorse the intention for long-term occupation, and allowed the

demand for popular elections for the Chief Executive and members of Legislative to remain a gist of the master frame. Second, the phrase “real universal suffrage” highlighted the “genuineness” of the universal suffrage. It was the thought of the third collective action frame, the democracy frame. The desire for “real universal suffrage” was based on the principle of “one person, one vote” and a fair nomination process. Similar to the original democracy frame, it was a response to Beijing’s proposal of a restricted electoral reform package, which included a screening process during nomination. It was not a surprise that the master frame included most of the ideas found in the original frames. In the first place, as a succession of the campaign, the Occupy Movement retained its democracy ambition. It was reasonable that the frame occurred after the succession shared the thoughts of the previous campaign.

While Snow and Benford (1992) pointed out that the generality of commonly accepted ideas in the master frame allows the aggrieved groups to utilize it to mobilize the people, this was not exactly the case in the Occupy Movement. The Occupy Movement replaced the Occupy Central campaign after the class boycott of students and the chaos on the night of September 28. By then, the original leadership had collapsed, with no replacement emerging afterward. As such, the master frame of the Occupy Movement was not intentionally proposed by any of the movement organizers for the purpose of mobilizing the public, as there was no one to employ it.

How, then, did this master frame come about? Credit should be given to the student leaders. The student organizations played a crucial role in bringing up the master frame. Considering how the class boycott campaign and student ambush action had led to the dramatic change in the movement,

student leaders obtained much influence in the movement. As the student organizations were one of the coordinators of Occupy Central, their stand and demands were generally congruent with other leaders of the original movement. In this connection, when the turn of events made the leadership vague, and the students became the voice of the movement, the rejection of Beijing's decision and the establishment of civil nomination in the proposed plan of universal suffrage remained part of their requests.<sup>23</sup> The students' clamor for democracy won concurrence from other pan-democratic factions, allowing the demand for democratic development to become the master frame of the Occupy Movement.

Another interesting point that makes the Occupy Movement's master frame different from the original notion was that it was unintentionally employed after a considerable number of participants had joined the campaign. Recall that a significant function of this master frame was to assimilate various kinds of participants to join the movement. One of the critical differences between the Occupy Movement and Occupy Central was the composition of the participants. Occupy Central was organized through the social network of the pan-democratic parties and social movement organizations. Yet, the Occupy Movement also included localist factions and a considerable number of non-aligned participants, whose original motivation for joining was their anger about the police's use of violence and tear gas on protesters, the occurrence of master frame successfully incorporated them into the movement and made them stay on for the

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<sup>23</sup>The Federation of Students announced four requests after the riot police retreated. They were: 1. Reopening the Civil Square for people to protest; 2. Resignation of Leung Chun-ying; 3. Rejection of the Beijing Decision; 4. Civil nomination to be included in the proposed electoral reform plan.

democratic goal for more than three months.

*The Abandonment of the civil disobedience frame of Occupy Central*

Apart from the enlistment of the non-aligned occupiers, the Occupy Movement also consolidated the localist factions. Although pan-democratic political parties, leftist social activists, and localists all professed themselves as democrats and the establishment of universal suffrage was the common goal, the localists did not provide any assistance to Occupy Central. Then, why did they insist on joining the occupation after the collapse of the original leadership?

This question is two-fold. First, why did the localist occupiers not engage in the original Occupy Central campaign? It could be attributed to the final collective action frame of the campaign - the civil disobedience frame. The dismissal of the civil disobedience frame appeared mostly among the localist and non-aligned occupiers due to two reasons. One, the localist occupiers thought that the planned civil disobedience would not be able to yield the expected result:

In fact, I can foresee, at the end of the occupation, all those political tricksters will be sitting on the ground, and the police will simply remove and arrest them. They can then get the “political aura”. But it does not help matters by doing so.....It is just their attempt to “set their horrible records straight (洗底)”.

Mr Cheung, interviewee,  
localist occupier, member of Civil Passion

This may be a relative prejudiced view against the organizers of Occupy Central, but some non-aligned occupiers also reckoned the proposed plan of civil disobedience was not powerful enough to make the Beijing government

yield to their demands. Secondly, the spirit of self-sacrifice, which was a core part of the scheduled civil disobedience, made those non-aligned hesitate. Mr Tsang, a non-aligned occupier who put a lot of effort into providing legal support to others who were arrested, mentioned that being handcuffed was not in the original plan of many protesters:

You can see how frustrated they were. They were scared and I don't think they were ready for that. But this comes as no surprise, right? Who gets themselves ready to be arrested?

Mr Tsang, interviewee,  
non-aligned occupiers

Almost all localist and non-aligned occupiers interviewed rejected the idea of surrendering themselves. It was especially hard for the non-aligned occupiers who were new to politics to imagine being arrested. Their way of thinking contributed to a flaw in the civil disobedience frame, making it unable to perform the function of mobilization efficiently. As the original target of Occupy Central was to paralyze the financial center, it was mandatory to mobilize as much participants as possible. Yet, the emphasis on self-sacrifice and the design of the action plan made it difficult to enlist people other than veterans of social movements and students to join.

Second, why did the localist occupiers become adamant about participating in the movement and staying through the occupied stages? After the commotion during the first stage of the Occupy Movement, the original leadership of Occupy Central collapsed and their proposed disobedient action plan flopped, representing the failure of the civil disobedience frame. The deterioration of that frame, by chance, drove more participants to continuously engage in the movement, since there was no longer any provision for surrendering, and the absence of a plan provided



flexibility for occupiers from various factions to act, which allowed the development of diverse activities that sustained the movement for more than three months.

### *Summary*

Along with a turn of events transforming the Occupy Central campaign into the Occupy Movement, the framing process also saw a change in the form of the occurrence of a master frame and the abandonment of the original civil disobedience frame, which finally precipitated into the long term involvement of both the nonpartisan and localist occupiers. The master frame, which was unintentionally created by the student leaders, became the very basis for occupiers from various factions to take part in the movement, while the debacle of the original leadership represented the desertion of the civil disobedience frame that was holding back participation from the nonpartisans and localists.

This turning point was crucial for extending the occupation and attracting thousands more to join the movement. The movement could not have sustained for three months if the non-align actors participated only because of the fit of anger triggered by police violence. In this regard, the analysis of framing is capable of explaining the occupiers' continued involvement in the movement.

### **A Conflict of Framing: Unsuccessful Framing Alignment Strategies**

The transition of frames after the stage of transition transformed the movement and attracted the participation of many nonpartisans and localist occupiers. However, towards the final stage of the movement, there was a

steep decline in the number of occupiers and infighting among factions. Seemingly, the master frame could no longer provide momentum to the movement. This is expected from a scholarly perspective, as the progression of movements is fused with the operation of master frames (Snow and Benford 1992). In other words, the function of the master frames would change over the progress of a movement. A possible reason for the recession of movement is the emergence of competing frames that challenges the resonance of the master frame (Snow and Benford 1992:149-151). In the case of the Occupy Movement, despite being anchored by the master frame, factions of occupiers were in fact heterogeneous, which each of them holding its own perception of the situation. The result was the creation of alternative frames of the movement.

*Framing the Occupy Movement: From the perspective of non-aligned occupiers*

Even now, after the Occupy Movement, we (the protesters) still do not know too much about the politics.....If you ask them (other non-aligned occupiers) what universal suffrage is, I do not think many of them can answer you.

Mr Chan, interviewee,  
non-aligned occupier

Mr Chan's comment on his non-aligned partners implied that the incentive for them to engage in the movement was not fused with a subtle sense of politics or a sophisticated understanding of Hong Kong's politics. In fact, their personal emotion and feeling towards events that happened during that period were the motivation for their involvement, as they first took to the streets because of their anger towards the police's use of excess force.

Likewise, their experience during the movement was a decisive contributor to the construction of the frames for the Occupy Movement.

In this regard, two collective action frames were developed by the nonpartisans. The first one was the notion that the occupied sites were worthy of preservation. The content of this frame came from their daily living experience on the occupied sites. Mr Tsang, a non-aligned occupier, mentioned that living on the occupied sites was a totally unique experience.<sup>24</sup> Since the occupied areas were founded after the night of the tumult, steadfast occupiers spent a lot of time huddled together on those sites, gaining a rare living experience. The bountiful material donated by supporters of the movement kept the supply stations well-stocked with defensive tools like goggles and umbrellas, packaged food, and bottled water – all of them complimentary for the protesters. Protesters responsible for operating the supply stands distributed the resources wisely. When it was scorching and sweltering during the day, cooling gel pads were distributed; when it was freezing and frigid at night, blankets

Figure 11:  
A booth in Admiralty named  
“Harcourt Mansion”



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<sup>24</sup> For example, Mr Tsang (interviewee, non-aligned occupier) said, “The newspapers always told you the occupied sites were dangerous.....But it was not the case. Sometimes they were fuming but they never shake their fists at anyone. They talked. They slept. They cooked.....I thought they just moved their home onto the street.”

Ms Tong (interviewee, non-aligned occupier) said, “.....once Eric (another non-aligned occupier) brought some woods, a screwdriver, a power drill and a jigsaw. He wanted to build a pavilion! It was totally crazy.....how could you imagine a man building a pavilion on Harcourt Road.....Of course he couldn’t make it by himself. But people helped him voluntarily. This is real helpfulness.”

Mr Ip (interviewee, non-aligned occupier) said, “The people of Hong Kong were miserly but the people at the occupy sites were generous. You could have whatever you wanted in the sites.”

were delivered. This kind of living arrangement on the occupied sites exhibited a sense of sharing, which many protesters cherished.

A sprawl of hundreds of variegated tents could be seen in the occupied areas, especially in Admiralty. Some of them were privately owned, but more were open for free use. Some long-term occupiers even decorated their tents, built pavilions, and gave their tent interesting names imitating those of luxury mansions. These brought a lot of enjoyment for occupiers. With sufficient resources, fine installations, and admirable furnishing, the occupied sites evolved into a high-functioning and well-managed settlement. Such living experience was enjoyed by many nonpartisan occupiers, and became a crucial impetus for them to stay devoted to the campaign, thus sustaining the occupation. More than that, the partnership among occupiers also fueled their intention to stay, as many considered the friendship and amity among occupiers precious and something they cherished.<sup>25</sup> In addition to the rare living experience and comradeship developed on the occupation sites, the senses of solidarity, benevolence, and rapport established were unique. The occurrence of the fanciful utopian community created a sensation of relief and countless blissful moments for occupiers. The inundation of euphoric feeling became a crucial stimulant for sustaining the movement, as it convinced the non-aligned that the occupation campaign was important and worthy of preservation. More importantly, the occurrence of this frame added to the Occupy Movement, stitching an intention of

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<sup>25</sup> For example, Mr Lau (interviewee, non-aligned occupier) said, "What makes me so insistent on staying here? It is definitely the friendship. How can I just betray them and leave? We were on the battlefield together; we withstood the police together; we protected the sites together..... I should stay. If, unfortunately, they had any problem during the confrontation, I can help."

generating an affectionate and cozy community with intimate affinity and devoted harmony together with a democratic movement.

The second collective action frame for the non-aligned occupiers was the need to defend the city. It was derived from their experience of life after the city's handover:

There have been too many changes these few years. Life has become hard. The reason why I stayed at the occupied site for such a long time was that I simply wanted to tell the government, "I do not like these kinds of changes".

Ms Tong, interviewee,  
non-aligned occupier

The "changes" Ms Tong mentioned probably referred to the hardship in living. Although the Basic Law promised that the lifestyle of Hong Kong would not change after the territory's return to China, stability in the quality and standard of living could never be guaranteed. One obvious economic challenge was the increasing income inequality, as manifested by the Gini coefficient - a measure of income disparity based on original household income hitting a record high in the latest census, with a rising trend over the past three decades (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Gini Coefficient 1981-2011



Year	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2011</u>
Gini coefficient	0.451	0.453	0.476	0.518	0.525	0.533	0.537
% change	/	+0.004	+0.051	+0.882	+0.014	+0.015	+0.008

Source: Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong

Apart from the expanding income disparity, the lofty home prices (Day, 2015) and decrease in quality of life in Hong Kong over the years (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2014) are all reasons for the public to be worried about the future of their city.

Another change was the influence from mainland China after the handover:

Those officials told the people the mainland is benefiting our city.....but I can only see the bad .....The shortage of baby formula, the problem of anchor babies, and the strain on educational and medical resources.....are the results of intervention from the mainland.....Mainlanders are seizers.

Mr Fan, interviewee,  
non-aligned occupier

The most obvious change after the territory's return is the restrictions on our freedom..... From Article 23 in 2003 to the

white paper on the practice of the “one country, two systems” policy, the Beijing government has been trying to expropriate our freedom.....I do not want my basic rights to be taken away.....all of these motivated me to stay.

Ms Tong, interviewee,  
non-aligned occupier.

Mr Fan and Ms Tong both expressed dissatisfaction with mainlanders’ influence on their daily lives and frustration with the Chinese government’s intention of manipulating Hong Kong’s internal matters. These made people lose confidence in the Chinese government’s willingness to keep their promise of high degree of autonomy for Hong Kong, as fears about Beijing’s increasing control and intervention on local matters continue to accumulate.

While the recognition of “changes” in the city is a private feeling, the thought of withstanding changes in livelihood is a signal that the nonpartisan were attributing their private troubles, in Mills’ (1951) term, to the “public issue”. The resolution to maintain the occupation represented their longing for retaining their original standard and ways of living:

We are afraid that Hong Kong will collapse..... It (the movement) was not just for me, but for the next generation as well. That was the greatest motivation.

Mr Chan, interviewee,  
non-aligned occupier

In a nutshell, from the perspective of the non-aligned occupiers, the Occupy Movement was not merely a democratic movement. Rather, they interpreted the movement as a way to show support for others and an opportunity to express their craving for sustaining their original way of living.

*Framing Occupy Movement: from the perspective of leftist activists*

Unlike the nonpartisans, the leftist activists possess a political tenet of supporting social equality and egalitarianism. In this regard, their understanding of problems in governance is normally fused with the whole social and economic system. This anchoring political creed caused the leftist actors to develop frames that were different from those of the nonpartisans.

The leftists also demanded a democratic election reform, so they also accepted the master theme, "I want real universal suffrage". But, more importantly for them, the promotion of democracy was an attempt to break the collusion between the government and businessmen and establish social equality:

It is unreasonable to talk about democracy without mentioning the problem of capitalism. The current capitalist system is strongly associated with the development of democracy.....Even if the Beijing government withdraws the August Decision and implements universal suffrage in future elections.....I doubt that it would be real democracy.

Mr Ng, interviewee,  
leftist, member of Labour Party

From the perspective of the leftists, Hong Kong society is partial to the commercial and business sectors. The privileged status of businessmen in Hong Kong can be traced back to the colonial period, when the colonial government wished to form a close alliance between its expatriate officials and local businessmen to promote political stability and guarantee British business interests. A way was to take a corporatist strategy and absorb the merchants and bankers into the government bodies (So 1999). This strategy, on the one hand, established an institutional link between the expatriate officials and businesspeople, and, on the other hand, set up an appointment



system for the businessmen. Almost all top-level governmental units were occupied by officials on expatriate terms of service (Davies 1977). In order to maintain political stability, these officials tended to help merchants and bankers affiliated with big British businesses. In this way, they could align local businessmen with the British power. Besides, as Scott (1989) pointed out, the Chamber of Commerce, which represented the interests of British merchants in Hong Kong, had had an informal process of nominating unofficial members of the Legislative Council.

In this respect, after the establishment of the link between the local and British businessmen, Chinese businessmen would be appointed to lower-level municipal councils and advisory boards. Those with extensive economic ties to British businessmen were even appointed to the Legislative Council. Between 1850 and 1941, at least 71 of the 102 unofficial members who sat on the Legislative Council were businessmen, with the rest being lawyers and other professionals who had close interests with the business sector (Miners 1996:248). As such, for political stability and British interests, businessmen enjoyed a predominant status.

Consequently, the corporative strategy rendered a consensus mode of operation in the Legislative Council. Although those businessmen supposedly had ability to represent society's interest, they were more likely to support the colonial government and seldom propose noticeable changes to government policy or to impassioned public controversy with the concern of their own interests (Wesley-Smith 1987), leading to Castells and his colleagues (1990:120) commenting the role of the Legislative Council as "purely symbolic, rubber-stamp the laws and decrees submitted to it by the Executive Council with debate."

The strategy employed by the colonial government created a system that showed partiality for the business sectors. The Chinese government also noticed this, and tried to gain the support of business leaders in the negotiations for the handover. Thus, over half of the members in the Basic Law Consultative Committee were drawn from the business and professional sectors. During the transition period, the Chinese government also relied on a close alliance with the business sector. This political pact remained in post-handover Hong Kong, as exemplified by the composition of the Executive Council, Legislative Council, and the Chief Executive Election Committee.

The restricted form of democracy can then be deemed a system to preserve the dominance of the business sector in Hong Kong. The leftist activists, who believe in social equality and benefit for the grassroots, reckon that the extant political institution is unfair, as it is partial to the businesspeople and generally ignore the interest of the general public:

Perhaps democracy can bring us equality. But if we just focus on the flaws of the Beijing government – like what the localists are doing, I don't think it is a correct way to achieve equality.....I do not intercede with the Beijing government. My point is: To promote democracy, we need to pay attention to both the political system and the social unfairness.

Mr Ng, interviewee,  
leftist, member of Labour Party

In this regard, the promotion of democracy, from the leftists' perspective, is a way to empower the majority of the population. The Occupy Movement is a massive movement to pursue democratization to fix the unfair political system, and challenge the dominance of businessmen.

*Framing Occupy Movement: from the perspective of localist activists*

Localism is a rising political faction in Hong Kong in recent years. A significant feature of this political faction is its hostile attitude towards the Beijing government, the traditional pan-democratic camp, and leftist social activists. Thus, the localists, despite agreeing to the general theme of demanding for democracy, had a different interpretation of the Occupy Movement compared to the leftist and non-aligned occupiers. Different diagnosis and prognosis were built up in the localist camp, which cumulated into the internal conflict seen during the final stage of movement.

First, the localist occupiers had a different way of identifying problem. While there are literature pointing out other factors that can influence the transition to democracy (e.g., So 2000), people generally hold the government responsible for the progress of democratization. For example, Kuan (1991) argued that since Hong Kong was a dependent polity controlled by both the British and Chinese, and both governments commanded overwhelming resources, they could simply set the pace for democratization in Hong Kong without considering the opinion of Hong Kong people. After the handover, the Chinese government gained a decisive role in determining the political development of Hong Kong, as it has the final say in any reform proposal on the constitutional level. Thus, the democratization process of Hong Kong was controlled by two external forces before the handover, and solely by China after that. It is therefore reasonable to put the blame on the Chinese and Hong Kong governments for restrictions in political reform and the lack of significant democratic progress.

Yet, localist occupiers reckoned that the traditional pan-democratic camp should also be blamed for holding up the democratization process. The

pan-democratic camp has been a crucial social force in the democratization process of Hong Kong. They started to become a factor in the two decades before the handover, when the colonial government introduced direct elections for the District Councils and indirect elections for the Legislative Council. The violent crackdown of the Tiananmen protest in 1989 left the general public with no confidence in the Chinese government's determination to maintain Hong Kong's liberal system. Worrying about their future, the people flocked to support the pan-democratic parties, turning them into the core force in fighting for democracy in Hong Kong. Ironically, this leadership role also made these traditional democrats bear responsibility for the slow democratization process:

What have those (pan-democratic) politicians done all these years?.....They run in the elections (of Legislative Council). If they won at the poll, it was "a victory of democracy"; if not, they said it was the "darkest day of democracy". The fact is, I could not see anything beneficial to the development of democracy (in Hong Kong) even if I voted for them and they won.

Mr Yeung, interviewee,  
localist occupier

More than 15 years after the territory's return to China, the patience of some started to wear thin, as the pan-democratic camp could not harvest any meaningful democratic fruit. In particular, their support of the 2010 political reform package dealt a significant blow to the pan-democratic political parties. The 2010 political reform package was the second proposed by the Hong Kong government before Occupy Central occurred, the first one being the 2005 package that was denied by the pan-democratic camp, as they thought that it did not propose any concrete plan for reforming the Chief Executive election. Five years later, the government proposed a similar

package. Yet, after holding last-minute talks with the representatives from Beijing, the Democratic Party decided to accept the addition of a new five-seat District Council functional constituency in exchange for their support of the package. Amidst opposition from other pan-democratic parties for the lack of meaningful democratization progress and results of the by-election civil referendum indicating disagreement from the public, the package was passed. As a result of this cooperation between the Democratic Party and the Beijing government, the pan-democratic camp was divided, and the people started to distrust the Democratic Party, and even the whole traditional pan-democratic camp.

Apart from the disappointment towards the pan-democratic camp, the localist activists were also discontented with the peaceful way of protest adopted by the social activists:

We first call for a protest. Then we shout slogans and sing some inspirational songs in the rally. Afterward, we dismiss.....and they call this resistance!

Mr Chan, interviewee,  
non-aligned occupier

Other than the party politics, mass demonstration was another main arena in the fight for greater democracy. The power of mass movement was best shown in the demonstration against the national security legislation in 2003, which successfully coerced the government to make concession and withdraw the legislation. In the eyes of localist actors, this was the last event that was successful in moving the development of democracy forward, as other massive movements in recent years, such as the Anti-High Speed Railway Movement, Anti-North East New Territories New Development Planning Movement, and the protest for the free-to-air license, did not

achieve any significant result. This made some people discontented, and prompted them to reconsider the usefulness of the prevailing ways of protesting.

The differences in diagnoses and prognoses between the localists and the leftists and the non-aligned occupiers on recent political events gave rise to the hostile position taken by the localists against the pan-democratic camp and social activists. Mr Chow, as a localist actor, made an interesting metaphor to show the difference:

Have you ever watched the “zombie movies”?.....Now imagine you are the main character – you are holding a shotgun, ready to go outside and kill the zombies. But you find that some of your partners are infected. So, you have to kill those zombies around you before you go outside, right? The pan-democratic camp and those leftists are the zombie around us, for more than ten years after the handover!

Mr Chow, interviewee,  
localist occupier, member of Civic Passion

The “zombie metaphor” expresses the localist occupiers’ discontent towards the pan-democratic camp and the leftists. Since they attributed the problem to the traditional pan-democratic camp, some radical localist occupiers created strategies that not only targeted the government, but also the leadership of the movement and the leftist actors. As the movement lost steam, with people still staying in tents but no sign of the government willing to make any concession, the localists’ hostile attitude towards the leadership deepened, and that intensified the strife.

### *Summary*

The current section presented the argument that different factions of the Occupy Movement had their own way of interpreting the Movement, which caused the deep split among occupiers.

It is not rare that social movements contain internally differentiated alliance and sets of allied actors entertain complex relationship. In the Occupy Movement, the leftists, localists and non-aligned occupiers were heterogeneous and held their own interpretation of the situation. Specifically, the localist occupiers held the traditional pan-democratic camp and social activists responsible for the delayed democratization process and made an enemy of them. This interpretation of the localist occupiers gave rise to the hostile position against the pan-democratic camp and social activists which caused the internal conflict. In the meanwhile, considering the absence of concrete leadership and the unstructured organization of the movement, there was no mechanism to resolve the struggles between factions. In short, the competing frames of the factions and the absence of coordinating mechanism led to the failed frame alignment process which prevented the movement from enlarging and rendered effort to reconcile the strife useless. However, rather than being an occasional event, the conflict of framing and the political events in these few years were inextricably entwined.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter is a discussion of how the major framing process in the movement can explain the progress of the movement (see Figure 3). Simply put, before the commencement of the Occupy Movement, the founder of the Occupy Central campaign provided a series of collective action frames,

which failed to mobilize localists and the general public to join the campaign. The unexpected events that happened during the first stage of movement incited people to take to the streets with a sense of anger. The master frame and the abandonment of the original civil disobedience frame encouraged occupiers to stay in the occupied sites continuously.

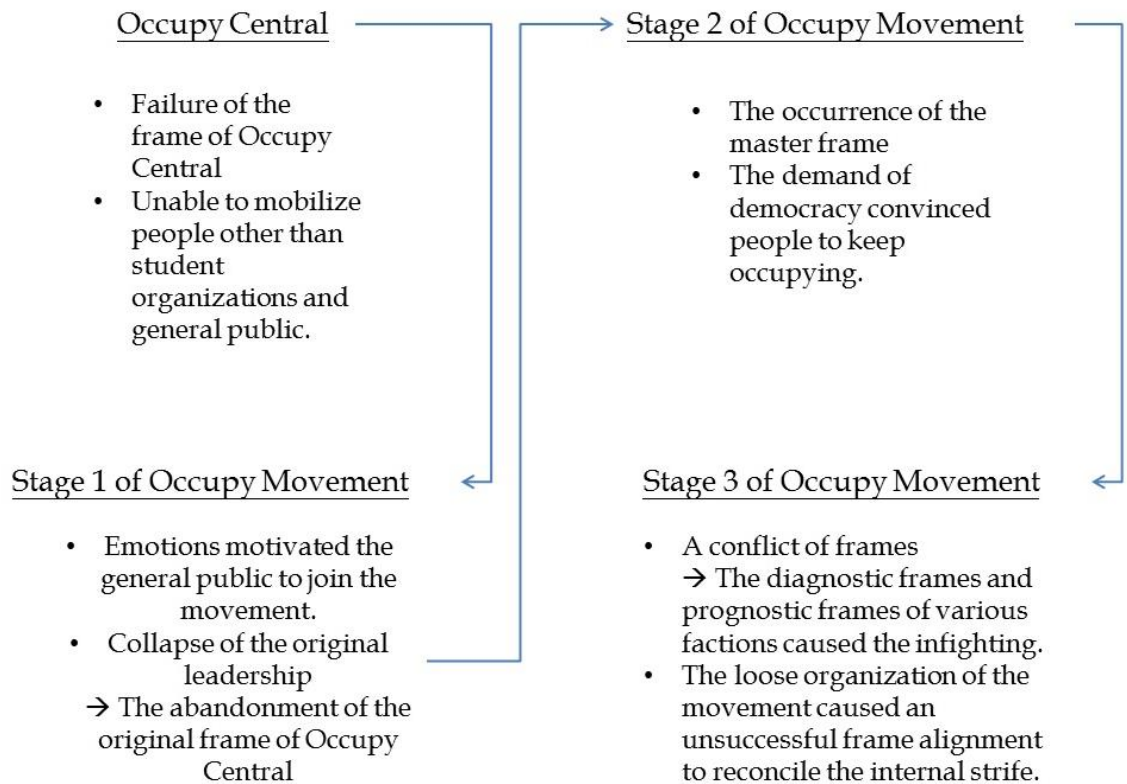
Difference factions had their own interpretation of the movement and the problems. The loose organization of the movement led to the lack of alignment, and thus, the inconsistent interpretations by the various factions could not be reconciled. Fused with the political development in recent years, localist actors had a negative attitude towards leftist actors and other traditional pan-democratic organizations. Towards the end of the movement, the localist occupiers provoked an intra-movement conflict with other factions, further corroding the movement.

Together with the analysis of repertoire in Chapter 5, which reported the progression of the movement and evinced the influential external factors, the analysis of framing in this chapter, which provided an explanation for the occupiers' continuous engagement and the friction between localist actors and others, completed the picture of the movement and explanation for occupiers' actions and interpretations.

The next chapter turns to the study of visions, which will help reveal the implicit assumptions behind the actions and ideas of the occupiers.



Figure 13: Summary of the framing impacts on the progression of the movement



## CHAPTER 7

### VISIONS

The analysis of repertoire and framing in the previous chapters has shown that , while the Occupy Movement had a shared ambition, the occupiers acted differently, and their interpretation of the movement and their grievance were inhomogeneous, resulting in their various choices of actions and thus, affecting the progress of the movement. I have contended that the social circumstances and political development in Hong Kong after her reunification with China have constituted the variance in the occupiers' perception of issues.

However, what is the cause for the divergence in their interpretation under the same historical configuration? The analysis of vision will help to answer this question by disclosing the occupiers' ideological origin. As will be shown in this chapter, the underlying factor dominating their actions and ideas was the premises of their reasoning, the fundamental differences in which led to the formation of the three factions that were of different composition but all intrinsically connected.

While the previous chapters have analysed the institutional and mobilizing structures, and the collective process of interpretation and attribution of the movement, the analysis of vision focuses on the presumed causation of factions that shaped the occupiers' behaviours and ways of thinking. I am going to unravel the visions of the different factions in order to understand the visions directing their thoughts and conducts.

## **The Leftist Occupiers: The Economic Vision of Society**

The first faction I am going to analyse is the left. The leftist actors played an important role in coordinating the original Occupy Central campaign and in sustaining the Occupy Movement, showing their determination in securing the development of democracy in Hong Kong. Being veterans of social movement, the leftist occupiers had been heavily involved in previous democratic movements, as well as other political campaigns and events. Locating themselves in the left of the political spectrum, their common concern is the unjustified social inequality. In grappling with the uneven distribution of resources, income, and wealth, the promulgation of social fairness is perhaps the essential tenet for this sect.

Out of their political faith, my argument is that the economic vision of society was behind the leftist occupiers' thoughts and conducts in the movement. In this case, the economic vision of society refers not to the economic force, but to an assumption of the base of society that is an adequate social relation, and covers a variety of aspects, including the social democratic criticism on the operation of capitalist market system for creating social injustice and the oppression of underprivileged groups and poverty.

A way to illustrate this vision would be through Karl Polanyi's criticism of the modern economic system and the market ideology. While the reasoning and propositions of Polanyi and the leftist occupiers are not totally identical, their suppositions about society are alike. In this regard, Polanyi's ideas are able to not only portray the economic vision of society, but also help discover the ideological origins for the leftist occupiers by comparing the propositions of both.

*The economic vision of society of Karl Polanyi*

The central argument of Polanyi is that “the idea of a self-adjusting market implied a stark Utopia” (Polanyi 1975:3), meaning that the self-regulating economic system is just a fantasy and is completely impossible to achieve or maintain. This is obviously inconsistent with the prevailing thoughts in economics, namely, liberation of the market system from government interference, the idea that the operation of market economic system is the only way to achieve human freedom (Haworth 1994:3), and the belief that the free market model is competent in justifying all kinds of social action (Becker 1976). Polanyi challenged the very idea of free market doctrine by contending that there exists no economy that can operate without government intervention (Stiglitz 2001: vii), since all resources for running the market are created and sustained through government action. Without the government’s participation, there will be no legal system, money supply, education policy, employment system, nor other public goods to run the market system, and resources will not be sufficiently allocated to manage the market. The government’s coercive power is inevitable for the “free” market – that is what Polanyi meant by his dictum “laissez-faire was planned” (Polanyi 1975:147).

The rejection of “self-regulating” economic mechanism is based on the idea of “embeddedness”, which refers to “the idea that the economy is not autonomous”, but “subordinated to politics, religions, and social relations” (Block 2001: xxiv). In other words, the whole economic system is supposedly embedded in society. Supported by a series of anthropological study (Polanyi 1977) illustrating that economic activities in the primeval society were tied around other noneconomic mechanisms, such as the operation of

reciprocity and the association of kinship links, this idea bespeaks that it is not necessary to make markets the central mechanism for the society.

In this regard, the modern market ideology, which encourages disembedding the economic sector from the whole society, disregards the operation of market and the fabric of society. This attempt is fundamentally threatening to human society. Although the self-regulating market system is merely an unrealizable fantasy, the effort to bring it into being will produce deleterious effect (Polanyi 1975:37). This is because the market ideology perceives that all social necessities are for sale on the market. People have no choice but to allow the market mechanism to be the sole director of their fate and the natural environment. When public goods and social necessities coercively become (fictitious) commodities rather than a protected right, various kinds of social dislocation will ensue and demoralize humanity. The emergence of slums, the long working hours of children, and the low wages of certain categories of workers are all examples of the consequences of market ideology.

The elaboration on Polanyi's idea in the previous paragraphs, though laconic, is sufficient to exhibit the economic vision of society. The notion of embeddedness, which argues that politics, economy, religious and other social mechanism are embedded in the society, points out that the economic sector does not dominate, but is dependent on the social relationship. The successful operation of the economic system lies in the cooperation among other forces, implying that rather than siding with the market or any particular mechanism, the relationship between social sectors is regulated.

The economic vision of society is also reflected through Polanyi's two-fold criticism of the modern market based on the idea of embeddedness:

Not only is the self-regulating market unachievable, but the market ideology, which tries to bring the free market into being, is also harmful to people's livelihood. Both of these show that the modern market ideology has remodeled the primary social relation by converting the fabric of social relation. The disregard for adequate social relationship and the attempt to extract the market from the social structure are the flaws of the market ideology, and are responsible for bringing deleterious consequences.

*The economic vision of leftist occupiers*

Based on Polanyi's account, I specify that the economic vision of society, which underlies the thoughts and actions of leftist occupiers, is the premise that the foundation of society is a disinterested social relation that does not side with any particular social mechanism.

A central theme in the Occupy Movement was the demand for democratic reform. In this regard, a possible way to get acquainted with the occupiers' ideological origin is to examine the discrepancy in that coherent demand, since it could uncover the various assumptions that differentiated people connected to a same goal into various factions. Referring to the major features of various groups of actors presented in the previous chapters, it can be concluded that, though the leftist occupiers were closely associated with the founders of the Occupy Central campaign and other pan-democratic cooperators, they provided different interpretations for the delay in Hong Kong's democratization process. Specifically, the leftist occupiers believed the reformation of the electoral system could bolster social equality, and the movement was a medium to uncover the current unequal and corruptive political institution. What insights can we gain from these perceptions to

disclose their underlying vision?

The leftist occupiers' economic vision of society can be seen from their awareness of the electoral system. Similar to their other counterparts, the leftist occupiers condemned the governments of Beijing and Hong Kong for breaking their promise for democracy. But their concern was more than the accusation of the restricted electoral reform package and the oppression from the authorities. They viewed the problem on the whole social structure level, and their concern was fused with the dominant position of the business sector. Both of these interpretations imply that the extant social relation is biased towards businessmen, which, as noted in the previous chapter, was allowed by both the British and Chinese governments in hope that high economic attainment would lead to stability in the politics. Such policy did not change along with the sovereignty, and entrepreneurs and merchants continue to be the privileged class in multifaceted domains in Hong Kong. The prerogatives enjoyed by businessmen and the dominance of their sector are ostentatiously exhibited in the government, from sitting in the various committees, to being a part of the administration and holding unequal voting rights in the legislature.

This inclination towards the business sector was what the leftists were dissatisfied with. In their view, the current system ensures the sector's dominance, and a democratic reform could probably break the business-oriented electoral system. The pursuit of such reform showed that the current social relation was awry to the economic domain. Accordingly, the movement was not only a mean to demand for equal voting rights, so that the public will be empowered to fight against the economic-oriented social relation, but it also served as a platform to disclose the cause of the

unrepresentative government and of its inability to satisfy public demand. These made sense of the leftist occupiers' employment of both instrumental and expressive repertoire. Thus, it can be seen that, although the leftist occupiers' main purpose for participating in the Occupy Central and the Occupy Movement was similar to their counterparts, their underlying ideological origin was the premise that society should not be lopsided towards the business sector:

Although we still cannot get universal suffrage, I would not say that the movement has failed.....if we successfully coerce the government to implement universal suffrage, does it mean a success? The city is still controlled by those privileged classes.....so we have to keep going.

Mr Ng, interviewee,  
leftist, member of Labour Party

In other words, there is an assumption that the basis of society is neutral but not partial towards the economic force.

#### *Comparing the economic visions of society*

Both Polanyi and the leftist occupiers reckoned that the market mechanism does not dominate the society. While Polanyi's vision of society provides the grand narrative presenting the historical development of the market system and the fabric of society, the leftist occupiers' vision of society induces their concern of the social unfairness in Hong Kong.

Polanyi derived the argument of "double movement" from the idea of embeddedness, which can shed light on the leftist occupiers' economic vision of society. Double movement can be defined as the "inevitable self-protection against the commodification of life (Mendell and Salée 1991: xiii)." In other



words, they are spontaneous response of individuals to preserve their livelihood from the destructive consequences of the market system (Gill 1995). People would not await their doom, but would struggle to defend their livelihoods, community, and cultures. However, while the devastating effects brought by the market ideology are the impetus for double movements, such counter-movements against the destructive forces of the free market do not necessarily create social protection, since they can be progressive or conservative (Block 2001). A classic instance of a reactionary counter-movement suggested by Polanyi was fascism, which attempted to restore the market by means of ultimately abolishing democratic institutions and replacing them with a totalitarian government.

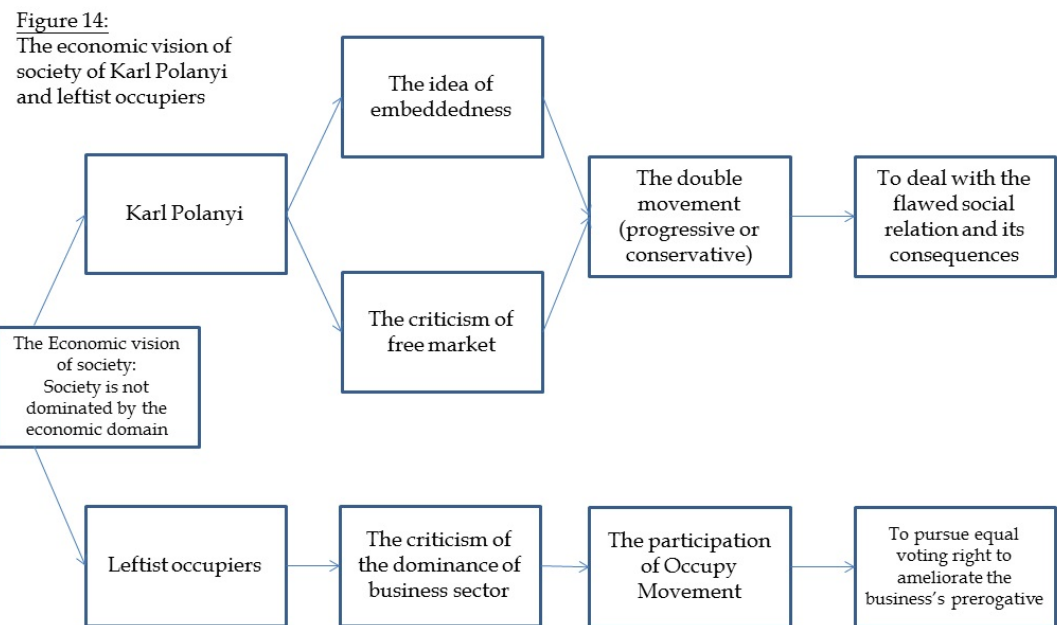
In this connection, the leftist occupiers' participation in the Occupy Movement was by nature a kind of double movement. Their economic vision of society underlies their criticism of the business-oriented social structure and their engagement in the movement, and their pursuit of the democratic electoral system was an attempt to correct the existing flawed mode of election with the goal of breaking down the dominance of the business sector by empowering the voting right of the people. This helps us understand the leftist occupiers' employment of both instrumental and expressive repertoire, and lends insights into their interpretations of the movement.

It should be noted that the economic vision of society of the leftist occupiers was not totally identical with Polanyi's propositions. Polanyi was concerned with the illusion of market ideology and the remodeling of social relation. He rejected the idea of self-regulating market and the market ideology but not the existence of market. The economic domain is embedded in the social relation, which is a part of society. In this regard, the protective

double movement should aim to tackle the consequence of free market system while dealing with the flawed social relation. Yet, the leftist occupiers revealed that their intention to participate was relevant to the prerogative of businessmen. This reflected the premise that society is not dominated by business mechanism, but does not contain an obvious motivation to correct the social relation.

### Summary

I have employed Polanyi's idea to illustrate the economic vision of society, which underlies the thoughts and actions of leftist occupiers (see Figure 14). A premise that society should not be dominated by economic sector guided their conducts and perceptions in the movement. Although their propositions were not completely the same as Polanyi's, their participation in the movement was by nature a double Movement, despite that it chiefly dealt with the dominance of business sectors but slightly projected an ideal social relation for the city.



## **The Non-aligned Occupiers: The Communal Vision of Society**

The second faction I am going to examine is the non-aligned occupiers. As nonpartisans who were mostly newcomers to social Movements and politics, perhaps their personal concerns, temper, and experiences aroused their demand for democracy and led to their involvement in the Occupy Movement. Yet, they neither joined the leftist veterans nor the uprising localist faction. Rather, they struck out a new line in the movement. With inspiration from the notion of the vision, this implies that there is an inconsistency in these occupiers' vision that directed their thoughts and actions, and such vision is not coherent with, or may even be contradictory with, the one held by other occupiers.

For this group of occupiers, my argument is that the communal vision of society underlay their participation of the movement, based on the assumption that the basis of society is not the central authority, but the intermediate associations. To represent this vision, I will adopt Robert Nisbet's discussion on individualism, which reckons that the sanguine attitudes stemming from the liberation of individualism from traditionalism in fact led to deleterious effects in the life of individuals.

### *The communal vision of society of Robert Nisbet*

Individualism is hailed as an emancipation of human beings. It disposes people to isolate himself from the mass and withdraw from any association, the value of which is to break the constraints of feudal and traditional confederations. In pre-modern society, the community was prioritized over the individual. In this case, community referred to various small social groups, including traditional associations, family, the peer group, the

neighborhood, the social club, and the religious sect (Nisbet 1970). All these forms of community were “product of people working together on problems, of autonomous and collective fulfillment of internal objectives, and of the experience of living under codes of authority which have been set in large degree by the persons involved” (Nisbet 2010: xxix). The community inevitably had strong influence on individuals’ reason in traditional society, since it provided arrangement of social life, which was considered God-given and subject to traditional arrangements. Such social orders were considered a confinement to individuals and an exploitation of their freedom, leading to a radical questioning of almost all forms of communities. While getting rid of the parochial and restrictive social order was a milestone in the emancipation of human, the release from the community embodied the elimination of its functions. The idea of the individualism literally denied the importance of communities as integrating intermediations between society and individuals and revoked the functions of communities in flourishing habits, traditions, shared beliefs, and affective bonds.

The destructive effect of the rise of individualism in modern society is two-fold. First, it causes the problem of the atomization of individuals through sapping the communities and other intermediate associations. Although individuals are not required to accept traditional arrangements of social living anymore, the rejection of community and other associations for the sake of emancipation has led to the weakening in the connection between society and the individual, which further led to the demise in the foundation of social integration and solidarity, and finally the collapse of the sense of security and belonging. Second, it catalyzed the emergence of the centralized “territorial state”. As individuals break out of traditional closed societies,

local institutions are eliminated. Without community or other intermediating associations, a centralized governmental authority would be the only organization individuals could rely on when needed.

In consequence, the rise of individualism, together with the decline of communities, would result in a possible tyrannical relationship between the state and the individual, ultimately eroding human's freedom:

Here, of course, the role of the new State was influential in men's conception of the individual units of society. If all authority becomes objectified, externalized, that is centralized, in the increasingly remote and impersonal State, the consequences to the primary forms of authority with which man has traditionally and subjectively identified himself are profound.....Their moral virtues are transferred, as it were, to him, even as their historic authorities have been transferred to the State.

(Nisbet 1970:228, Italics in original)

The essence of the state is "its possession of sovereignty—absolute and unconditional power over all individuals and their associations and possessions within a given area" (Nisbet 1984:42), which allows it to become a kind of destination for atomized individuals while the functions of community are decimated and terminated. The state is the one and only authority capable of replacing the increasingly ineffective integrated associations, as it obtains the right to conscript life, allocate income, supervise family, and define crime and punishment. Almost all kinds of basic needs, including education, recreation, welfare, production, distribution, and health care are absorbed into the administrative structure of the government, allowing the all-powerful state to make atomized individuals dependent upon it. This extensive and absolute power over all

individuals is the fuel for the state to become centralized and totalitarian, and the freedom and emancipation that were supposedly gained from the elimination of community are reluctantly trapped into a strong central government. Nisbet accused this growth of the state, which does not merely restrains and replaces the community, but also creates a totalitarian direction for the atomized individuals under the despondency and bafflement caused by the loss of community. In this sense, the question is transformed from the individual's right against the community to the right against the state.

In Nisbet's assessment of individualism, unlike the optimistic view on the central authority, we can see the rejection of centralized power in individuals' daily lives. In this regard, it represents what I call the communal vision of society, which is the premise that the centralized authority is not the ground of society.

*The communal vision of society of non-aligned occupiers*

The major theme of the Occupy Movement, namely, the demand for democratic electoral reform with the full universal suffrage, was generally accepted by occupiers from all three factions. As I have mentioned in the preceding chapter, broadly speaking, the non-aligned occupiers' involvement in the Occupy Movement involved with two themes: the togetherness with fellow occupiers and the defense of city - the so-called communal vision of society. The daily lives of these non-aligned occupiers were crucial in developing a frame, through which their view of the Occupy Movement can be sought.

In the first place, the partnership and companionship among them represented their determination to defend the city:

Long Hair stood on the stage and said “We either win together or lose together (贏就一齊贏、輸就一齊輸)” .....this scene was etched in my memory. We stay together and we fight together.....just let the governments know that we will stay together to fight.

Mr Lau, interviewee, non-aligned occupier

People stayed on the street to fight for their city. I am a part of this city. Of course I have to stay with them to fight this battle.

Ms Wong, interviewee, non-aligned occupier

Cementing a tie with other occupiers was an attempt to establish great rapport with other occupiers. The occupied sites, in certain respects, composed a sense of the mutuality, supportiveness, reciprocity, and comradeship. Although the movement did not create intent, belief, and a concrete identity, the occupied sites constructed a certain degree of cohesiveness where the occupiers protect and fight for their city, which also formed the basis for their sense of belonging.

The second theme for the non-aligned occupiers’ participation in the movement was their resentment towards the decline of the city. I have argued that these non-aligned actors generally perceived the downturn of the territory in two ways – the continuous recession of the living standard and the intrusion into the city’s affair from the Central government, the latter of which presented a premise in which a city that was promised with a high degree of autonomy should seek to avoid unnecessary interruption from the state:

I am afraid of that Hong Kong is going to become a normal province of China.....I don’t want my city to be controlled by the Central government.

Mr Chan, interview, non-aligned occupier

I can't deny that we have lost a very important game.....the control from the Central government would only be greater in the future..... will there be a greater restriction of the freedom of speech or more intervention of our local affairs? Who knows? But I simply don't want to be controlled by this evil authority.

Mr Fan, interviewee, non-aligned occupier

The non-aligned occupiers strived for self-determination for the city and rejected the over-intervention of the centralized power of the state, as they portrayed the city as a society that should be free from the centralized power of the state. In this regard, the communal vision of society underlay their thoughts and ideas.

#### *Comparing the communal visions of society*

While Nisbet's communal vision of society proposed that the decentralization of administration is beneficial to the individual's freedom, he admitted that the central government has its legal power in administering public affairs. The point is that the centrality of sovereignty does not necessarily lead to the centralization of administration in public affairs, if only the government is willing to strengthen the intermediate associations. When discussing the double-task confronted by the Conservative Party, Nisbet (1993: 45) emphasized firstly the need "to work tirelessly toward the diminution of the centralized, omniscient, and unitary state with its ever-soaring debt and deficit" and secondly the need "of protecting, reinforcing, nurturing where necessary the varied groups and associations which form the true building blocks of the social order". This view guided waves of the conservative movement, and fueled the call for a



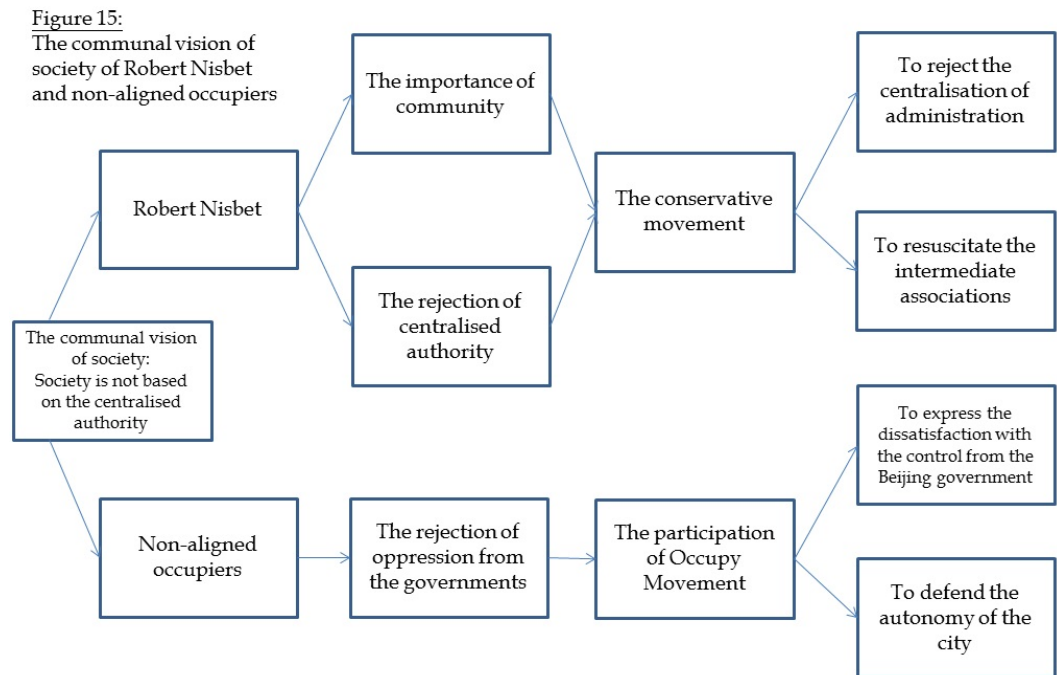
'new philosophy of laissez-faire' (Nisbet 1970:247). Considering the ineradicable characteristic of individuals that they are inseparable from social groups, these should be the basic unit under new laissez-faire. However, to achieve genuine liberation and emancipation, conditions should be set to contain divergent autonomous and self-reliant social groups, so as to minimalize intervention and interposition from authority and decentralize administration and vacate space for the formation of strong communities to reestablish the social order and restore the appropriate solidarity. By doing so, the liberal democracy will stand to benefit from the diversity of culture, the plurality of association, and diminution of the centralized state.

Considering their attempt to resist the centralized power, the participation of non-aligned occupiers by nature can be deemed a conservative movement. Yet, the communal vision of Nisbet concerned the resuscitation of the intermediate associations, which was not seen in the non-aligned occupiers' vision. Rather, they were only concerned with the rejection of the intervention from the centralized authority.

### *Summary*

In summary, the non-aligned occupiers' ideas and actions were underlay by the communal vision of society, which, in this case, refers to the assumption that society is based on intermediated associations but not the centralized authority of government (see Figure 15). Through this vision, their engagement in, and interpretation of, the movement can be viewed as ways to reject the intervention from the Central Government in affairs in Hong Kong. When compared to Nisbet's communal vision of society, the nonpartisans' Occupy Movement had the nature of a conservative movement.

The difference, though, was the lack of an intention to resuscitate the intermediate associations in the movement.



### The Localist Occupiers: A Vision of Violence

The position of the localist occupiers was quite different from other pan-democracy actors. Localism, characterized by anti-mainland sentiment and radical and confrontational protest actions, had great influence on the Occupy Movement and contentious politics. Specifically, some localists got into an internal strife with occupiers from other factions during the movement. I have argued that the history and delayed development of democracy in Hong Kong formed the basic tenets of localism. But what was the vision that directed some localist occupiers' hostile attitude and unusual protesting methods?

Different from the leftist and the non-aligned occupiers, who held their own visions of society as discussed in the previous paragraphs, the localists held a premise of force, which I contend as the vision of violence, and is

hereby illustrated by using Frantz Fanon's advocacy of justified violence. Fanon endorsed the use of violence as a mean to resist colonial imperialists and to realize humanity, the underlying assumption of which is that violence is an instrument to bring along social changes and to achieve political liberation.

*A vision of violence of Frantz Fanon*

During the era of colonization, exploitation and enslavement were common in colonies that were under the central control of imperial authorities, and social relationship between the colonizers and indigenous population was extremely unequal. Together with the imposition of a subjugating colonial identity, which imbued a servile and slavish mentality upon the colonized, the conquerors used both physical and mental violence to achieve dehumanization of the natives through denying their humanity. In this regard, the colonial system, as a Manichean world described by Fanon, was built upon the violence used by the conquering armies and the infliction of a sense of self-destruction on the indigenous peoples.

In face of the extremely harmful and destructive nature of colonialism, decolonization "is clearly an agenda for total disorder" to "[infuse] a new rhythm, specific to a new generation of men, with a new language and a new humanity" (Fanon 2004:2). In other words, decolonization is a way to tackle the annihilation of the humanity inflicted on the indigenous inhabitants by the colonial powers with the creation of "new men", and its goal is lucid and transparent from the outset.

To this end, new humanity should be achieved by any means necessary. In particular, for Fanon (1963:250), violent resistance, as an instrument to

tackle the catastrophic and dreadful sabotage of colonial territories and its natives, is necessary. On the one hand, the establishment of the colonies through the use of violence by colonizers implies that violence is a possible way to obtain political power, or the power to rule. Using violence to resist, or even to get rid of, the exploitative and oppressive colonial predominance is thus totally possible and tenable. On the other hand, as a psychiatrist, Fanon argued from a medical point of view that violent resistance is a “therapy” for the natives who have been imbued with the sense of unworthiness by the colonizers. In summary, violence is a powerful tool for overthrowing oppressors and their colonial hegemony, thereby allowing the creation of humanity by the natives. Anti-colonial violence is thus an important mean to achieve human liberation.

While Fanon’s proposal of using violence as a way to escape from the colonial domination has seemingly made him an advocate of such, his argument did not espouse its unlimited and endless use. In fact, in his analysis of the consequences of the colonial war on the parties involved, he considered violence as merely an instrument that can be abandoned afterwards (Fanon 2004:181-234). However, for the purpose of this study, the brief introduction on his view on violence as discussed above is adequate for providing the grounds for the vision of violence, namely, using violence to generate power in politics and for liberation.

#### *The vision of violence of the localist occupiers*

The vision of violence represents an assumption that it is possible to bring societal, political, and cultural changes through the use of violence, and this is reflected in the conduct and ideas of the localist occupiers during the

Occupy Movement, leading to their use of valiant actions and explaining their attitude towards the pan-democracy and leftist activists.

While the origin of the term “valiant action” is unclear and its definition incoherent, it is often mentioned by the localist activists in recent years. Contrary to the prevailing peaceful protest culture embraced by other pan-democracy groups and social organizations in Hong Kong, “valiant action” illustrates the localists’ premise of pursuing more radical action in protests. A generally accepted feature of this scheme in the localist camp is accepting the use of violence in confrontation. As mentioned in previous chapters, one of the implications of this proposition is the birth of the idea of “using violence against violence (以武制暴)”:

One of the biggest flaws of those leftards (左膠) is their rejection of using violence.....Violence is useful actually. You can see the protests and coups in foreign countries.....the use of violence is necessary. Otherwise how can you coerce the authority?

Mr Yeung, interviewee, localist occupier

I think that people are starting to accept the idea of valiant action after the Occupy Movement.....After being treated by the police violently, we all know that the peaceful and non-violent action cannot bring any change.....If we don't accept using valiant action, we can't win the battle in the future definitely.

Mr Wong, interviewee, localist occupier

The vision of violence supplied the localists with confidence in violent resistance even before the start of the Occupy Movement. During the incubating stage, localist groups were already mocking the organizers of the Occupy Central campaign for their conservative disobedience plans. As the movement was confronted with excess violence from the police, the localists encouraged occupiers to resist instead of asking them to calm down or to

retreat when necessary, as the leftist group did. In the final stage of the movement, the localists even attempted to charge into the Legislative Council Complex. All these are evidence for the localist occupiers' belief that non-violent and peaceful protests are unproductive, and the use of violence is necessary.

Apart from challenging the police, the localists also took action against the leaders of the Occupy Movement by charging the main podium, which served as a centre for discussing or planning future actions, and in the process, destroying the cooperative relationship with the student leaders and leftist occupiers. As previously argued, the conflict of frames employed by the different factions and the failure to align were causes for the infighting, and, amidst their continued dissatisfaction with the pan-democracy camp and leftist activists, the localists hoped to bring changes to the movement through fierce and violent confrontation by stirring up a battlefield inside the occupied zones and fighting with fellow occupiers who disagreed with them, in hope of eliminating their power and leading role – a manifestation of the localist occupiers' vision of violence:

If they (students and leftist occupiers) were willing to listen to us, they would dismiss the marshal team and the main podium.....if we did not get rid of their control, they will curb our action and keep operating the movement in their unsuccessful way.

Mr Wong, interviewee, localist occupier

In fact, they (student leaders and leftist activists) didn't invite us (Civic Passion) to talk .....Even if they did, I wouldn't join..... their inability and dishonesty are well-documented.

Mr Wong, interviewee, localist occupier

### *Comparing the visions of violence*

A comparison of the vision of violence of Fanon and the localist occupiers reveals that they differ in the aim of using violence. For Fanon, violence is simply a tool to resist the exploitation and enslavement by colonists, and should be abandoned after the subjugation of the colonial authority. Fanon's real concern is the revival of humankind by returning of the power of ruling to the indigenous population, so that they can rebuild their livelihood, system and culture. In other words, the ultimate goal of using violence, according to Fanon, is to recover the humanity of the oppressed.

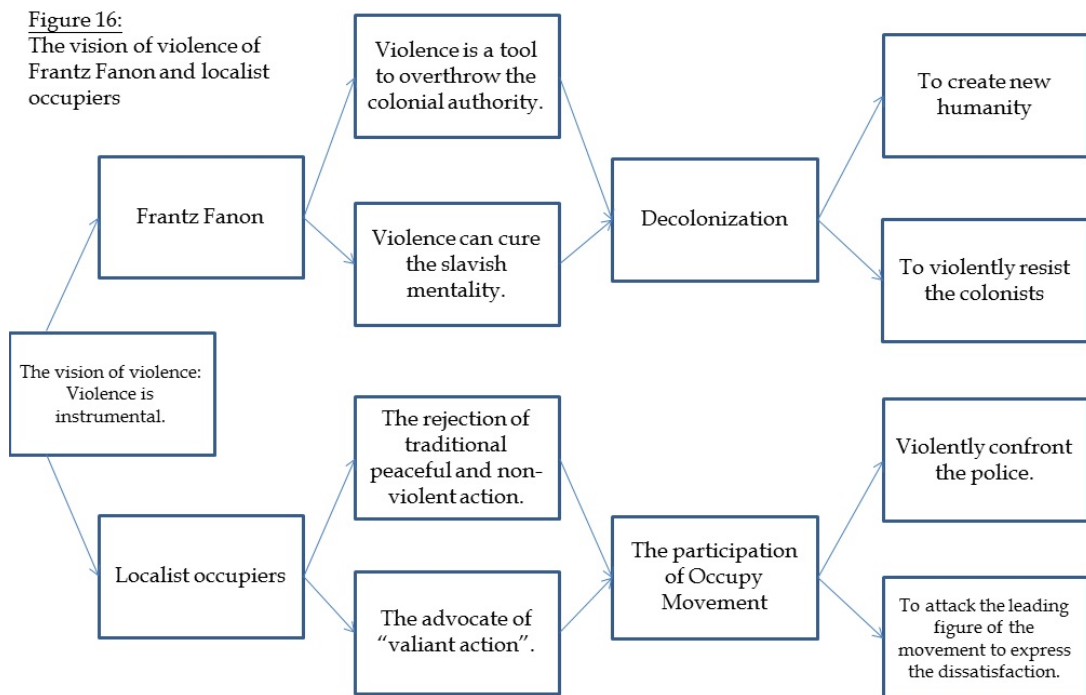
In contrast, the localist occupiers' vision of violence is repressive. Their goal of using violence is confused, as they advocated, but did not elaborate, the aim of such. For example, when the localist occupiers tried to attack and dismiss the main podium to express their discontent with the student leaders, they did not consider the potential harm that their action might bring, nor did they propose any concrete plan for improvement. Although the arrangement of the podium had its shortcomings, it served key functions as a platform for circulating information and expressing opinion. However, the localist occupiers' were seemingly not concerned with these issues. Their justification of using violence was simply relevant to its capacity of bring changes to the event, with the only goal of striking their opponents (including the police officers and anti-occupy activists) and retarders (student leaders and leftist occupiers).

Moreover, Fanon justified his stand for using violence against the colonists by considering how it can help the indigenous population physically confront the authority's oppression and mentally eliminate their

sense of being enslaved. In comparison, the localist occupiers' vision of violence did not include a clear criterion for using violent action. Their proposal of "valiant action" and "using violence against violence" were based on the inefficiency of non-violent protests and the police officers' use of violence. However, the localists never indicated the circumstances under which violent act is allowed, and the level at which violence is allowed. In this regard, the vision of violence of the localist occupiers is not as complete as that of Fanon's.

### Summary

In summary, I have argued that the vision of violence underlay the conduct and the ideas of the localist occupiers (see Figure 16).



This vision refers to an assumption that violence is instrumental, and was exhibited through their idea of "valiant action", their confrontation with the police, and how they dealt with fellow occupiers they were discontented with.



Comparing to the economic and communal vision of society that held by the leftists and non-aligned occupiers, the vision of violence seems to be a strategic means rather than some broader ends. As for the localist leaning towards violence, this vision embodies the implicit and imprudent worldview. While the leftists and non-aligned occupiers had their clear own ends, the localists could only express their strategic means of actions but not an understandable goal of action. For the localists, the meaning of pursuing universal suffrage was somewhat unclear in their vision but the dissatisfaction with the prevailing peaceful protest culture was overtly showed in their worldview and led to the violent-oriented advocacy. Together with the police interactions-experiences that led to serious frustration during the movement, localists attempted to use violence to bring changes to the movement. In other words, they had a belief in using violence as the strategic means but not a whole picture of their political pursuit.

Also, this feature was obvious by comparing their vision with Fanon's interpretation of violence. Unlike Fanon, the local occupiers' vision of violence did not include an ultimate goal and a clear criterion for using violence. Rather, they only intended to use violence to bring changes to the movement.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have analysed the underling vision for the occupiers of different factions. By doing so, my key attempt is to provide another way to understand the actors and the progression of the movement. I have argued that the major factions of the occupiers obtained different kinds of vision which directed their conducts and thoughts during the movement.

The leftist occupiers and the non-aligned occupiers respectively obtained two different visions of the society – the former faction held the economic vision of the society and the latter faction possessed the communal vision of the society. This embodied that the actions and ideas of these two different factions of occupiers were dominated by two distinctive views about the assumed image of the society. In regard to the localist occupiers, instead of having any vision of the society, they possessed the vision of violence. What implicitly guided their thoughts and actions was an assumption that violence is useful to generate political force.

While the analysis of the repertoire has demonstrated the exogenous factors that composed the movement and the analysis of the framing has indicated the collective process of interpretation of the movement and the problem by different factions influenced the progression of the movement with reference to the prolonged process of the political development, the analysis of visions in present chapter has offered another way of explanation to the creation of their thoughts and selection of actions with the focus on the factions per se. By doing so, the study of the visions help to understand the multi-dimensional natures of the movement in the sense of different factions and, at the same time, get into the ideological origin of their actions and thoughts.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION

For the purpose of understanding of the Occupy Movement, the concepts of repertoire, framing, and vision, based on the formulation of W. G. Runicman, were employed to analyse the movement. The progress of the movement, the senses and attitudes of actors towards the entire movement and their fellow occupiers, and factors that generated and helped evolve the movement have been examined in the previous chapters.

The first of the last three chapters is an analysis of the repertoire. It contained a chronological record of the movement, from planning for the Occupy Central campaign to the unexpected generation of the Occupy Movement, happenings in all three stages of Occupy Movement, and a study of the selection of movement activities by occupiers of different factions. Simply put, in the first stage of Occupy Movement, there was an expansion of the occupation. In the second stage, there was an expansion of the selection of the movement activities, which contained both instrumental and expressive repertoires, and in the final stage, there was fierce internal strife among occupiers. In the entire movement, non-violent actions were dominant until the final stage, when some racial and violent actions were seen in the confrontations with the police and internal conflicts among occupiers.

In Chapter 6, the overt and covert causes for the generation and the evolution of the movement were investigated through the analysis of the framing process. It was found that factors influencing the progression of the

movement can be divided into different levels. On the external level, the prevailing tranquil protest culture confined the selection of movement activities in the Occupy Central campaign and the first two stages of the Occupy Movement. On the interpersonal level, emotion played a critical role in mobilizing people to take to the streets, resulting in the original campaign being turned to a long-term occupation. On the structural level, the unclear leadership and the absence of a systematic cooperative mechanism, while sustaining the occupation, caused the frame alignment to be unsuccessful, leading to the inability in resolving conflicts of the various frames and an impetus to the infighting. Finally, on the historical level, the delay in the development of democracy was a stimulant to the generation, as well as the splitting, of the movement.

So far, the Occupy Movement seemed to be a miscellany of political interests, mass emotions, historical events, and many other factors. An analysis of the ideological origin of different factions of the movement in Chapter 7 was able to provide a deeper understanding of the movement and also the occupiers. Through investigating the vision of the three major factions of occupiers, their actions and thoughts in the movement was explained. Specifically, the actions and ideas of both the leftists and the non-aligned occupiers were directed by two different assumptions of society, termed “the economic vision of society” and “the communal vision of the society” respectively. The former assumed that a proper social relation forms the basis of society, and imperceptibly guided the leftist occupiers to focus on the dominance of the economic sector in the city’s affairs, while the latter treated communities as the basis of society, and inadvertently directed the non-aligned occupiers to strive for the autonomy of the city. By contrast, the

localist occupiers obtained a vision that was divergent and not of society. What they saw was a vision of violence, representing a premise that the use of violence is instrumental to gaining the political power needed to coerce the authority and achieve their goal.

The main goal of the Occupy Movement was to fight for a democratic electoral reform. In this sense, it was definitely a democracy movement. Yet, findings from the current study seem to point out that the movement exhibits the various worldviews and conceptions of different movement factions.

### **Limitations**

All studies have limitations. This one is no exception. First of all, access to various groups of factions was limited. I have divided the occupiers into three factions by their political creed and recruited respondents from each faction to solicit information. However, a faction included fragmented sub-factions. I have chosen the leaders or core members of some well-known political groups within the factions only as I did not have good contacts with all factions. For example, I have invited the members of CP and Green Camp (HKI) to represent the localist. Yet, there were many organizations under the flag of localism such as the Neo Democrats which I could not get in touch with. Although the snowball sampling enabled me to get in touch with more interviewees, it might cause selected bias. For instance, the non-aligned occupiers were self-organized and not affiliated with any organization. In the second round of sampling, I have contacted the well-known occupiers directly and asked for referrals from them. It probably limited the validity of the sample since the snowball samples were dependent on the subjective choices of the respondents first accessed and biased towards the initial

respondents' circle of acquaintance. Dealing with this problem of validity, I have tried to ask for new interviewees from more initial respondents in order to increase the sample's diversity.

Second, this study focused on the Occupy Movement in Hong Kong only but does not provide a comparative perspective on other occupy movements. It is noted that the comparative study is important for analyzing social movement as it can generalize common features of various types of movement and shed light on various research methods on social movement (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996). Considering a wave of occupy movement emerged in different countries in recent time, a comparative perspective on this wave of occupation will contribute to understand the spectacular trend of occupation. Even though the purposes of these occupations are definitely not the same, they are exhibiting a new form of organization or mobilization for movement. Taking the Occupy Wall Street in 2011 as an example, its struggle against inequality in the name of the "99%" was not identical with the democratic demand of the Occupy Movement in Hong Kong (although the leftist occupiers' economic vision might possess a relevant claim). Scholars have argued that these two occupations in fact shared the "new global language of protest" - the autonomous action and online organization (Perlin 2015) and the direct-democracy model (Graeber and Hui 2014), and concerned the digital capabilities of new communication technologies used in these occupations (Carty 2015).

Finally, the discussion of the occupiers' vision was not complete. By definition, visions are the ideological presupposition dominating day-to-day events. The study of visions is helpful for understanding the hidden premises underlying the occupiers' different interpretations and actions in

the movement. However, only the thoughts and conduct of the occupiers in the movement were studied. A recent example of this problem is the post-Occupy Movement political engagement of the “umbrella soldiers” – youngster who took part in the occupation, some of them previously non-aligned. After the occupation, some chose to join localist groups, others signed up with pan-democratic organizations. Does this imply there was a change in their vision? Or did they simultaneously possess more than one vision? Or is it because they were further subdivisions in a faction? Unfortunately, the time limit and scope of the current study made these questions unsolvable. A better way to disclose their visions might be to consider their political participation before and after the Occupy Movement.

### **A Concluding Remark**

The current study was able to contribute to the understanding of the complexity and fluidity of Occupy Movement. In addition, the analysis of vision shed light onto the various social movement sectors in Hong Kong by revealing their ideological difference in the movement.

Tension among the democrats was clearly manifested during the Occupy Movement. However, this tension was not simply due to a conflict of interests or values, but can be attributed to a conflict of visions. The fundamental difference in their sense of causation was the source of their political conflict. After the Occupy Movement, the political situation was still tense, with the pan-democratic camp riven into different social movement sectors and political factions, and under attack from the localist groups, which gained much attention and followings as a result of the occupation. As evident from the District Council election in 2015, the contest among the

democrats was as intense as that between the pan-democratic and the pro-establishment camp. For the sake of understanding such tension, it will be beneficial to uncover the nature of different social movement sectors, which could be the next step in the study of the social movement in Hong Kong today.



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