

Media Framing of China, Hong Kong, and Hong Kong Canadians

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ABSTRACT

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Jiaying Mo

The question of representation of immigrants in mass media has been widely debated in the fields of journalism studies and sociology; in particular, the media construction of immigrant collective identity has been a key academic issue. However, there has been little academic attention given to the media construction of the diaspora identities of Hong Kong Canadians. In order to partially fill this existing gap, this research examined how a newspaper aimed at the Hong Kong Canadian community promoted a specific understanding of identity. In particular, this thesis examines the frames promoted and core messages about identities conveyed in the *Sing Tao Daily* as it reported on significant events leading up to Hong Kong's Handover in 1997. Furthermore, it interprets these findings from the perspective of the media construction of identities, concluding that the *Sing Tao Daily* served assimilative and pluralistic functions, helping the community to assimilate into mainstream Canadian society and at the same time maintain multi-faceted identities with ties to Hong Kong and China.

Keywords: Hong Kong Canadians, representation of immigrants, framing analysis, mediated construction of identities.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The Chinese Diaspora and Hong Kong Canadians

The history of Chinese immigration to Canada stretches back over two centuries. The first Chinese immigrants landed in Canada as early as 1788. In the spring of that year, Captain John Mares, a British fur trader, employed 50 Chinese smiths and carpenters from Macao and Guangzhou, China to build a fortress and a 40-tonne schooner. They first landed at Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island. The following year, another 70 Chinese workers came to British Columbia to help with construction. These 120 workers were the first Chinese to step on Canadian soil (Lai, n.d.).

Amongst the global diaspora of modern times, the Chinese comprise a major migratory population as well as numerous subcultural Chinese groups (Shi, 2005). This thesis will look at the Chinese Diaspora, focusing on one of its subgroups — the Hong Kong Canadians who immigrated to Canada from the 1960s to 1997.

During this period, there were two main events that triggered the two massive immigration waves from Hong Kong to Canada. The first was a series of extensive riots in Hong Kong from the 1960s to the mid-1970s; this caused many of the Hong Kong elite to immigrate. It is difficult to estimate the total immigration population of this period, due to the lack of complete statistics. However, according to Lau (2016), from 1973 to the end of the riots, 14,662 Hong Kongers immigrated to Canada (p. 36). The population of Hong Kong during that period was approximately 4,400,000 (Census and Statistics Department of the Hong Kong Government, 2015). From these numbers, it can be assumed that this immigration wave did not have a great impact on Hong Kong society. In the 1980s, the second immigration wave was provoked by the combination of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984 and the Tiananmen Square Protest in

1989. This time a heavy impact was felt in both Hong Kong and Canada as the receiving country. According to Li (2005), in the late 1980s and 1990s, there was a flood of immigration from Hong Kong to Canada, with numbers jumping to around 20,000 in 1987 to 60,000 by 1990, and staying at this level for half a decade (p. 14). Hong Kong was Canada's top source of immigrants from 1991 to 1996, and by 1996, there were already 241,095 Hong Kong immigrants in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2003). Most of these immigrants came from the middle or upper middle class, with approximately 30% being extremely wealthy, i.e., investors and entrepreneurs (Smart, 1994, p. 106).

1.2 Introductory Literature Review: The Chinese Diaspora, Identity, and Ethnic Media

According to Karim (1998), diaspora is defined as “comprising members of an ethnic group who reside in the homeland and in a number of other countries where they or their ancestors may have arrived as immigrants” (p. 2). Although this term initially was used to refer to the global Jewish communities, it is increasingly used to relate to the dispersion of different ethnic groups (Karim, 1998). Looking at diaspora of various origins in different parts of the world, huge differences can be observed amongst them. These differences can be understood as the result of (a) different periods of migration, (b) various degree of integration into receiving societies, and (c) the existence of links with their homelands and other parts of the transnational group (Karim, 1998). Therefore, it can be said that diaspora patterns of ethnic groups deserve examination and exploration, as their experiences are not uniform. To that end, one aim of this study is to add to diaspora studies by studying the Hong Kong diaspora in Canada. Particularly, how their ethnic media constructs their identities.

From the perspective of cultural and postcolonial studies, diaspora is considered something that resists global and national structures of dominance (Karim, 1998), which

resembles the idea of ‘subaltern counter-publics’ introduced by Nancy Fraser. In *Rethinking the Public Sphere*, Fraser (1990) challenged Habermas’ concept of the public sphere, as she considered it a specific bourgeois masculinist conception that overlooked the variety of gender and race in society. In addition, she argued that one sole public sphere could be problematic, especially in stratified societies “whose basic institutional framework generates unequal social groups in structural relations of dominance and subordination” (p. 66). The deliberative process will be inclined to operate in the interest of the dominant groups and tend to exclude subordinates in the public sphere, therefore social inequality will be further intensified. On the other hand, according to Fraser (1990), multiple public spheres would challenge the unfair dominance of public sphere and promote democracy, as alternative publics will be able to widen discursive space. These publics, also called subaltern counter-publics, are constituted by subaltern social groups, such as women, workers, people of color, gays, and lesbians. With a plurality of competing public spheres, subaltern counter-publics (a) would have their independent arenas for deliberation among themselves to express their needs, objectives, and strategies, in which they would be able to express and protect their interests; and (b) would be allowed to have “parallel discursive arenas where their members invent and circulate counter discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs” (Fraser, 1990, p. 67).

Articulating the idea of diaspora with subaltern counter-publics, we can see that ethnic media in fact function as “alternative public spheres” or “subaltern counter public spheres,” and that they “relate particularly to instances of intentional political mobilization that seeks to intervene in the mass media public sphere or to develop a counter-public sphere” (Downey & Fenton, 2003, p. 187). Through ethnic media, groups are be able to challenge the domination of

mass-mediated representations of society and create their own political interventions (Downey & Fenton, 2003). However, as Fraser (1990) points out, public sphere arenas are not only for discursive contestation but also “for formation and enactment of social identities” (p. 68). Therefore, ethnic media not only circulate information and promote democracy, but also serve to construct and express their cultural identity in the process. As the cultural and social perspective of ethnic media deserves exploration as well, this thesis will focus on how this media can play an important role in the identity construction of ethnic minorities.

According to Oh and Zhou (2012), the ethnic press serves assimilative and pluralistic functions in terms of identity construction. It helps new-arrivals to assimilate into the host society, by providing necessary information for their adaptation and reassuring their readers that immigration was the right decision to make. On the other hand, it also serves a pluralistic function, including serving to:

- Maintain and reinforce ethnic identity;
- Provide platforms to new arrivals for temporary day-to-day transnational connections;
- Boost the local ethnic communities and openly advocate on their own behalf (Oh & Zhou, 2012).

In this thesis, both the assimilative and pluralistic functions of the ethnic media will be studied, especially in the field of identity construction. In other words, I will be interested in examining how the ethnic press promotes ethnic and national identity. To achieve this objective, I will look at the identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians in their major ethnic newspaper, the *Sing Tao Daily*.

1.3 Framing the Identity of Hong Kong Canadians in the *Sing Tao Daily*

The *Sing Tao Daily* was chosen because of its strong influence in Canada. In Canada there are two major Hong Kong-founded newspapers: the *Sing Tao Daily* and *Ming Pao*. In this research, the *Sing Tao Daily* (Toronto Version/Eastern Version) was chosen, because it is the oldest and most influential Hong Kong-founded Chinese newspaper in Canada (Huang & Xu, 2013). The *Sing Tao Daily* was founded in Hong Kong in 1937 and its first foreign distribution began in San Francisco. In 1978, the Toronto edition was first established in Canada. On the other hand, *Ming Pao* was not founded until 1993 in both Toronto and Vancouver, sixteen years later than *Sing Tao Daily* (MingPaoCanada.com, n.d.). In addition, compared to *Ming Pao*, the *Sing Tao Daily* is the most read newspaper (Environics, n.d.) Torstar holds an approximate 50% interest in the operations of *Sing Tao Daily*'s Canadian media group (Star Media Group, n.d., para. 16).

In analyzing the *Sing Tao Daily*, I will select three significant events that directly linked to the second immigration wave that lasted for over a decade. The first event was the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984, which officially declared that Hong Kong would be handed over to China from the UK on July 1st, 1997. Even though this document linked Hong Kong's future to China, it did not immediately trigger a significant migration, because many felt mostly positive overall about Hong Kong's future. They believed Hong Kong could push China towards democracy by the time 1997 arrived. The second event was the Tiananmen Square Protest in 1989, which pushed more Hong Kongers to leave. Thousands of students peacefully protested in front of Tiananmen Square for democracy, but the protest was violently broken up and hundreds of students were left dead or injured. Hong Kongers panicked and became very worried about China taking authority over Hong Kong after 1997. Many of them rushed to immigrate to

different countries before the 1997 Handover, and Canada was one popular destination. The third event was Hong Kong's Handover on July 1st, 1997. This event was important, as it was the date that many Hong Kong immigrants had been wary of. Now that many had immigrated to Canada, it will be interesting to analyze how *the Sing Tao Daily* covered this event from the perspective of being Hong Kong Canadians.

Relevant news stories that reported on these three events will be collected, and I will look at how the *Sing Tao Daily* framed the events. First, a textual analysis will be used to uncover major themes. Next, I will analyze how these themes constitute major frames and explore what this framing says about how the *Sing Tao Daily* contributed to the identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians, particularly the role that an ethnic press can play in assimilation and/or plurality. In addition, by looking at the structural changes in the newspaper over the three events and what news was prioritized, I will be also examining what this says about how the *Sing Tao Daily* constructs the identity of Hong Kong Canadians. For instance, in what era did they start to prioritize Canadian news over Hong Kong news?

In conclusion, a combination of textual and framing analysis, and the analysis of the form of the newspaper will be conducted in this research. This methodology will be used to answer the following two research questions:

- **RQ1:** How are these three major events framed in the *Sing Tao Daily*?
- **RQ2:** What do these frames say about how the *Sing Tao Daily* constructed the identity of Hong Kong Canadians?

1.4 Chapter Outline

This thesis consists of five core chapters: This chapter as the Introduction, Literature Review and Theory (Chapter 2), Methodology (Chapter 3), Findings and Discussion (Chapter 4), and Conclusion (Chapter 5).

Chapter 2 will start by looking at the identity of Hong Kongers, as this can be understood as the core collective identity of Hong Kong arrivals in Canada. In addition, understanding the identity of Hong Kongers helps to comprehend the ethnic identity of Hong Kong Canadians. The next step is to provide an overview of the history of Hong Kong Canadians and their ethnic media in Canada. This chapter will also introduce and articulate the core theories mobilized in this thesis: diaspora studies theory, focusing on flexible identity in particular, and media construction of identity.

Chapter 3 will elaborate how the methodological tools will help to identify the dominant themes and frames, and how this framing constructed the identity of Hong Kong Canadians.

In Chapter 4, the three major frames that were found will be discussed: (a) China is to be trusted, (b) China is not to be trusted, (c) Multiple Identities: We are Chinese/Hong Kongers/Hong Kong Canadians/Ethnic Chinese. I will analyze each frame and expound on how several themes worked together to create each frame.

In Chapter 5, I will relate the framing of the three events in the *Sing Tao Daily* to the identity construction of the Hong Kong Canadians. I will summarize two core messages underlying the first two frames — (a) *continuity and autonomy* and (b) *stability and prosperity*, and how this simultaneously serves assimilative and pluralist function for the Hong Kong Canadians community. In addition, drawing on the third frame, I will interpret the *Sing Tao*

Daily's direct portrayal of the ethnic and national identity of Hong Kong Canadians. The strengths and the limitation of this thesis will also be discussed.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theory

This chapter will start by briefly reviewing Hong Kong's modern history, and the formation of Hong Kongers' identity. This can be understood as the primary and collective identity of the newly arrived immigrants to Canada. An exploration of Hong Kong Canadians' identity is necessary in order to better understand the identity construction that occurs in the *Sing Tao Daily*. This chapter will then outline the history of Hong Kong Canadians and their ethnic media in Canada. Finally, this chapter will introduce and articulate the core theories mobilized in this thesis: diaspora studies theory, focusing on flexible identity in particular, and media construction of identity.

2.1 The Modern History of Hong Kong and the Formation of Hong Kongers

2.1.1 Brief history of Hong Kong. Hong Kong consists, from South to North, of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, and the New Territories, with the New Territories bordering the south of mainland China. The process of colonization of Hong Kong by the United Kingdom began in 1842 when Hong Kong Island was ceded to Britain with *The Treaty of Nanjing* in 1842 (Tsang, 2004, p. 14). In 1860, with the signing of *The Convention of Beijing*, Kowloon was ceded as well (Tsang, 2004, p. 29). Finally, in 1898, in *The Second Convention of Beijing*, the New Territories were leased to Britain for 99 years. This 99-year lease foreshadowed the Handover of Hong Kong in 1997, which was one of the most important watersheds for Hong Kong in its modern history (Tsang, 2004, p. 41).

At the end of the 1960s, Hong Kong's economy took off, because of a solid foundation in light industrial production and export trade (Tsang, 2004, p. 171). At the same time, political reform created a relatively transparent political environment, which benefited and encouraged a boom in Hong Kong's private sectors (Tsang, 2004, p. 171). In 1983, one year before the official

announcement of Hong Kong's Handover, Hong Kong's GDP ranked 38th in the world (Ranking of the World's Richest Country, n.d.).

The concept of a 'Hong Konger' was formed against this background and then became prevalent as something distinct from Chinese. It started to form in 1949 when the People's Republic of China (China) was founded, and at the beginning of the 1980s, it became a very important concept in Hong Kong society (Tsang, 2004, pp. 180-181).

From 1982 to 1984, the United Kingdom and China formally held negotiations over Hong Kong's sovereignty, given the fact that the lease of the New Territories would expire in 1997 (Tsang, 2004, p. 218). However, throughout the negotiations, the Chinese government held the firm position that Hong Kong belonged to China and that its sovereignty was not negotiable. Eventually, in December, 1984, *The Joint Declaration*, or the Future Agreement, was signed by the UK and China, and it was officially announced that the Handover would be on July 1st, 1997 (Tsang, 2004, p. 226). Most importantly, this Agreement established several key principles meant to benefit Hong Kong, including (a) "Hong Kong would remain fundamentally unchanged for 50 years," (b) people in Hong Kong would run Hong Kong, and (c) Hong Kong would retain "a high degree of autonomy" (Tsang, 2004, p. 226). *The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China* (1997) addressed these principles: "Article 5: The socialist system and policies shall not be practiced in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and the previous capitalist system and way of life shall remain unchanged for 50 years (para. 5)." In other words, Hong Kong would enjoy "a high degree of autonomy" from the central government of China (Tsang, 2004, p. 226).

However, the declaration and the Tiananmen Square Protest in 1989 made many Hong Kong citizens lose the confidence in Hong Kong's future, and a large amount of Hong Kong

citizens fled to Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, Canada and the United States (Tsang, 2004). After 1997 though, Hong Kong's political and economic situation remained relatively stable. Especially when China's economy boomed, Hong Kong was seen as having many geographical benefits. Thus, many Hong Kong overseas citizens decided to return Hong Kong (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005).

2.1.2 The change in Hong Kong society and the formation of Hong Kongers. Dating back to World War II, there was no such concept of a Hong Konger, and few people would have considered it home (Speak, 1997; Tsang, 2004). As Tsang (2004) described: "Before the Pacific War, the overwhelming majority of Hong Kong's ethnic Chinese shared much more in common with their fellow countrymen [and women] living on the mainland of China than with their non-Chinese fellow residents in Hong Kong" (p. 181). As Hong Kong borders Guangdong, it used to be only a temporary shelter for Chinese in Guangdong, or a place they traveled through as they immigrated abroad. Chinese at that time could freely cross the border. When the economic or political situation was bad in China, they might work in Hong Kong temporarily then return to China when the situation improved or they amassed enough capital. Additionally, for Chinese laborers and professionals, they immigrated via Hong Kong to South-Asia, the USA, Canada, and Australia (Speak, 1997).

Tsang (2004) argued that it was in 1949, when the Communists gained power in China, that a Hong Kong identity started to emerge (p. 180), and he identifies four elements as triggering this change: (a) China's border control, (b) Hong Kong's political reforms and its mature economic development, (c) the development of Hong Kong's Cantonese pop culture, and (d) the media representation which distinguished Mainland Chinese from Hong Kongers (pp. 180-196). In 1950, the government of China decided to enforce its own border control and closed

the border between China and Hong Kong. This made “the Chinese population in Hong Kong into a settled one” (Tsang, 2004, p. 181), as at that point the Chinese on the different sides of the border began to split. Maoism and the ideology of communism prevailed in China. At the same time, the Confusion tradition in Hong Kong continued, coexisting with its rapid modernization as well as the concept of democracy that was introduced by the British government (p. 182).

Tsang (2004) described the 1960s as “an important transitional period in the eventual emergence of a Hong Kong identity” (p. 183). Border control differentiated Chinese on both sides, but the political, economic, and cultural changes in Hong Kong in the 1960s produced a distinct identity for Hong Kongers. First, there were the 1967 Riots, which were seen as the first time that Hong Kong citizens acknowledged the colonial government as *their* government. The riots were organized and directed by the Hong Kong and Macao Work Committee. This committee was a local branch of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China which is located in Beijing. The central committee was the highest decision-making body of the Communist Party of China, and contained all the paramount leaders of the Chinese government, such as Zedong Mao, Xiaoping Deng, and Enlai Zhou. Therefore, the riots can be understood as an action led remotely by the Chinese government. The riots started out as strikes demanding welfare for workers but later turned into large-scale and sustained disturbances throughout Hong Kong from the middle to the end of 1967. Tsang (2004) points out that the 1967 Riots forced the local Chinese in Hong Kong to choose between supporting the Chinese government and the colonial government, and they chose the latter (p. 190). It was the first time in Hong Kong’s history that the local Chinese supported the British-Hong Kong government as their government (Young, 1994, p. 140).

Moreover, a political reform that came afterward made Hong Kongers, no matter of what ethnicity, proud of being Hong Kong citizens. The British-Hong Kong government transformed its political system into a modern administration responsive to public opinion. As corruption had been a huge issue for the British-Hong Kong government and had triggered serious social conflicts, the Independent Commission against Corruption was founded. This commission efficiently tackled corruption and improved quality of life for Hong Kongers, and perhaps, more importantly, it advanced the credibility of the government. After seeing the government putting so much effort into reform and the significant results, many Hong Kong residents were proud of the government and proud to be considered citizens of Hong Kong (Tsang, 2004, pp. 190-192).

Thirdly, a distinctive pop culture in Hong Kong was emerging that served to reinforce a more distinctive identity. This pop culture, based on Cantonese, arose when living standards, conditions, and attitudes towards society and the government all improved. Hong Kong's pop culture was distinguished from the pop culture in China, Taiwan or other Chinese regions (Tsang, 2004, p. 192). Within this context, when more and more Hong Kongers began to travel to the mainland, they, for the first time, directly realized the huge difference between Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese culture, even though they purportedly shared the same cultural and ethnic background (Tsang, 2004. p. 193).

Lastly, media representation created a sense of "us" as Hong Kongers and "them" as people from Mainland China. From 1978 to 1980, the "touch base" policy enabled the influx of over 400,000 Mainland Chinese to Hong Kong. Most of them were "young male farmers from rural communities" (Tsang, 2004, p. 193) and Hong Kong at that time was already a global metropolis. The media negatively framed them as "Ah Chan" and "Dai Huen Chai." Both these two terms do not have specific meanings. "Ah Chan" is usually a person's given name, but it is a

derogatory name that many associate with someone who is silly or simple. In “Dai Huen Chai,” “Dai Huen” refers to Guangzhou, and “Chai” to a boy. In Cantonese, a name that ends with “Chai” is mostly derogatory. Tsang (2004) noted, “this recognition was essential for the emergence of a Hong Kong identity, the existence of which became unmistakable by the beginning of the 1980s” (p. 194).

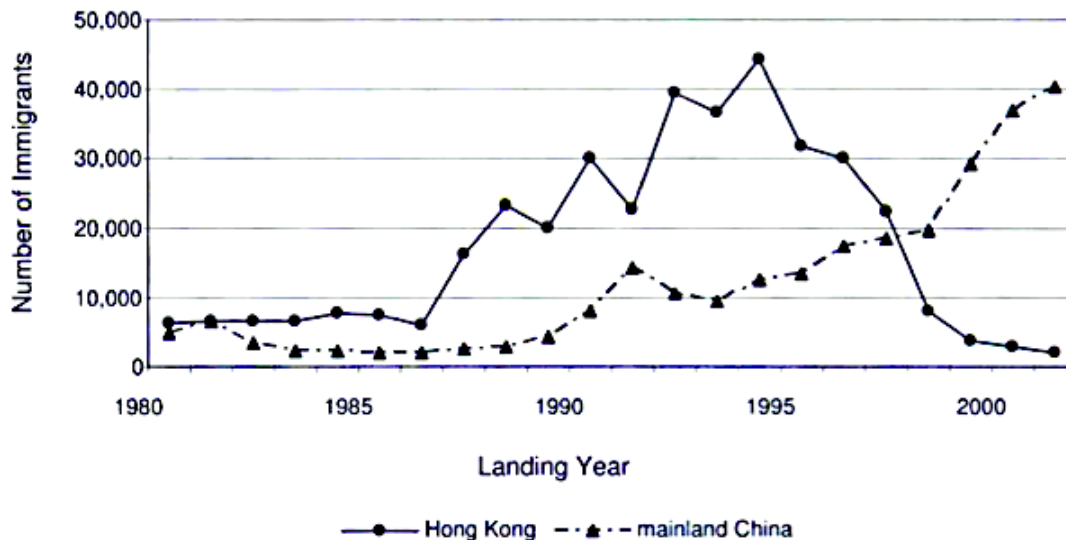
However, the identity of a Hong Konger was complicated at the beginning of the 1980s, influenced by traditional Chinese culture along with cultural influences from the United States, Britain, and Japan. Tsang (2004) concluded that “this identity combines the traditional Confucian moral code and emphasis on the importance of the family, with modern concepts like the rule of law, freedom of speech, human rights, a limited government, a free economy, a go-getting attitude and pride in the local community’s collective rejection of corruption” (p. 194).

2.2 History of Hong Kong Canadians in Canada and Hong Kong Media in Canada

2.2.1 Migration waves. There have been three migration waves from Hong Kong in its modern history. The first wave was in the 1950s when there was an agricultural crisis in the New Territories and people immigrated to Britain. The second wave was in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, due to the massive riots in 1967. A certain amount of Hong Kong’s elite left Hong Kong; however, this did not cause serious social or economic changes, because afterward, thanks to political and economic reforms, Hong Kong's economy took off. The third wave was in the late 1980s and the 1990s, and it was the most significant one for Hong Kong as well as for the countries that accepted them, such as Canada, Singapore, Australia, and the United States. The Tiananmen Square Protest was the main incentive for the third wave, as well as *The 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration* (Li, 2005). After 1989, thousands of Hong Kongers, many of whom were professionals or entrepreneurs, fled from Hong Kong to different countries, taking with

them a large amount of capital. Canada was one popular destination. As shown in Figure 1, the number of immigrants from Hong Kong before 1989 was stable; however, it increased from the

Figure 1. Immigration to Canada by Landing Year, from Hong Kong and Mainland China, for all Ages, 1980-2001. (Li, 2005)



middle of 1986 and reached a peak in 1995.

2.2.2 Research on Hong Kong Canadians. The academic research that examines the identity of Hong Kong Canadians has focused on their impact on, and adaptation to, Canadian society. Researchers have looked at the reasons for the immigration of Hong Kong citizens into Canada (Johnson & Lary, 1994; Lam, 1994; Smart, 1994), the general impact that they had on Canadian society (Ley, 2010), and the adaption they had to a new lifestyle in Canada, especially in cities like Toronto and Vancouver (Johnson, 1994; Lary & Luk, 1994). Research has also focused on the integration of their ethnic and national identity (Chow, 2007; Costigan, Hua & Su, 2009; Hui, 2000; Lee & Tse, 1994a; Rock, 2005; Kobayashi & Preston, 2014; Yan, 2014). Finally, the definition and the interpretation of Hong Kong Canadians' migration into Hong

Kong has been another important topic of research. There has been an academic debate about whether this migration should be defined as return migration, a transnational sojourn or diaspora (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005; Kobayashi & Preston, 2007). The research contained in this thesis can partly fill the gap that exists in the current research about the identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians.

Turning first to the research that examines Hong Kong immigrants' impact on, and adaption to, Canadian society, the Hong Kong immigrant community has clustered in Vancouver and Toronto, creating cultural centers in both cities (Johnson, 1994; Lee & Tse, 1994a; Wickberg, 1981). From 1986 to 1990, the percentage of Hong Kong wealthy immigrants (i.e., investors and entrepreneurs) was around 30% (p. 106), with most Hong Kong immigrants to Canada coming from the middle or upper middle class (Smart, 1994). Research has examined the effect that Hong Kong immigrants have had on the Vancouver housing market, and the conflict that arose. In the mid-1980s, the houses built by Hong Kong Chinese were dubbed "monster houses" by local media. Owners were building houses to the maximum permitted size, and they were not responsive to pre-existing neighborhood design tastes (Mitchell, 2004, p. 23, cited in Ley, 2010). There were headlines such as "A monster problem in Shaughnessy" (Griffin, 1992, p. 23, cited in Ley, 2010), or "How we saved Shaughnessy from monsters" (Ohannesian, 1990, p. 23, cited in Ley, 2010). Additionally, as money from Hong Kong entered Canada's property market, housing prices significantly increased. In the Greater Vancouver area, "house prices surged from 1986 to 1995, closely following the upward trajectory of net immigration, and fell back as Hong Kong immigration waned after 1997" (Ley, 2010, p. 152).

Research examining the relationship between Hong Kong Canadians and established Chinese Canadian communities, has shown that Hong Kong immigrants significantly changed

the established Chinese community. In Vancouver, they not only increased the number of Chinese in the city but also developed their own shopping malls, bringing Hong Kong-style consuming habits, including Hong Kong-style groceries and bakeries, Hong Kong newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations (Lee & Tse, 1994a; Johnson, 1994).

Interestingly, when Hong Kong immigrants first immigrated to Canada and were not accepted as part of the established Chinese, they considered themselves Chinese Canadians (Rock, 2005). Rock (2005) noted that the established community narrowed the meaning of the term Chinese Canadians to include only Chinese Canadians who shared the same experience of discrimination and struggle in the past decades, which excluded Hong Kong immigrants. On the other hand, Hong Kong immigrants considered themselves Chinese Canadians, but they distinguished themselves from the established community by building their own Chinatowns in Richmond and Burnaby, far from Vancouver's downtown Chinatown.

Wei-Na Lee and David Tse (1994) examined how Hong Kong Canadians adapted into Canadian society from the perspective of their consumption habits. They found that Hong Kong Canadians retained some habits that were deeply ingrained in Chinese and Hong Kong culture, but also rejected others. For example, an important part of Chinese or Hong Kong culture was to save a specific amount of income in case of emergencies, thus new Chinese immigrants would tend to save instead of spending. Their research found that longtime immigrants to Canada did not adopt this practice. However, some consumption behaviors that were tightly related to deep-rooted Chinese values might not change. For example, the concept of owning a dwelling representing a stable and successful life was implanted deeply in their culture. This value was not easily changed, even for long-term immigrants.

How Hong Kong adolescents identify themselves has been another important topic of research. An adolescent, in this case, refers to both the “1.5-generation” (immigrants who immigrate to Canada when they were young) and the second or third generation. Costigan, Hua, and Su (2009), in a review of the Canadian literature on ethnic identity among Chinese youth, concluded that although the ethnic identity of Chinese youth appeared strong, their integration into Canadian society varied greatly. Kobayashi and Preston (2014) studied second-generation immigrants. They concluded that Canadian-born-Chinese did not self-identify as second-generation *immigrants*, but *Canadians*. They idealized being Canadians, including how to wear their clothes or behave in the way of Canadians. However, “their sense of identity and belonging is a set of paradoxes of between-ness that they negotiate through a sense of place-ness” (p. 240). In other words, they acted more Chinese when they were home, but more Canadian when in public.

Chow’s (2007) research focused on the different elements that would affect Hong Kong adolescents' sense of belonging and life satisfaction. This research was based on “astronaut families.” In these kinds of families, fathers were unwilling to give up high-paid jobs in Hong Kong, so they left their families in Canada and returned to Hong Kong to work or continue their business (Chow, 2007, p. 516). While their wives and children stayed in Canada, fathers flew back and forth between the two countries. Chow concluded that the presence of a father in Canada, higher self-rated socio-economic status, immigration to Canada being politically and culturally motivated, and a positive experience in making friends in Canada were the elements that affected adolescents’ sense of belonging and life satisfaction. Alaggia, Benjamine, Chau, Irving & Tsang (2003) studied how “satellite kids” negotiated their identities. Various patterns were shown during the interviews: Some interviewees believed that their identity as

Chinese/Taiwanese/Hong Konger were permanent and unchangeable, some believed that they were Canadians because of their Canadian citizenships, some believed that their identity was somewhere between Chinese and Canadians, but others believed that they were Chinese now, but would eventually become Canadians. There were also some other interviewees who were confused about their ethnic identity.

In 2011, a survey called *Hong Kong: Canada's Largest City in Asia* was published. This survey focused on the quantity and living situation of Canadians living in Hong Kong. A conservative estimate put the number of Canadian citizens at around 300,000. Of these, 67% were born in Hong Kong, and 16% were born in Canada (DeGolyer & Zhang, 2011). After 1997, because of unfavorable economic conditions in Canada, a significant amount of Hong Kong Chinese, including “astronaut families,” decided to return Hong Kong (Yan, 2014, p. 181). More importantly, a substantial amount of young people also decided to move to Hong Kong to work, creating Canadian diaspora (Yan, 2014, p. 182). All these returnees have sparked an academic debate: Is this return migration, or diaspora, or part of transnationalism (Fong, 2012; Kobayashi & Preston, 2014; Ley, 2005; Yan, 2014)?

In conclusion, identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians has been a topic that has garnered academic attention. However, in most of the research, interviews were the main methodological choice. One limitation of interviews is that they can only focus on a specific group of people at a specific moment in time. Rock (2005) and Ley (2010) used newspapers in their research; however, they focused on a limited number of articles. This research will try to understand the identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians from another perspective, from a larger scope and over a longer period of time. This research will attempt to study how the identity of Hong Kong Canadians manifests through an ethnic newspaper to understand the

community as a whole. There is no denying that the identity construction process of each individual varies greatly; however, understanding how a newspaper depicts a community is one window into understanding how a collective identity may be defined.

2.2.3 The History of Chinese language media in Canada. The history of Chinese Canadian media developed along their immigration history, with the earliest Chinese Canadian newspaper dating back to 1903 (Huang & Xu, 2013). At the beginning of the 20th century, China was under the rule of its last feudal dynasty, the Qing Dynasty. Qichao Liang, a senior official, introduced the Hundred Days' Reform, for the purpose of implementing Constitutional monarchy. However, this reform failed, and he was listed as a wanted criminal. After he escaped abroad, he did not give up and established the Chinese Empire Reform Association. In 1903, in order to publicize his ideas, he founded *Ri Xin Bao* in Vancouver, the first Chinese Canadian newspaper (Huang & Xu, 2013). Although Chinese Canadian media has a long history, this research will focus on the Chinese Canadian media from the 1980s as it is the most relevant to the time periods covered in this research. In the 1980s, a substantial number of Hong Kongers and Taiwanese immigrated to Canadian. They brought with them the popular newspapers of their place of origin; for example, the *Sing Tao Daily* and *Ming Pao* from Hong Kong, and *the World Journal* from Taiwan. Several Chinese radio and TV stations were also established. In this period, the Chinese Canadian media were heavily influenced by Taiwan and Hong Kong (Huang & Xu, 2013). Starting from the 1990s, the quantity of Mainland Chinese immigrants increased, and they founded many Chinese newspapers as well as radio and TV stations. Amongst all the Mainland Chinese Canadian media, the *Global Chinese Press* had the largest influence. For example, in 2005, one of its reports received a Jack Webster Award (Huang & Xu, 2013). Currently, news websites are becoming increasingly popular (Huang & Xu, 2013). Therefore,

there is wide diversity in the Chinese Canadian media. Chinese Canadians can obtain information from different platforms, varying from newspapers, radio and TV stations, to news websites. In addition, different subcultural Chinese groups have their own media. As this study is interested in the identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians, Hong Kong-Canadian media is the focus of this research.

The *Sing Tao Daily* and *Ming Pao* are the two major Hong Kong-based newspapers in Canada (Huang & Xu, 2013). The Toronto edition of *Sing Tao Daily* was established in 1978. Sixteen years later, in 1993, *Ming Pao* was founded in both Toronto and Vancouver (*About us: Ming Pao Daily News - North America*, para. 1). Of the two, the *Sing Tao Daily* is more widely read (Environics, n.d.). As such, the *Sing Tao Daily (Toronto edition)* has been chosen for this research because of its longer history in Canada and its reputation as being the most influential Hong Kong-founded Chinese newspaper in Canada (Huang & Xu, 2013).

For Chinese Canadians, the ethnic press is a significant information resource and heavily influences this community (Oh & Zhou, 2012). Lee & Tse (1994b) found that 41% of Chinese Canadians' media time was spent on ethnic media where the Chinese-language media tended to report news about China instead of local news (Lin & Song, 2006; Ball-Rokeach, Lin & Song, 2010). As Oh & Zhou (2012) noted, "In addition to transnational connections and rituals sustained through ethnic media's connection to homeland news, Chinese Canadians may be motivated to read ethnic newspapers because of the historically incomplete and negative portrayals of the Chinese in mainstream newspapers" (p. 264). According to Dunn and Maharani (2001) and Mahtani (2001), during the early immigration periods in the 1800s, mainstream media represented an anti-Chinese image to the rest of the society. More recently, Asian

Canadians have been portrayed as a threat and a social problem facing “real” Canadians, especially in the SARS period (Oh & Zhou, 2012).

2.3 Diaspora Studies Theory: Multifaceted Identities

As this research concentrates on media representation in relation to Hong Kong Canadians’ identity, this next section will focus on research in diaspora studies. Since the early 1990s, there has been increasing attention to the topic of diaspora. Books such as *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* by Avtar Brah and academic journals such as *Mobilities and Diasporas: A Journal of Transnational Studies* have highlighted the importance of diaspora research (Adiv & Rios, 2010).

Diaspora was first defined as a geographical term. From this perspective, diaspora was loosely defined around the ideas of people moving, being scattered, resettling, being migrational and transnationalism (Blunt, 2003). This concept was first used to refer to the Jewish diaspora and it was later extended to include groups “such as the Armenian, Chinese, Greek, Indian, Kurdish, Palestinian, Parsi, and Sikh” (Safran, 2005, p. 36). In the context of Hong Kongers who moved from their place of origin to Canada, the definition of diaspora is also applicable.

In the literature that examines diaspora, scholars have also extended the definition to sociological domains such as culture, politics, and identity (Adiv & Rios, 2010). For example, Safran says that diaspora are people “who had experiences of expatriation, institution building, and cultural continuity” and there is a “refusal to relinquish their collective identities” (Safran, 2005, p. 36). By doing so, this helps demarcate themselves from being mere immigrants and from assimilating into the mainstream. In this definition of diaspora and from a cultural perspective, there is an emphasis on the maintenance of a collective ethnic identity, one that comes from a place of origin and is transported to a new country. In the case of Hong Kong

Canadians, they fit into the cultural definition of diaspora, as they attempted to remain their Hong Kong or Chinese identity while they assimilated into the Canadian society.

Similarly, Blunt (2003) and Rios & Adiv (2010) relate diaspora to the discipline of sociology where they suggest that diaspora brings attention to the connections between "place, home, culture, and identity" (Blunt, 2003, p. 282). A further definition of diaspora also includes those who have to leave their homelands and re-establish themselves in a new country where they remain mostly independent of the receiving community by creating their own political community. This is based on preserving their own "religion, cultural and/or welfare" (Rios & Adiv, 2010, p. 3). The term diaspora includes interactions between two communities, implying that there usually is a two-way interaction between diaspora and their host countries.

This research will concentrate on the representation of Hong Kong Canadians' identity, in particular how their identities are continuously situated in relation to the interaction between the receiving society, Canada, and their diaspora community. Therefore, in order to serve this research better, this section will further explore the literature about the relationship between cultural identity and diaspora.

Hall (1990) reflects on cultural identity in two ways. In the first instance, the oneness of cultural identity is emphasized. Essentially, it is understood that a collective culture comes about from a shared ancestry, history, ethnicity or race. Thus, regardless of any changes in history, cultural identity remains stable, unchanging, and continuous. To the contrary, the second way of looking at cultural identity acknowledges that there are various historical interventions and that their impact can critically disrupt the general sense of what contributes to cohesive identity. Thus, it considers cultural identity as unstable and metamorphic. Hall (1990) believes that

cultural identities undergo a constant transformation, and thus defines: “Cultural identity, in the second sense, is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being’” (p. 225).

Therefore, for the purpose of explaining the process of identity formation, Hall (1990) argues that the formation is dialogically framed as it is constructed by having two simultaneously operative axes. One axis provides a sense of similarity and continuity as it provides the diaspora community with some fundamental knowledge about their history, and this enables their identities to continue from and connect with the past. Simultaneously, the other axis points to critical points of difference, ruptures, and discontinuities in identities. Because of this, there is a constant tension of not having direct access to their past culture. Particularly, the assimilation of a diaspora community into the new host society can be understood as a rupture or a discontinuity from their original identity. Ports & Zhou (1993) state that the assimilation process of separate groups depends on many several factors, including the context of the host society and group characteristics of arriving immigrants. Diaspora identities find themselves in an uneasy dialogue with their place of origin, which brings a comfort from the cultural similarity of their homelands, yet there is a continuous tug-of-war between the old identity and the newly emerging transnational identity, one that is in constant evolution (Hall, 1990; Georgiou, 2006). This idea of migrant identities constantly reconstituting themselves has been verified through research conducted by Li, Jowett, Findlay & Skeldon (1995). They found that the identities of immigrant communities can change over time and that the coexistence of multiple group identities can also be found with the same migrant group (Li et al., 1995). Therefore, “diasporic populations not only belong to a distinct transnational community, but also have multiple identities and positions in local, national, and transnational spaces” (Georgiou, 2006, p. 155). The transnational experience of diaspora builds new identities, which are different from their original identities due

in part to the impact that their new geographical location has on them. As time goes on, this difference in location further distances the diaspora from their original communities (Georgiou, 2006).

In this research that focuses on Hong Kong Canadians, their collective Chinese identity can be understood as stable, fixed, unchanging, and continuous. This is the identity shared by all the ethnic Chinese whether they come from mainland China, Hong Kong or are Chinese Canadians, Hong Kong Canadians, Chinese American, and so on. On the other hand, in regard to Hall's (1990) theory, the history of Hong Kong Canadians produces multiple variables for their identity formation, including the colonization history as Hong Kongers, their immigration to Canada, and their interaction with the rest of the Chinese Canadian community and Canadian society. In particular, Hong Kong's unique history draws a distinction between Hong Kong Canadians and other Chinese Canadians. If we use Hall's theory, the transition of Hong Kong Canadians' identities should be an ongoing process, in a continuous negotiation between the above-mentioned variables and their original Chinese identity.

More importantly, as Hall (1990) mentioned, the boundaries between identities are not fixed as they are continually re-sited in relation to their various reference points, be it places, times or/and topics. As a result, identities are constantly being negotiated, as they are always diverse and flexible. Hong Kong Canadians' identities are multifaceted, and various aspects of their identities can be emphasized depending on the different situations and contexts. As Hall (1990) concluded, cultural identities of diaspora communities, or diaspora identities, "are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference" (Hall, 1990, p. 235).

2.4 Media Construction of Identity

Ethnic identity is not innately inherited but is a product of social construction where the major influences behind this construction and reproduction come from local, regional or national political processes (Brass, 1991). Identity is also shaped by one's status and the power that it may bring, or not. In addition, Brass (1991) points out that elites in the process of distinguishing one ethnic group from another will select cultural markers that signify their position within that society. This manipulative action by the elites is done as a means of consolidating both the internal solidarity of the group and its possible social enhancement, as a claim for a particular social status (Brass, 1991, p. 63). This process implies that identity construction done in this way is "a statement of a person's social position in the group and its power vis-a-vis members of another group" (Li et al., 1995).

To summarize, both Li et al. (1995) and Brass (1991) look at the construction of ethnic identity from a political perspective. Brass (1991) though, has recognized the important role that mass media has played in reinforcing identity construction because they are social agents who, as determined by the elites, communicate cultural markers as cultural social norms. However, in the process of identity construction, mass media not only function as 'delivery people' who directly transfer ethnic elites' messages to the community, but also play a key role in the construction of social reality.

Therefore, the following section will explore why news can have such a significant power in terms of identity construction, starting with a discussion of the *social imaginary* and *imagined communities*. According to Taylor (2003), social imaginary is a collective understanding of a group of people and their social existence, in this case, what makes them members of a group. Taylor (2003) gives a precise definition: "[It is] the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go between them and their fellows, the

expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations” (p. 23). This is carried in their images, stories, legends, and practices (Taylor, 2003). In relation to an imaginary community, social imaginaries can be understood as the glue that connects this community. According to Anderson (1983), in an imagined community, fellow members might not have opportunities to have any interactions with each other. However, they still believe that they are connected because they share similar identity and understanding about the community; and social imaginary can be viewed as part of this understanding that they have in common. Furthermore, Anderson (1983) states that the mass media facilitate the production of imagined communities, because sharing common media can advance the sense of belonging to the community. Therefore, this section will further discuss how media construct social imaginaries for an imagined community, and in the context of this research, might serve to construct the multiple identities of a diaspora.

Both Tuchman (1978) and Gasher (2005) argue that news is not simply a reflection or a mirror of everyday life. Instead, it is “a practice of representation” (Gasher, 2005, p. 211) and “a construction of the reality” (Tuchman, 1978, p.184). In the process of reportage, journalists make decisions as to what words, images, and sounds will be selected in order to depict events. In doing so, the news has a role to play in being able to actively define what is normative or deviant, so that news is constantly “defining and redefining, constituting and reconstituting social phenomena” (Tuchman, 1978, p. 184). Identity can be counted as part of this social phenomena, and the flexible and diverse identities of diaspora communities that were discussed in the previous section. Hall (1990) stated that the negotiation of diaspora identities is two-dimensional, i.e., the interplay between the collective and original identity, and the differences caused by

historical interventions. However, drawing on Tuchman and Gasher, it can be argued that one more dimension should be added to the model of identity formation — media construction.

According to Georgiou (2006), through texts and images, the media renegotiates and represents a diaspora's present and past. More importantly, this construction happens every day. "Media actively get involved in debates of what it means to belong, of what identification with a group consists of, what the symbols of the imagined self, the other and the community are, and how the boundaries around communities and places are appropriated" (Georgiou, 2006, p. 13). Therefore, this shapes the (selective) renewed and contemporary collective memory and provide repertoires for the construction of new individual and communal identity.

Mayorga (2007) expressed a similar viewpoint in terms of media's function in identity construction. As to one's ethnic identity, the acquisition of its typical features is through the process of socialization, and there are two ways through which this occurs. One is primary socialization, which mainly takes place in the childhood; the other is secondary socialization that includes all other social communication that shapes an individual's beliefs and values. In terms of secondary socialization, the mass media are the most apparent and influential agents (Mayorga, 2007). A conclusion can be drawn that the mass media play an important role in the shaping of ethnic identity, and it is reasonable to extend this conclusion to general identities.

To summarize, the media is influential in the construction of reality, including the identity of a diaspora community. In particular, Oh and Zhou (2012) argue that ethnic media play dual roles to construct the identity/ies of diaspora. One is the assimilative role. Ethnic media provide significant information for the adaption of new-arrivals into the host society and reassure new-arrivals that they had made a correct immigration decision. By doing so, ethnic media

produce the sense of belonging in a diaspora community to their host society. In other words, ethnic media generate and construct a new national identity (Oh & Zhou, 2012).

The other role that ethnic media play in identity construction is pluralistic (Oh & Zhou, 2012). The ethnic media (a) maintain and reinforce ethnic identity, and function as a local community booster; (b) allow new-arrivals to follow the daily events in their home countries and connect them with the homeland; and (c) promote the use of the ethnic language and provide a symbolic presence for the community (Oh & Zhou, 2012).

In conclusion, the previous section concentrated the formation and negotiation of diaspora identities in everyday life. Identity has its historical and cultural roots, which are collectively shared among the members. Simultaneously, critical points of difference, which exist in their particular experiences, history, and cultures, cause their identity to be subject to ongoing transformation. Therefore, diaspora identities are continually mutating and multifaceted. This section emphasized that media representation of identities is in fact a process of identity construction. The process of reporting constructs and reconstructs social imaginaries of imagined diaspora communities, including who they believe they are.

Within this theoretical background, this research will focus on the media construction of diaspora identities, focusing on their multiple identities. According to Oh & Zhou (2012), ethnic media construct the ethnic and/or national identity of a community; in other words, they serve an assimilative and a pluralist function. This research will specifically look at whether the *Sing Tao Daily* plays either or both roles.

2.5 Conclusion

This literature review has introduced the history of Hong Kong Canadians and their ethnic media in Canada, as well the research that has been done on Hong Kong Canadians to

date. After reviewing research on Hong Kong Canadians, it can be said that the issue of their identity construction has captured much academic attention. However, most of the research has used interviews as the major methodological choices, and misses the opportunity to understand the collective construction of identity through mass media. Therefore, in this research, the identity of Hong Kong Canadians will be considered as a whole and their shared identity expressed through ethnic media will be studied and analyzed.

This study situates itself within diaspora theory, focusing on the formation and dynamic negotiation of diaspora identities. It also draws on theories of representation, including how the media does not simply reflect identity, but actively constructs reality, including identity, through journalism. Therefore, this chapter further emphasized the media's function in constructing identities, particularly the assimilative and pluralist roles that ethnic media play.

The next chapter will discuss how this research has been conducted, in order to understand how the *Sing Tao Daily*, worked to construct the identify of Hong Kong Canadians in the 1980s and 1990s.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This research looks at the representation of Hong Kong Canadians in their ethnic media and analyzes the media construction of their identities. There are two major questions guiding this research:

- **RQ1:** How are the three major events in Hong Kong's history – the Joint Declaration, the Tiananmen Protest, and the Handover from Britain to China - framed in the *Sing Tao Daily*?
- **RQ2:** What do these frames say about how the *Sing Tao Daily* constructed the identity of Hong Kong Canadians?

The goal of this chapter is to explain how this research was conducted. This chapter will outline what this study examined, including justifying the selection of media, timeframe, and which articles were chosen to study the identity negotiation of this community. This chapter is divided into two sections: (a) Data Selection and (b) Data Analysis.

3.1 Data Selection

3.1.1 The selection of media. The *Sing Tao Daily (Toronto version)* has been chosen for this research, considering it has a longer history and larger influence than *Ming Pao*, which is the second major Hong Kong-based newspaper in Canada, also aimed at the Hong Kong Canadian community.

3.1.2 Study Period. Looking back through Hong Kong's modern history, there were two main immigration waves from Hong Kong to Canada in the 20th century that happened between the 60s and the 90s. This research focuses on the second wave between 1984 and 1997, the impetus for which was Hong Kong's impending the Handover to Chinese rule; this time frame is seen by many as the beginning and ending point of this significant event. There are two reasons

to study this event in order to understand the identity negotiation of Hong Kong Canadians. First of all, for a substantial number of Hong Kong Canadians, the Handover was one of the important reasons to immigrate to Canada; secondly, after 1978 when the *Sing Tao Daily (Toronto Version)* was founded, this was the most influential event in modern history to affect the collective Hong Kong Canadian community.

This research analyzed and studied three major events that are significant to the Handover. The first is the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration on December 19, 1984. In this document, both countries agreed on Hong Kong's Handover from the United Kingdom to China on July 1, 1997. This declaration was also called "the agreement of Hong Kong's future" in Chinese (Leung, 2000), by the Hong Kong government and media, which suggests its significant impact.

The second event was the Tiananmen Square Protest. From April to June in 1989, a large group of students gathered and demonstrated in front of the Tiananmen Square, demanding democracy, equality, and other human rights. However, on June 4, the protest was violently broken up and hundreds of students left dead or injured. This event destroyed the fragile newly established link between Hong Kongers and China; Hong Kong society had thought that Hong Kong could provide China an example of democracy that would work in the Chinese context, and thus push it towards democracy by the time of the Handover in 1997 (Tsang, 2004, pp. 247-248). After this incident, a large amount of Hong Kongers fled overseas, and Canada was one of the most popular destinations. Hong Kong immigrants at that time increased the established Hong Kong Canadian community and Chinese Canadians community in Canada.

The third event was Hong Kong's Handover to China on July 1, 1997. Between 1984 and 1997, there was a steady stream of immigration from Hong Kong to Canada, with immigration

numbers reaching a peak in 1995. For Hong Kong Canadians, the Handover was very significant, as it was the main reason why many had left their homeland. In addition, by the time the Handover occurred in 1997, these immigrants had left Hong Kong over a decade. Therefore, by observing how this event manifested in the *Sing Tao Daily*, the research can see whether they distinguished themselves from local Hong Kongers or not. If they did, in what ways?

Newspapers in these three periods were reviewed in the form of microfilms. For each period, ten newspapers were collected. The newspapers selected articles and/or editorials that covered the event in question in an in-depth manner. This research is based on a pilot research project was done in April 2016, which studied the identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians in the *Sing Tao Daily* between 1984 and 2014. The conclusion of the pilot research was that the Chinese identity of Hong Kong Canadians was emphasized and that there was a focus on assimilation into general Canadian society. The drawback of the pilot research, however, was that the textual analysis was not in-depth, extensive or systematic. In this research, the textual analysis has been improved by expanding the database and using framing analysis.

In addition, editorials were added to the analysis materials, as they are designed to directly show opinions and understanding of issues, including issues related to identity. The timeline of the three periods are in shown in Table 1, and the final selection of the articles (news stories and editorials) are shown in Table 2.

Table 1. *The Timeline of the Three Research Periods*

Event	Time	Research Period
The Joint Declaration	December 19th, 1984	Sep 15, 1984 - Sep 26, 1984
		Nov 15, 1984 - Dec 19, 1984

Event	Time	Research Period
The Tiananmen Square Protest	June 4th, 1989	Apr 15, 1989 - July 1, 1989
Hong Kong's Handover	July 1st, 1997	June 1, 1997 - July 10, 1997

Note. The selection of the research periods was based on the pilot research that I conducted in April, 2016. Most relevant articles or editorials clustered in these periods.

Table 2. *The Quantity of Selected Articles and Pages*

Period	News	Editorials	News pages
Period 1	39	3	23
Period 2	27	12	26
Period 3	29	3	27
Summary	95	18	76

3.2 Data Analysis

When it comes to data analysis of news, the form of the newspapers and the text of in the selected newspapers will be analyzed.

3.2.1 Layouts (Analysis of the form). According to Barnhurst and Nerone (2001), the form of a newspaper is the “persisting visible structure of the newspaper” (p. 3). In other words, the form is what makes *Sing Tao Daily* recognizable, as the content changes every day. In short, “form is everything a newspaper does to present the look of the news” (p. 3). An analysis of the form refers to the analysis of the persisting layouts, design, typography, the habit of illustration, genres of reportage, and schemes of departmentalization.

In the pilot research, three elements of layouts were identified as being very useful in terms of analyzing Hong Kong Canadians’ identity: headers, the way that news was departmentalized, and the format of how news is written on one page.

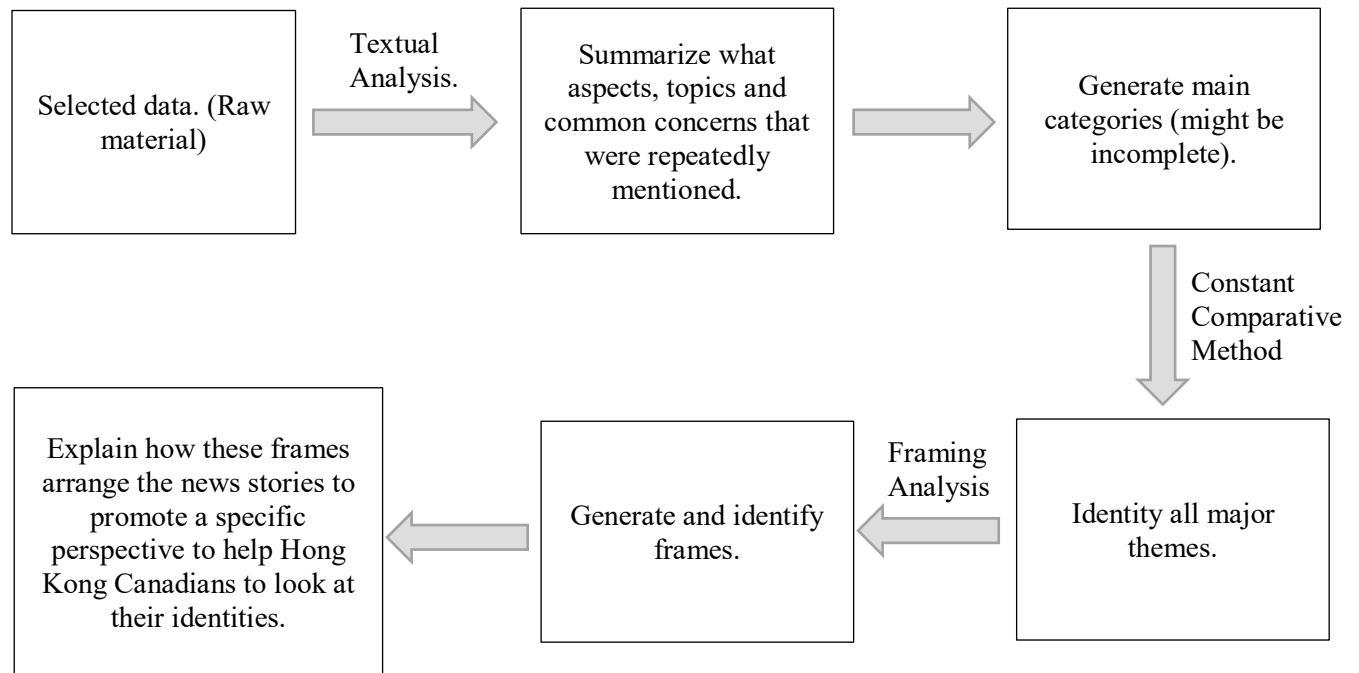
1. Headers. In the *Sing Tao Daily*, headers are arranged at the top of each page and include the page number, the name of the beat, date, and “Sing Tao Daily” (in Chinese or English or both). As will be shown, the arrangement of headers changed over time, and some of the changes can be seen as reflecting the identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians.

2. News departmentalization. The way that newspapers classify news into different categories (beats) and arrange these categories based on priority is considered departmentalization. In these different research periods, there might have been no departmentalization or different ways to departmentalize. This research looked at how news was prioritized and classified through looking at its departmentalization.

3. The format of news stories. A Chinese news story can be written from right to left, top to bottom; or from left to right, top to bottom, as a typical English story. The former way appears to be a traditional way of formatting stories in Hong Kong newspapers, and the latter one appears to be a modern way, influenced by in this case by North American norms. This research will examine whether the *Sing Tao Daily* uses the traditional Chinese way of formatting stories, or not. A change from right-to-left to left-to-right, could indicate a shift; that Hong Kong Canadians were abandoning the traditional Hong Kong style of writing stories, in favor of adopting a North American style.

3.2.2 Texts. In this research, after analyzing the visual structure of the pages from the newspapers collected (the form), the text used in the articles and headlines were analyzed. The core objective was to examine how the texts selected relate to the identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians. In order to achieve this, as shown in Chart 1, textual analysis, constant comparative method and framing analysis were applied. An analysis of the news in Period 1 will serve as an example for demonstrating how these three methods will work together

Figure 2. The combination of textual analysis, constant comparative method, and framing analysis.



1. Textual analysis for identifying general patterns. Generally speaking, texts are considered as cultural artifacts, as they can provide a clue about our culture and how we make sense of our world (Brennen, 2013, p. 193). In particular, Brennen (2013) suggest that textual analysis should focus on (a) the word choices, concepts, and ideas behind word choices; and (b) themes and issues that the texts are centered around. The purpose of textual analysis is to identify the entire range of potential meaning that might be hidden in texts and to explore persistent patterns. In this study, as textual analysis is the foundation of this research, its function is to identify patterns running through the different stories (Altheide & Schneider, 2013). Priest (2010) suggests that a few specific questions needed to be asked when conducting textual analysis. As such, the following questions will guide this research.

- What aspects of the Handover were consistently presented in the *Sing Tao Daily*?
- What were the topics about the Handover that the news constantly talks about?
- What were the common concerns across the different news sources? As this study solely focuses on the *Sing Tao Daily*, this question can be understood as exploring the common concerns among different interviewees. For example, in Period 1, the *Sing Tao Daily* interviewed senior officials from both governments and different opinion leaders of Hong Kong. Their concerns will be thus summarized.

Guided by the three previous questions, the first step is summarizing themes from each article selected. As an example, the chart below introduces the themes generated after a first reading of the articles in Period 1.

Table 3. *Popular themes generated from the data (Period 1)*

Names	Content
Aspects	<p>The progress of the Agreement.</p> <p>The reactions to the Agreement from the Hong Kong society.</p> <p>Comments about the Agreement and Hong Kong's future.</p>
	<p>The practicality of "one country, two systems."</p> <p>Human rights and freedom after 1997.</p> <p>The responsibility of the British Government to Hong Kong.</p> <p>Autonomy.</p>
	<p>The principle of stability and prosperity.</p> <p>Continuity.</p> <p>China's ability to keep promises.</p> <p>The responsibility of Hong Kongers to Hong Kong.</p>
Topics	

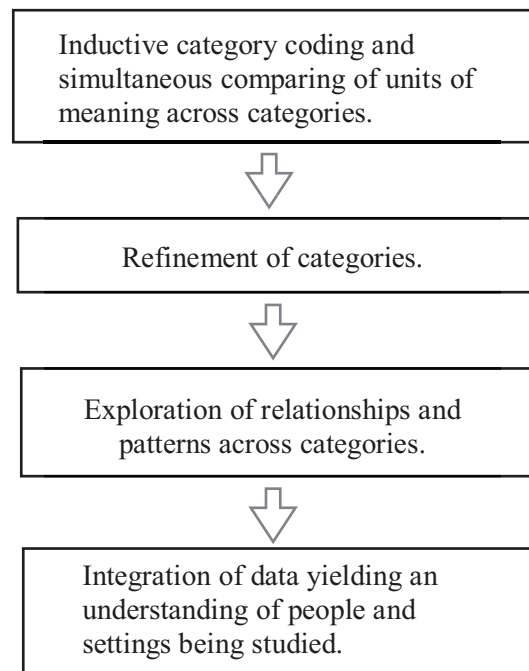
Names	Content
Common concerns	The practicality of “one country, two systems.”
	Human rights and freedom in Hong Kong after 1997.
	China’s ability to keep its promises.

With this primary result, a general idea is generated as to what the *Sing Tao Daily* decided to cover during this period; the main focus was on the event and as well as the reactions to it. At this stage, categories were summarized, but they might not be complete. In order to examine and expand the existing categories, the constant comparative method was used.

2. The constant comparative method for identifying and categorizing specific themes.

This method is used to analyze qualitative data by comparing all the units of meaning obtained from the data, and at the same time inductively coding by generating categories. In this process, “initial categories will be changed, merged or omitted; new categories are generated; and new relationships can be discovered” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 123). This method is designed to make the qualitative research more reliable and objective. Using consistent categories in a systematic way allows them to emerge from the data, rather than imposing the preconceived ideas of the researcher(s) that may lead to misrepresentation (Priest, 2010). This step of the research is informed by Maykut & Morehouse (1994) who have used an explicit chart to explain the process:

Figure 3. The Process of Constant Comparative Method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 124).



Each theme that has been generated from the news stories is one unit of meaning. To ensure the validity of the research, all the articles were reread and themes summarized. Guided by the constant comparative method, each unit of meaning was compared using the four initial categories as a framework for analysis, and then a decision was made as to:

- Whether this theme should be included under one of the existing categories, or
- Whether the categories should be modified according to the new data, or
- Whether a new category should be created.

Eventually, major categories were identified and labeled as “major themes” that will be analyzed in the upcoming chapter. These major themes that have been identified will be the fundamental material to proceed with the framing analysis.

3. Framing analysis for the identification of hidden frames and the interpretation of how the Sing Tao Daily framed the identity of Hong Kong Canadians. In choosing what to cover and how to cover it, frames help to shape our understanding of this world, thus they are necessary for us to understand the sophisticated and unfamiliar world around us (Tolley, 2016). Tuchman (1978) reminds us that news is not objective, but a socially constructed product. Metaphorically, Tuchman (1978) says that it functions as a window that people look through to look at the world. In the process of information dissemination, the news not only circulates but also shapes knowledge.

As to the concept of framing, “frame” can be both a verb and a noun. When “frame” is used as a verb, this emphasizes an actively selective process where some aspects of a perceived reality are chosen and made salient (Entman, 1993, p. 52). When it is used as a noun, this refers to the frames as “organizing principles” or “a central organizing idea” that turn/s occurrences into events and events into news stories (Goffman, 1974; Tuchman, 1978). Tolley (2016) argues that frames are the result of a combination of agenda-setting and priming. Agenda-setting promotes some issues over others to readers, and priming makes some attributes of these issues salient. Tolley (2016) states that frames are a way of the simplification and organization of information, which helps citizens to understand the most important features, characteristics, or attributes of the news. In summary, the verb form of frame focuses on the process of framing and the noun on the results.

In this research, framing analysis will identify both the hidden frames (results) and how these frames promote a specific perspective to readers (the process of framing). Starting from the major themes generated by the constant comparative method, I will explain how they can constitute the frames. This process will be explicitly discussed in *Chapter 4: Discussion*.

Continuing in *Chapter 5: Conclusion*, I will examine how these frames promoted a specific idea about how Hong Kong Canadians should perceive their identities. In this sense, the abstract criteria used to organize the framing of the Handover (Frames 1 & 2) and their identities (Frame 3) will be explored, and the following questions will be answered in the final chapter:

- When the *Sing Tao Daily* framed the whole duration of the Handover (from Period 1 to 3), what criteria were used by the *Sing Tao Daily* to measure China's credibility?
- When the *Sing Tao Daily* discussed the multiple identities of Hong Kong Canadians, what were the core ideas or principles that organized this discussion?
- How did these criteria /organizing principles relate to identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians?

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

After a thorough analysis of the data generated from the *Sing Tao Daily* from 1984 to 1997, three prominent frames were identified. They were: **Frame 1**: China is to be trusted, **Frame 2**: China is not to be trusted, and **Frame 3**: Multiple identities: We are Chinese/Hong Kongers/Hong Kong Canadians/Ethnic Chinese. Within each frame, there were several themes that worked together to create the frames. These themes and the subsequent frames will be analyzed throughout the three periods of time that this thesis is focusing on: Period 1: The Declaration (1984), Period 2: The Tiananmen Square Protest (1989), and Period 3: The Handover (1997). Overall, the purpose of this analysis is to examine how the *Sing Tao Daily* framed the identity of Hong Kong Canadians.

This chapter will thus consist of the following:

- An analysis of the form, for the purpose of observing the identity construction of Hong Kong Canadians from a visual perspective.
- The exploration of the dominant themes in each time period, using key examples from the *Sing Tao Daily*.
- The examination of how these themes work together to create frames in each period, in particular how the *Sing Tao Daily* selected and emphasized certain information about the Handover yet downplayed other information in order to put forward particular perspectives.

4.1 An Analysis of the Form

4.1.1 Layout (Analysis of the form). When examining the layout of the newspaper, or the ‘form’ of the newspaper, there are three areas where changes occurred over the three periods that provide interesting insight into how Hong Kong Canadians might identify. The first is how

the headers were dated on the paper and the move away from a specifically Hong-Kong way of thinking about the passage of time. The second area looks at how news was departmentalized and a change towards distinguishing news into separate categories. The third area focuses on how there was a change in how the script had been written and meant to be read, moving from a more Chinese way of writing towards a more Western way.

4.1.2 Headers. In the *Sing Tao Daily*, the header appears at the top of the page and includes the page number, the name of the beat, the date, and the name of the paper, *Sing Tao Daily*, in either Chinese, English, or both languages. What is noticeable about the headers is that there was a change in how dates were measured as we move through the first three periods that are being examined. In Periods 1 and 2, the newspaper uses the Republic of China Calendar to measure the passage of time, as did all Hong Kong newspapers at the time. The beginning of this calendar is marked by the foundation of the Republic of China, which is also known as Taiwan. However, in the Handover period, the newspaper moved away from this distinctly Hong Kong way of marking the passage of time and starts to use the Gregorian calendar, which is used in China, Canada, and Britain, as well as many other parts of the world.

Although no assumptions can be made from this change that there is any particular affiliation being made with either China, Canada, or Britain, what is clear is that there is a move away from a traditional Hong Kong way of thinking about time. This could perhaps signify a move away from thinking about the *Sing Tao Daily*, and by extension its readers, as being primarily affiliated with Hong Kong cultural practices and norms.

4.1.2 News departmentalization. There were no departmentalizational labels in the headers of both Periods 1 and 2. However, it was clear that the *Sing Tao Daily* arranged what was considered the most important news on the front page. The following pages contained either

Chinese-/Hong Kong-related news or Canadians news, but in no particular order. This implied that, at this beginning point, the *Sing Tao Daily* was aware of the importance of Canadians news, but it paid equal attention to the news about China, Hong Kong, and Canada. In Period 3, however, the *Sing Tao Daily* had begun to departmentalize the news. After the front page, came Canadian news, including “Community news,” “City news & Provincial news,” and “Canadian finance & economics” came first. Hong Kong news was then clustered in the second section, including “Hong Kong news,” “Hong Kong economics,” and “International news.” Chinese news came at the end. Therefore, it can be said that the editors of the *Sing Tao Daily* put more emphasis on Canadian news over time, and as an extension on the Canadian identity of its readers.

4.1.3 The format of news stories. In both Periods 1 and 2, the *Sing Tao Daily* used the traditional Chinese way of formatting stories, i.e., right-to-left. However, in Period 3, the *Sing Tao Daily* adopted the traditional way to shift into a North American style, i.e., left-to-right.

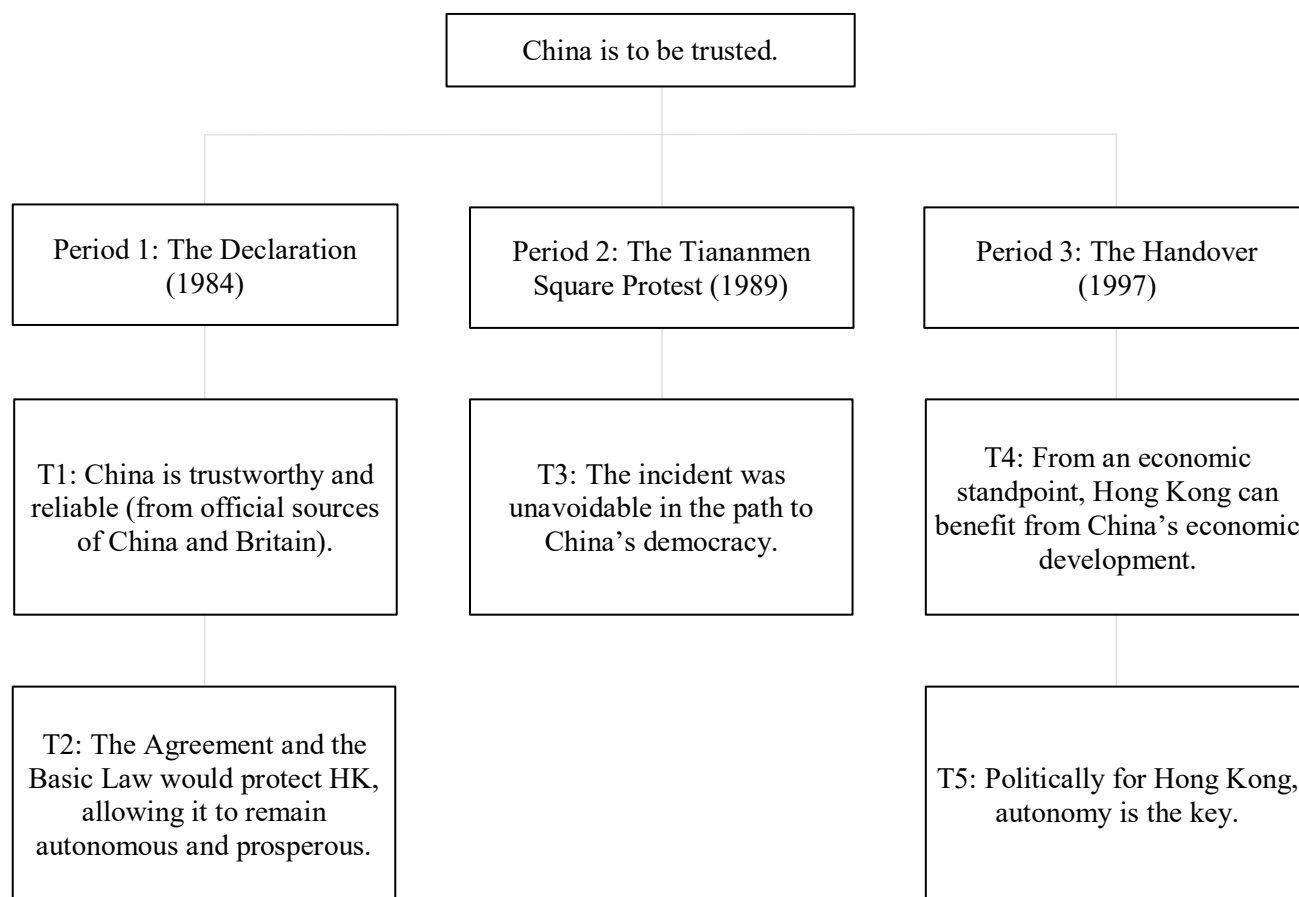
In conclusion, after an analysis of the form, it can be said that the layout of the *Sing Tao Daily* shifted from a traditional Chinese way to a North American way over time. This visual change can be interpreted as the *Sing Tao Daily* promoting its readers’ Canadian identity.

In the concluding chapter, I will explain how these three changes in *Sing Tao Daily*’s layout speak to the construction of Hong Kong Canadians’ identity.

4.2 Frame 1: China is to be trusted

The frame, ‘China is to be trusted,’ was a dominant frame throughout the Pre-Handover period, compared to Frames 2 and 3. Essentially, this frame explored various rationales for supporting China as a promising future ruler of Hong Kong. Figure 4 below displays the continuum of this first frame, with its correlating themes of the three periods of time.

Figure 4. Frame 1: China is to be trusted.



4.2.1 Period 1: The Declaration (1984). In 1984 after long and protracted negotiations, Britain and China reached a collective agreement for Hong Kong to be returned to Chinese sovereignty. As a result of this agreement, a declaration of Hong Kong's new legal status was devised and Hong Kong's constitution, known as the Basic Law, became a priority. In both of these documents, the principal idea was "one country, two systems," which was deliberately stated in this way, in order to appease any doubts about the uniqueness of Hong Kong's history, and the distinctive identity of Hong Kongers. During the time the Declaration and the Basic Law

were being developed there were many articles that discussed whether or not these two documents would create harmony or not.

T1: China is accountable and reliable (from official sources of China and Britain).

This theme was a core message in several articles, which covered the comments of government officials of China and Britain about the soon-to-be Declaration. These officials included the Premier of China, Ziyang Zhao, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (UK), Margaret Thatcher, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (UK), Geoffrey Howe, and a member of the Labor Party (UK), Baroness Young. Within this theme, the *Sing Tao Daily* used official sources to restate the positions of the Chinese and British government: China would keep its promise, Britain would protect the interest of Hong Kong, and Hong Kong would continue to be stable and prosperous.

One example is a story published on the front page of the *Sing Tao Daily*, on December 20, 1984, one day after the Declaration. Its headline was “[China will] Implement the Agreement and [Hong Kong will] Safely Pass 1997. [Hong Kong Will] Remain [an Established] Institution Unchanged for 50 Years,” with a pre-headline “Leaders of China and Britain Signed the Hong Kong Future Agreement,” explaining the background. The terminology “1997” was commonly used and interchangeable with “Hong Kong’s Handover.” Such a headline alerted the *Sing Tao Daily* readership of the Declaration and the Handover. In addition, the positioning of this story was on the front page, indicating that editors felt it was important.

In journalistic writing, the inverted pyramid is often used and important details of the story are arranged according to their level of significance. In the above-mentioned article, this formula is followed. In the first paragraph the editors have selected the ceremony that was held to introduce the Declaration as the first point, followed by Zhao’s speech where he emphasized

that “one country, two systems” policy, was a long-term policy of China, and he wanted to reiterate that it was not a political ploy by China to gain the confidence of Britain to relinquish Hong Kong back to China. Therefore, the key message conveyed in this article in the *Sing Tao Daily* was that China would be trustworthy.

On the same page, there was a second story titled “Ziyang Zhao Emphasized to British PM: The Communist Party Would Hundred Percent Enact the Future Agreement.” This article emphasized what China’s attitude would be toward the Future Agreement by directly quoting Zhao, who stated that the Agreement was not only the result of a collective effort by the Chinese and British governments but also a reassurance to Hong Kongers: Because China was “a country that kept its promises,” China was completely committed to the implementation of the Agreement (1984, p. 1).

These two stories were prominently displayed on the front page, indicating their importance. These stories reinforced the idea that the Handover was a positive move because Premier Zhao was predominantly featured supporting China’s future governance of Hong Kong. The *Sing Tao Daily* focused its headlines on phrases such as “implementing the agreement” or “practicing the future agreement” inferring China’s accountability in the deliverance of the Declaration.

In tandem with Zhao's commentary, the *Sing Tao Daily* interviewed Baroness Young, who was a member of the Labor Party, and stated that “The Communist Party has had a good record to keep its international promise, and doing so will be to China's economic benefit” (“UK House of Lords,” 1984, p. 6). The *Sing Tao Daily* published this interview several days before the Declaration made public and coupled with Zhao’s commentary. Both were positive about

China's accountability and credibility, thus likely would reassure the readership that China would be accountable.

The two examples above directly presented a primary message in support of China as accountable to Hong Kong, but there was also a secondary message as well. Although it was not directly stated in these articles, the *Sing Tao Daily* positioned Britain as the protector of Hong Kong, having the responsibility for ensuring that the Handover period from 1984 to 1997 went smoothly. This message was reinforced as Britain, on behalf of Hong Kong, did sign the Agreement and by doing so honored its capacity as a benefactor to Hong Kong. The message conveyed in the articles was that the Future Agreement would protect the political and economic uniqueness of Hong Kong on the one hand, and on the other would commit China to disseminating the agreement.

For instance, fifteen days before the Declaration, Thatcher affirmed Britain's responsibility to Hong Kong in a story entitled "Thatcher Notified Hong Kong Representatives: Britain will Have a Responsibility towards Hong Kong's Transition." In the article, Thatcher emphasized British commitment to the Agreement in fulfilling its promise to Hong Kong "to retain its prosperity and stability from now (1984) to 1997" (1984, p. 10). Specifically, Britain's involvement with the Communist Party during the Handover negotiations would ensure that Hong Kong would benefit and that China would honor the Agreement. This portrayal constructed the image of Britain as having a responsibility to its colonized territory.

Another story used to highlight Britain's responsibility to Hong Kong was published on December 21st, 1984, a day after the Declaration was publicly announced. The *Sing Tao Daily* reported on a visit to Hong Kong by several members of the UK Parliament. They suggested that Hong Kongers to provide a detailed reflection of their ideas about the Agreement and send it to

British authorities. This article framed Britain as a responsible ruler, because it showed that Britain would respect the opinion of Hong Kongers, despite the fact that Hong Kong could not participate in any negotiations about the Handover.

To sum up, the theme ‘China is trustworthy and reliable’ was predominantly supported by the use of official sources from Britain and China. The fact that this message was prioritized in news articles made this message more salient than other information in the same story.

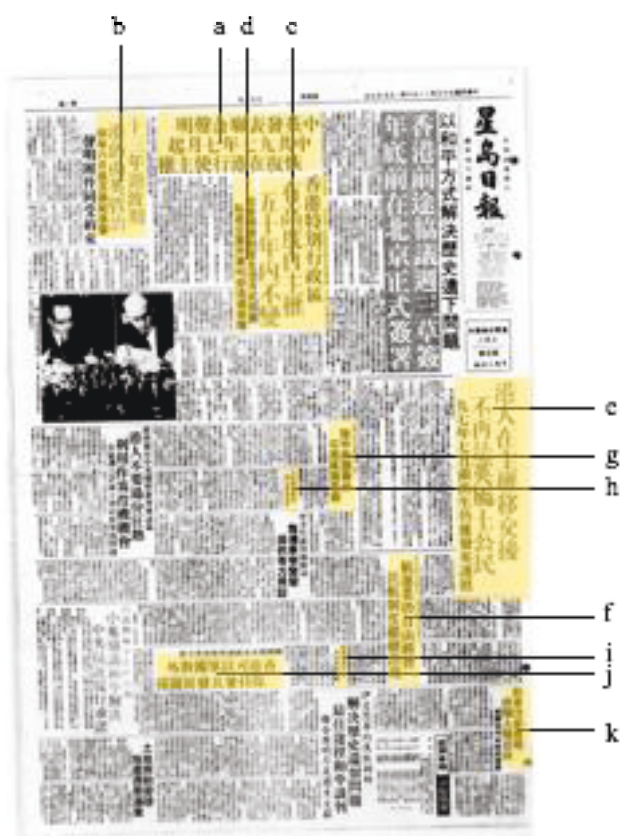
T2: The Sino-British Agreement and the Basic Law would protect Hong Kong, allowing it to remain autonomous and prosperous. The *Sing Tao Daily* emphasized that this agreement would guarantee the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and would help Hong Kong remain unchanged. In particular, the *Sing Tao Daily* emphasized that the social institutions of Hong Kong, primarily the economic system (capitalism) and its governance, would be fundamentally unchanged after the Handover and would lay the foundation for Hong Kong’s future development. Meanwhile, as regulated by the Agreement, a high degree of autonomy would ensure that Hong Kong would have enough independence to have the decision-making capacity over its own affairs.

The example below shows how the *Sing Tao Daily* elaborated on the ideas of continuity and autonomy. On September 26th, 1984, at an official ceremony in Beijing, China and Britain simultaneously approved and publicized the texts of the Agreement, that included eight sections, three annexes, and two memorandums, which finally became law in December 1984. The following day, on the front page, the *Sing Tao Daily* reported on the ceremony and published verbatim most of the Agreement, including the first two annexes and one of the memorandums, yet abridged other sections due to the lack of space.

Figure 5. A newspaper page of the *Sing Tao Daily*.



Figure 6. A newspaper page of the *Sing Tao Daily* (with marks).



As shown in Figure 5 above, the *Sing Tao Daily* paid far greater attention to the Agreement, as it occupied five-sixths of the page. The section in the red box contains the report on the ceremony. *The Sing Tao Daily* editors constructed its page to highlight excerpts of the sections from the Agreement that they believed was important; this can also be seen by the larger fonts that were used.

In examining the larger fonts (as seen in Figure 6), the headlines are highlighted in yellow. The translation of these highlights are as follows:

- a) “The Sino-British Joint Declaration: The Communist Party will resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong from July 1997.”
- b) “Hong Kong will be under the administration of Britain in the thirteen-year transition period, the annexes have equal legal validity [as the Agreement].”
- c) “Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has a high degree of autonomy and will remain unchanged for fifty years.”
- d) “Social and economic institutions and lifestyle will remain as before, private enterprises and foreign capital will be subjected to legal protection.”
- e) “After the transition, Hong Kongers will not be British Overseas Territories Citizens anymore — Children who were born before July 1997 still will be granted British passports.”
- f) “Shipping industries will operate independently, and the civil aviation system will be continued.”
- g) “Except for using the Chinese flag and emblem, the Hong Kong flag and emblem are allowed to be used.”
- h) “Judicial independence [from the Chinese authority] and Hong Kong currency.”
- i) “Educational system will not change, studying abroad is allowed.”
- j) “Hong Kong can have its own foreign relations with other countries in fields as economics, commerce, finance, communication, and tourism.”
- k) “Self-administration in social security, human rights, and freedom will be protected.”

These headlines above provided a visual cue for the *Sing Tao Daily* readers as to what elements of the Agreement the *Sing Tao Daily* editors believed were important to see first. These headlines emphasize that Hong Kong would remain unchanged because its autonomy would be

protected, thus creating a general picture of what Hong Kong's future would be like after 1997, one where it would maintain a high degree of independence. Interestingly, the *Sing Tao Daily* failed to highlight how the Agreement gave China legal rights over Hong Kong and instead focused on the autonomy of Hong Kong and how it would remain unchanged, with the exception of the change of citizenship from British to Chinese. More importantly, the *Sing Tao Daily* emphasized that the main purpose of achieving autonomy and remaining unchanged was for ensuring the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

Another example was a report on the positive performance of Hong Kong's stock market and the Hong Kong dollar, after the two governments decided that they would soon officially approve the Agreement. The *Sing Tao Daily* pointed out that the political climate between Hong Kong, China, and Britain was at ease. The incoming official approval, thus, was considered as a move to clarify Hong Kong's political situation, which resulted in a positive economic performance. This report served to highlight the confidence in Hong Kong towards the Agreement and China's credibility.

In its other newspaper reports, the *Sing Tao Daily* continued to reinforce the ideas of autonomy and remaining unchanged by elaborating in a positive manner how this would influence Hong Kong's main industries. An example of this is demonstrated in a large report entitled "How Hong Kongers Should Face the Future Agreement." Specifically, there were two stories that discussed how the real estate and financial sectors of Hong Kong would benefit from the Chinese authority as they would continue to ensure that Hong Kong's economy would be protected and stay the same as it was under British rule.

In the first story, the *Sing Tao Daily* interviewed a District Councilor of Hong Kong, Zhu, about the economy. Zhu commented that the principle of remaining unchanged would maintain

the prosperity of the real estate sector of Hong Kong, thus stimulating property developers to continue to invest in Hong Kong, as private ownership of land was permitted, unlike in mainland China.

In another story, entitled “Hong Kong’s Economy Cannot Collapse. Staying Positive to ‘One Country, Two Systems’ Policy,” the same theme of *remaining unchanged* was used again to promote economic success. The *Sing Tao Daily* interviewed Han Qiang Lin from Hong Kong Securities who narrowed down the concept of securities that related to the financial sector into four criteria as follows: (a) rental rates, (b) wage growth rates, (c) the interest rate of banks and (d) investor profits. According to Lin if these four criteria stayed steady, Hong Kong’s economy would not collapse.

As another example of how autonomy and trustworthiness were emphasized in the *Sing Tao Daily*, a story that covered Hong Kong’s Governor Crawford MacLehose speech titled “Young People [of Hong Kong] Should Bear the Responsibility of Hong Kong’s Future,” focused on MacLehose’s emphasis that Hong Kong’s future lay on the shoulders of those Hong Kongers from ages 30 up, as they constituted the major employment pool for Hong Kong. In covering this story, the *Sing Tao Daily* emphasized to its public that, with a high degree of autonomy, Hong Kongers could build their own future. Overall, the idea of ‘autonomy’ as it appears in the *Sing Tao Daily*, focuses on how Hong Kong would have independence in its own affairs, and that China would permit Hong Kongers to create a successful economic future.

Therefore, in the first frame of this period, the two themes that were discussed by the *Sing Tao Daily*, conveyed a specific message that China would abide by the Agreement and by doing so would protect the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. In summary, these themes can be understood as part of an overall media frame, ‘China is to be trusted.’

4.2.2 Period 2: The Tiananmen Square Protest (1989).

T3: This incident is unavoidable in the path to China's democracy. Despite the fact that 'China is to be trusted' was a major frame in the preceding period, during the Tiananmen Square Protest this frame does not appear prominently. It could be surmised that the Tiananmen Square Protest nearly destroyed the reputation of China's ability to be trusted. The only example that could be included in this type of framing came in a sub-story titled "Will China Have a Future after the Beijing Massacre," wherein Professor Rong Wu Da from the Biochemistry Department at the University of Toronto, commented: "one suppression would not prevent China from democratizing" (1989, p. Additional 2). He added that China has a history of democratizing, even if it was a step-by-step process. However, even though the *Sing Tao Daily* used Rong's comment as a positive message about the future of Hong Kong under Chinese rule, there were not any assurances about how long it would take China to democratize.

4.2.3 Period 3: The Handover Period (1997). Compared to Period 1, where the main issue was the trustworthiness of the Chinese authority, in Period 3, this frame expanded to include the message that Hong Kong would fully benefit from the Handover and thus advance its prosperity and stability.

The *Sing Tao Daily* published some comprehensive and analytical stories in this period, two of which are particularly prescient: one that focused on economics and the other on politics and society. The *Sing Tao Daily* used two significant sources in this period; they both had expertise in their fields of interest and one source had close ties with the Chinese and Hong Kong government. One was a senior Hong Kong official and the other an influential Hong Kong entrepreneur; both these sources provided valuable insight into Hong Kong's situation.

T4: ‘From an economic standpoint, Hong Kong can benefit from China’s economic development’. A fourth theme that emerged was that there would be a win-win economic relationship between China and Hong Kong, as well as between China/Hong Kong and Canada. Reinforcing this idea, the *Sing Tao Daily* ran a feature story entitled “Hong Kong could Become China’s New York in Ten Years,” and interviewed an influential Hong Kong entrepreneur Shuhao Zhu, who was highly regarded by both the Chinese and Hong Kong governments. Zhu's prominence was encapsulated by the many roles he played. For instance, he was nominated to be a member of the prestigious Selection Committee charged with electing the first Chief Executive and Provisional Legislative Council after the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and he was also a member of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference.

In this story, Shuhao Zhu displayed great confidence in Hong Kong’s future. In anticipation of the Handover, Zhu’s interview was published 19 days beforehand. Zhu pointed out how Hong Kong and China would complement each other, in that China would be Hong Kong’s powerful supporter and that Hong Kong could provide assistance with China’s development. His analysis was based on China’s strong potential for continued economic growth, and he believed this could drive Hong Kong’s economic success, providing many economic opportunities for Hong Kong, which would “accelerate Hong Kong’s prosperity.” Zhu explained that Hong Kong was an international leader in economics, finance, and trade, and this would help China. Zhu displayed great confidence in Hong Kong’s future under Chinese rule. This interview constructed the sentiment that the Handover would be of benefit for Hong Kong and positioned China as a significant contributor to Hong Kong’s economy. This message reinforces Frame 1 ‘China is to be trusted.’

T5: Politically for Hong Kong, autonomy is the key. The *Sing Tao Daily* also published a story with the soon-to-be first Chief Secretary of Administration of Hong Kong's Special Administrative Region, Chan Fang On Sang, who discussed how, in a positive way, autonomy would define Hong Kong's future ("Autonomy dominates Hong Kong's future," 1997, p. HKG12). Chan provided a detailed and thorough description of the concept of autonomy. Essentially, Chan underlined that preserving Hong Kong's autonomy would require a clear boundary between China and Hong Kong.

According to Chan, Hong Kong should be able to both decide and administer its own affairs, without direct interference from Chinese authority. Using the analogy that Hong Kong should be the only goalkeeper of its affairs, Chan added that remaining autonomous would refer to a number of core values: (a) democracy, (b) transparency, (c) free competition, (d) the rule-of-law, and (e) an independent judicial system. Chan believed that these core values must be well-preserved in Hong Kong, and warned that they must not be gradually eroded by the Chinese government. Chan emphasized that Hong Kong must preserve its political structure for the future and recommended the following: (a) future elections should be free, fair and open, (b) election regulations should be transparent; (c) candidates with different political opinions should be allowed to participate in elections; (d) when laws about democracy and freedom need to be amended, public consultations should be conducted.

As Chan explained, "The best way to guarantee a 'one country, two systems' policy is that Hong Kong does not interfere with China's affairs. If Hong Kong does, then we could not promise that China would not interfere with our business" ("Autonomy dominates Hong Kong's future," 1997, p. HKG12). Chan considered this to be "a responsible exercise of Hong Kong's right to autonomy" ("Autonomy dominates Hong Kong's future," 1997, p. HKG12).

Furthermore, Chan highlighted that Hong Kong should protect its autonomy as well as respect the interest of its new ruler, as there would be benefits to both parties.

If there happened to be a conflict of interest between the two parties, Chan said he believed that autonomy would allow Hong Kong to self-govern, as written in the Agreement, otherwise any conflicts would be dealt with by China. In addition, as Hong Kong was at the center of global trade, the idea of autonomy would give confidence to international corporations that had invested or had business in Hong Kong. The Handover, therefore, would not harm international trade, rather would guarantee that trade with Hong Kong was protected. Chan concluded that the Handover would not affect Hong Kong's major industries, nor its economy.

Despite these reassurances, Chan acknowledged that Hong Kong was still concerned about China's human rights record. In an effort to appease Hong Kong on this issue, Chan said that the current priority of the Chinese government had to do with food security and homelessness. When China had managed to deal with these issues to improve the living standard of the overall Chinese population, China would then commence shifting its focus to improve its social institutions including its human rights situation.

In this story, Chan intended to justify China's democratic and human-right situations: "We should keep that in mind the tremendous differences between China and Hong Kong. We would like to share our values with China. However, the great distance between China and Hong Kong is undeniable, especially when China has a large population" ("Autonomy dominates Hong Kong's future," 1997, p. HKG12).

The core message that "China is to be trusted" predominated in Periods 1 and 3, although it was less prominent during Period 2. There were two issues in the source selection in Period 1, however, that cast doubt on the credibility of the frame. As news sources, the *Sing Tao Daily*

chose either from Chinese or British officials, as well as from the various Hong Kong opinion leaders. However, some of these opinion leaders may not have been qualified to comment on the topics they were covering. For instance, it was unclear if the district councilor selected for an interview had anything to do with real estate sector, or whether the security professional had the credentials to be able to properly analyze the Hong Kong economy. Despite the potential lack of credibility of the sources, it was interesting that the *Sing Tao Daily* selected these sources that gave a strong and positive message about Hong Kong's future to their Hong Kong Canadian readers, rather than sources that may have been more critical or skeptical. Another problem was that the officials interviewed did not explain how Hong Kong would cope with the Handover, even though they were 'credible' sources and may have been able to explain in detail the intentions behind the Agreement. Despite all the commentary, the coverage simply appeared to assume that it was the responsibility of the Hong Kong government to execute the idea of "one country, two systems" as they were bound to the Agreement and Basic Law, which granted a high degree of autonomy to Hong Kong.

However, in Period 3, the *Sing Tao Daily* was able to interview two senior, influential figures from the government and business sectors of Hong Kong who had inside knowledge of the workings of the Handover and were able to confidently discuss this. Using these sources, the *Sing Tao Daily* was able to report on how Hong Kong would respond to China in protecting its autonomy, as well as the economic benefits that the newly formed Agreement would give to both China and Hong Kong.

Interestingly, in Period 1, the *Sing Tao Daily* would repeatedly use words such as *protect*, *guarantee* and *remain*, in relation to Hong Kong's prosperity and stability, which gives the impression that China may only allow for the minimum protection of Hong Kong's rights under

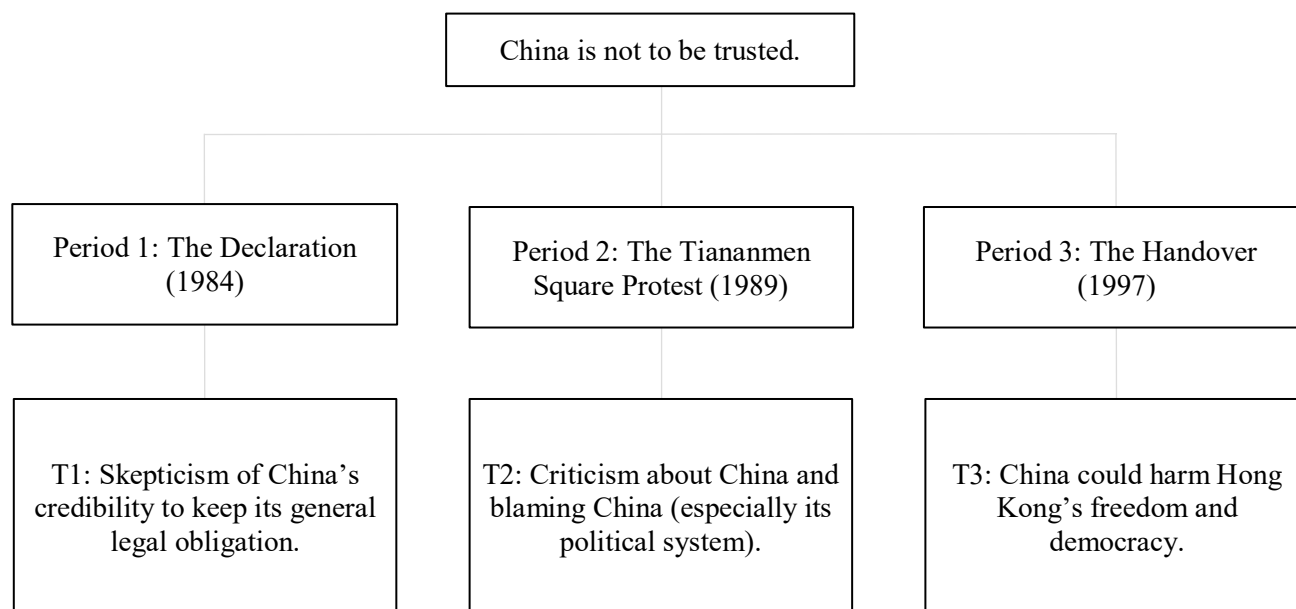
the Agreement. On the other hand, during Period 3, this had changed to words such as *improve*, *boost* and *help*, which suggest more confidence in the role of the Chinese government.

In conclusion, in Frame 1, the *Sing Tao Daily* contains the message that remaining unchanged and autonomy would both promote and guarantee the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, and that this would reinforce the grand narrative that Hong Kong's future was positive and that 'China is to be trusted.'

4.3 Frame 2: China is not to be trusted

As with Frame 1, I have used a chart (Chart 2) to show the changes in themes in each of the three periods thus to show the continuum of this frame. Essentially, this frame challenges the credibility of the Chinese government and puts forward the belief that China will not keep its promise to Hong Kong that it would be able to remain autonomous. This frame implied suspicion towards China trustworthiness and its capability to protect Hong Kong's core values, such as freedom and democracy, which were believed to be the backbone that would lead Hong Kong to prosperity and stability. The content of the Agreement was not discussed in this frame.

Figure 7. Frame 2: China is not to be trusted.



4.3.1 Period 1: The Declaration Period.

T1: Skepticism of China's credibility to keep its general legal obligation. A lengthy editorial entitled “How Hong Kongers should Face the Future Agreement” was featured in this period. In this article Ju Hu, the editor-in-chief of a Hong Kong magazine, was interviewed and raised concerns about whether the core principle of the Agreement, “one country, two systems,” would be implemented through the Basic Law. Furthermore, Hu had doubts about the Chinese authority's trustworthiness, as could be seen with this comment: “Human rights were written in black-and-white in the Chinese Constitution, but considering China's modern history, what they said was not consistent with what they had done. It would be difficult to have a strong faith in Hong Kong's future after the Handover” (1984, p. 6).

In another editorial titled “Two Different Attitudes of Mainlanders and Hong Kongers,” the author Zhang, questioned China's ability to govern Hong Kong as efficiently as the British: “Most Hong Kongers do not have much hope of life under the administration of the Communist party. As a matter of fact, Hong Kongers are hostile to any forms of Communist governments”

(September 20, 1984, p. 6). The article detailed that from 1842, under British colonization, Hong Kong had been at peace with the exception of the Japanese occupation during World War II. In comparison, China had been through four periods of major conflicts, the First Sino-Japanese War (1884-1885), the Siege of the International Legation (1900), the Second Japanese War (1937-1945), and the Chinese Civil War (1927-1950).

The article went on to say that despite the external conflicts coming to an end by 1945, and although the cloud of war disappeared over China, with the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the domestic situation continued to deteriorate. Due to significant and erroneous decisions that were made and executed by the government, such as the Great Leap Forward (1958-1962) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the living standards of the Chinese did not improve but resulted in Chinese escaping to Hong Kong as refugees. This negative impression of China dominated Hong Kong society for a long time. Part of the hostility against China was based on the fear that the same turmoil would affect Hong Kong and destroy Hong Kong's hard-earned prosperity and stability under a capitalist economic system. Historically from the 1970's on, Hong Kong's economic situation had boosted living standards and Hong Kongers did not want to lose the ability to continue to engage with the world as a capitalist society. In conclusion, Frame 2 expressed the apprehension some Hong Kongers felt about China, but the *Sing Tao Daily* did not report on this in any great depth, and it was not featured as a prominent topic.

4.3.2 Period 2: The Tiananmen Square Protest.

T2: Criticism about China and blaming China (especially its political system). China was negatively framed through the *Sing Tao Daily*'s reportage of the Tiananmen Square Protest. During this period, there were two types of coverage of the event. One type was a number of

factual reports that focused on Tiananmen Square and the reactions of both Hong Kongers and the Canadian population. One event reported on, for example, was a demonstration that was initiated by Chinese international students from six Toronto universities. The other type of coverage was the many editorials that expressed the opinions of both Hong Kongers and Canadian citizens. The *Sing Tao Daily* became a forum via its newspaper for readers to express their opinions of the event.

In these news stories/editorials, some expressed disparagement towards the Chinese government, ranging from its inhumane violence towards students to its political system and skepticism of its credibility; others related this tragedy directly to Hong Kong, saying that China would dim or even destroy its future. Thus the core message of this frame ‘China is not to be trusted’ was addressed. In examining how this frame was constructed in this period, particularly how the *Sing Tao Daily* negatively portrayed and framed China, I noted the use of words and phrases to describe the Chinese government and its actions. First of all, the *Sing Tao Daily* used several terms in its news/editorials to replace “the Chinese government,” such as:

- Dictators,
- The leaders of the Chinese Communist Party,
- The Chinese Communist Party,
- The power
- The army,
- The dictatorship,
- Beijing, and
- Authoritarian dictatorship.

These words emphasized the power structure of the Chinese government, namely that it operates as a dictatorship and autocracy, and that power lies with the ruling party and its leaders. The *Sing Tao Daily* attributed Tiananmen Square tragedy to the people/party in power. Other strongly disapproving nouns were also used to refer to China, including “a democracy butcher,” “the shameless,” “a tyrant,” and “the scum and shame of the Chinese nation.” Describing the government as “a tyrant” or “a democracy butcher” emphasizes that such a political system was against democracy. In addition, both “the shameless” and “the scum and shame of the Chinese nation” expressed outright condemnation in the *Sing Tao Daily*.

The same condemnation was expressed when I looked into how the *Sing Tao Daily* described what the Chinese government had done. They [the Chinese government]:

- Massacred armless students,
- Went against human rights,
- Violently suppressed the democratic movement,
- Cruelly killed people with the military, and
- Suppressed students.

These predicates directly contain the message that the Chinese authority abused its power and harmed its civilians.

The Chinese government was depicted as a regime that was the exact opposite of freedom, democracy, and its people. The *Sing Tao Daily* continued to add vivid details to this framing, by adding modifiers (Chinese words and phrases) to “the Chinese government” (see Table 4).

Table 4. Analysis of modifiers used to describe the Chinese government

Modifiers	Usage
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Modifiers	Usage
Group 1 “Feudal” “Authoritarian”	To criticize the Chinese political system.
Group 2 “Evil” “Bloody” “Corrupt” “Despicable” “Frenzied”	To convey condemnation of the Chinese government and its behavior during the in the protest.
Group 3 “Who overlooked people’s voices and democratic demands” “Setting themselves against the people” “Without humanity, morality, and rationality” “Being a disaster to the country and the people”	To express disdain towards China.

Through an analysis of the language used, it can be seen that the *Sing Tao Daily* negatively framed the Chinese government by criticizing its behavior and attributing such a tragedy to its political system, dictatorship, and autocracy.

A few other articles were written from the angle of exploring the impact on Hong Kong society. However, instead of directly criticizing the Chinese government as the above-mentioned editorials, the *Sing Tao Daily* explored what other options were open to Hong Kong: Should Hong Kongers still believe the promise that was guaranteed by the British and Chinese governments, or should they find a way to leave Hong Kong? The first story was titled “The Globe Denounced the Beijing Massacre — Madam Thatcher Expressed her Consternation and Promised to Keep her Word to Hong Kong.” The intention behind the article was to reassure Hong Kong society. The *Sing Tao Daily* paraphrased Thatcher’s comments about Britain’s

promise to Hong Kong, which was to help Hong Kong secure a guaranteed future that would be prosperous and stable after 1997. The second chose a particular angle to demonstrate what actions the British government could take to reassure Hong Kong. In addition, in the series of stories focused on David Wilson, the Hong Kong Governor sought to convince the British government to permit the 3.25 million British-Hong Kong Overseas Territories citizens to gain British citizenship. The background of this proposal was that this group of Hong Kongers did not have any actual rights as regular British citizens, despite being allowed to hold British National (Overseas) Passports. They could not have legal residency or the right to work in Britain, nor were they entitled to be citizens of the European Union, and they were subject to British immigration control. Because of this, Wilson strongly suggested Britain provide them with a safe and alternative place to reside in case the situation in Hong Kong deteriorated after the Handover, and he emphasized that doing so was a moral responsibility for Britain as Hong Kong's ruler. The last one was "China's Turmoil Terrifies Hong Kongers, and the Number of Emigration is Expected to Explode." This article reported on the increasing quantity of Hong Kongers who were interested in immigrating to Canada, Australia, Singapore, and Mauritius. These three stories tended to provide two options to Hong Kongers: either they could stay under the protection of Britain, or they could seek immigration to other countries. The fact that the *Sing Tao Daily* did not mention any solutions that included China implied the distrust of Hong Kong and Britain towards China, i.e., China is not to be trusted.

4.3.3 Period 3: The Handover Period.

T3: China could harm Hong Kong's freedom and democracy. In 1997, eight years after the Tiananmen Square Protest, when Hong Kong was taken over by China, the same concern

about Hong Kong's future continued to exist — Hong Kong might lose its freedom and democracy after the Handover.

The first example is a story published on June 22, 1997, and entitled “The Group of Eight (G8) Paid Close Attention to Beijing's Promise to Hong Kong.” In its lead paragraph, an anonymous official representing the G8 said that they hoped that after the Handover Hong Kong would have as much democracy and freedom as Beijing promised. They also hoped that China would allow Hong Kong to call an election for the legislative council as quickly as possible.

The background of the legislative council was highly controversial. On March 24, 1996, a provisional legislative council was formed by the Preparatory Committee for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, which was a body appointed and established by the Chinese government. It was designed to function as a temporary legislature until the election of the first legislative council. However, as regulated by the Basic Law, Hong Kong's legislature should come from a combination of direct and indirect elections; the establishment of this council was considered illegal by the British Hong Kong government. In spite of this controversy, it continued to operate in Shenzhen, a city in China bordering Hong Kong. As a result, this temporary Council constituted a threat to Hong Kong's democracy and was considered by many as a scheme to control Hong Kong, causing great anxiety. This is the reason why the G8 appealed to China to call the election as soon as possible. This report expressed distrust in China from the international community, suggesting that China could undermine Hong Kong's democracy.

Other stories emphasized the same concern and tended to repeat these types of remarks. Sources in these stories included a Hong Kong celebrity, several students from a Scarborough

primary school in Ontario, and a few participants at gathering mourning the Tiananmen Protest in Toronto.

In the first story, a Hong Kong celebrity in Toronto, Peizhen Huang, compared the British government with the Chinese government and said that the British government would be better for Hong Kong. She explained that although the British-Hong Kong government primarily functioned as a protector of the investment and interest of Britain in Hong Kong, it did protect the freedom, security, and property of Hong Kong citizens. From her point of view, a country like China whose leaders override laws and regulations could not promise Hong Kong's democracy and freedom, so she believed that the Handover would be of no benefit to Hong Kong. She observed the Chinese government using a discourse that attempted to justify the Handover, primarily that by "ending colonization of Hong Kong... alleviated the weight of the national humiliation that had been felt by China" ("Peizhen Huang," 1997, p. CAN8). She considered this discourse of reunification as a nationalist approach, for the purpose of distracting people from paying attention to the harmful aspects of the Handover.

The second story focused on a poll of students from a Chinese primary school in Scarborough over the issue of Hong Kong's Handover. Its headline was "Seventy Percent of Students in Scarborough Public Primary School States: [They were] Anxious about Hong Kong's Future." The following three comments were typical of the students' responses:

- "Hong Kongers should be worried. The Chinese government will seize the property out of no reasons, especially when China is poor and Hong Kong is rich" (1997, p. CAN10).
- "My father said, Hong Kong citizens should be worried" (1997, p. CAN10).

- “I am really anxious about my dad working in Hong Kong. He still will be there after the Handover on July 1st, I fear that the same massacre will happen in Hong Kong” (1997, p. CAN10).

Most of these students had family members or friends in Hong Kong, so their safety was the primary concern, as well as their freedom or freedom of speech. However, to give some context, the first quotation could be analyzed as an exaggeration and an outdated ‘myth’ about China to do with the seizure of properties from rich people, landowners or entrepreneurs. In the 1950s when China was newly founded, this was a common practice, because the Chinese government was attempting to diminish the power of the rich and promote socialist reform. However, in 1978, the Chinese government decided to undergo an economic reformation and to introduce the market economy into China. Afterward, the private economy was not suppressed as before, and even some public companies started to privatize. In addition, people started to operate their private businesses, and their property was well-protected. China’s economy began to boost and by 1997, its GDP ranked seventh in the world (Ranking of the World’s Richest Countries, n.d.). Looking at the first quote again, it seems to be harkening back to China in the 1950s, rather than necessarily reflecting the reality of the day. In addition, considering that these were primary-school students, it is perhaps likely students at this age would not have developed sophisticated, independent opinions of this complicated situation. They might have tended to simplify the opinions they heard from their families or the media. Therefore, this story supported this frame.

The third story was a report of a commemoration of the Tiananmen Square Protest in Toronto. The same concern was expressed about Hong Kong’s democracy under the ruling of an authoritative and anti-democratic country. The participants of the commemoration wished

that Hong Kong still could remain free and democratic, and that its advanced political system could serve as a model for China.

Overall in this period, articles in the *Sing Tao Daily* expressed concern about Hong Kong's freedom and democracy after the Handover, which could be understood as a negative framing of China's credibility to keep its promise and capability to administrate Hong Kong.

In conclusion, this frame developed along the three periods. In Period 1, skepticism from the *Sing Tao Daily* focused on China's ability to keep its promise; in Period 2, this sense of skepticism developed into the challenge towards China's political system; in Period 3, it further supposed that China could cripple Hong Kong's freedom and democracy.

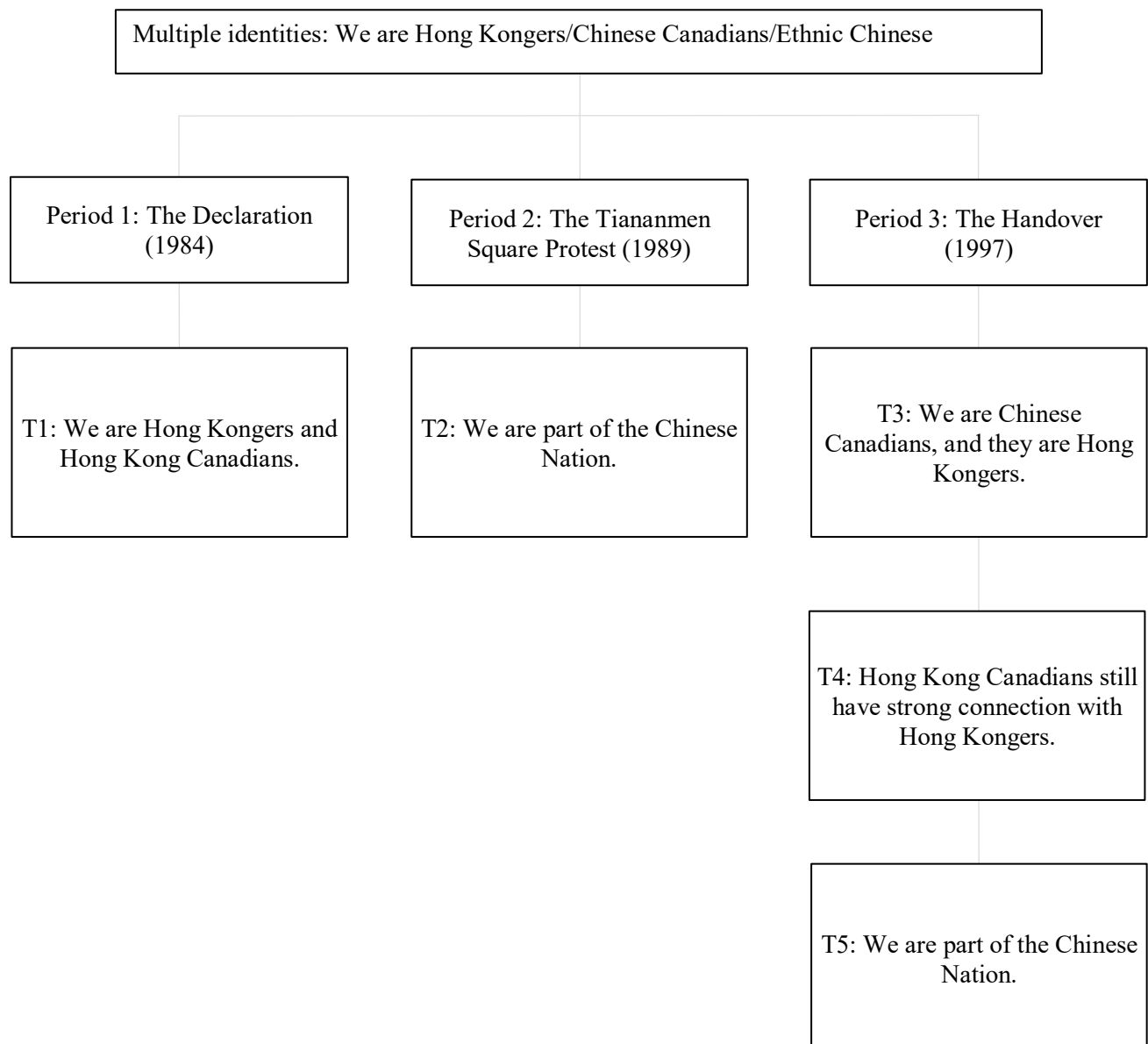
4.4 Frame 3: Multiple identities: We are Hong Kongers/Chinese Canadians/Ethnic Chinese

This frame explores the multiple identities of Hong Kong Canadians constructed by the *Sing Tao Daily* through the three periods. Differing from the two frames above, the articles that support this frame were mostly editorials and feature stories centering on Hong Kongers or ethnic Chinese. The articles in the *Sing Tao Daily* explicitly express a multi-faceted and evolving understanding of Hong Kong Canadians' identity. Some stories emphasized Hong Kong/Chinese identity, and others focused on Canadian identity. As will be shown, Hong Kong identity gradually assimilated into Chinese identity as a subcultural identity; and a Canadian identity as a national identity was highlighted.

Different identities of Hong Kong Canadians were emphasized in different periods. In Period 1, their Hong Kong identity was emphasized, as the *Sing Tao Daily* did not clearly distinguish between being Hong Kongers and Hong Kong Canadians. In Period 2, the *Sing Tao Daily* shifted its emphasis to the concept of "the Chinese nation" (中华民族), which can be understood as a strong nationalist concept. It generalizes about all Chinese globally as a huge

family, in spite of their nationalities. This concept, thus, highlighted the part of their identity that is culturally Chinese. In the case of the Tiananmen Square Protest, both Hong Kong Canadians and Chinese were identified as part of the Chinese nation, and Hong Kong Canadians as tightly related to Mainland Chinese in this crisis. In the last period, the *Sing Tao Daily* focused on the concept of Chinese Canadians, by differentiating Hong Kong Canadians from Chinese/Hong Kongers, despite also admitting a close relationship between the two groups.

Figure 8. Frame 3: Multiple identities: We are Hong Kongers/Chinese Canadians/Ethnic Chinese.



4.4.1 Period 1: The Declaration Period.

T1: We are Hong Kongers and Hong Kong Canadians. In this period, the *Sing Tao Daily* did not clearly distinguish between Hong Kong Canadians and Hong Kongers. For example, in a lengthy feature story called “How Hong Kongers should Face the Future Declaration,” the *Sing Tao Daily* interviewed several experts from different fields in Hong Kong about their opinions on the Declaration. An introductory paragraph, written by the editor, lead with this line: “Hong Kong’s future is displayed in front of Hong Kongers. What should WE do with this historically significant document ...” (1984, p. 6). In this quote, he was referring to “we” as Hong Kongers. Considering that the readership of the paper is in fact Hong Kong Canadians, this reference included them as Hong Kongers as well.

Another example was an editorial titled “The Issue of the Future in the Spotlight,” which used a combination of first- and third-person perspectives. This article outlined the reactions of Hong Kongers towards the negotiations: At first Hong Kongers were anxious, but with time this changed to a greater acceptance. Before any significant decisions were announced, anxiety was dominant in Hong Kong society, and they were not sure how to cope with this situation. In 1984, the British government announced that it would give up Hong Kong’s sovereignty. When the two governments signed the Agreement and it became clear the Handover would officially occur in 1997, Hong Kong began to accept the inevitability of its destiny under Chinese rule and started to positively integrate themselves with China by initiating constructive conversations with the Chinese authority. What is notable about this article is that the commentary first used

terms such as *Hong Kongers* or *Kongers* to explain the situation, and in the last three paragraphs, it used *we* three times in succession to refer to Hong Kongers, implying a connection between Hong Kongers and Hong Kong Canadians.

It is significant that the proposition *we*, instead of *they*, was used to refer to Hong Kongers in these two examples. Given that Hong Kong Canadians were the actual readers of the *Sing Tao Daily* it can be interpreted that these two groups were still tightly connected, and the boundary between these two groups was not clearly established. Hong Kong Canadians still were constructed as Hong Kongers.

Another article that elaborated on the impact of the Declaration on Hong Kong required readers to have a solid understanding of Hong Kong's situation. In "How Hong Kongers should Face the Future Agreement" a Hong Kong district councilor Lianfang Zhu pointed out that the Declaration would clarify the long-term land policy and that this clarification would encourage investments from property developers. Especially, she said, "The clarification of the long-term land policy will encourage the investment inclination of the property developers, the entire economy, including industry and commerce, will, therefore, be stimulated" (1984, p. 6). Within this quote, there is assumed collective knowledge about Hong Kong. "The clarification of the long-term land policy" means that Hong Kongers had not been certain about the future land policy and this uncertainty came from the conflict over this policy between China and Hong Kong. Before the Declaration, there were rumors that the Chinese authority would confiscate properties in Hong Kong and instead promote a public land policy. Additionally, Zhu noted that in Hong Kong's stock market, 70% of companies were related to real estate and any performance from this sector would positively boost the overall economy of Hong Kong. Therefore, it was extremely important for the Declaration to ensure that Hong Kong would remain unchanged,

especially that private land policy would be able to continue. Fortunately, the Annex III of the agreement, entitled *Land Leases*, said that the private land policy of Hong Kong would not change.

The analysis above shows that the reader is assumed to have a collective understanding of a great deal of Hong Kong society; there was a lot of background knowledge needed to understand a simple three-line quotation. As the *Sing Tao Daily* did not elaborate on the background, there is an assumption that its readership could understand. These articles presumed a link between Hong Kongers and Hong Kong Canadians –they are the same and share collective knowledge.

4.4.2 Period 2: The Tiananmen Protest.

T2: We are part of the Chinese nation. A series of mixed emotions was intensely expressed in this theme including anger, grief, disappointment, regret, and sympathy. At that time, due to information blockades, hardly any information about China was available, but it was clear that the *Sing Tao Daily* assumed that its audience was paying intensive attention to the event. This gap between information and attention resulted in the *Sing Tao Daily* publishing commentaries and editorials where emotions dominated.

Before proceeding to the in-depth analysis of the emotions contained in the texts, two frequently-used concepts should be first explained. One is *the Chinese nation*. As a nationalistic term, it emphasizes that Mainland Chinese, Chinese Canadians and other ethnic Chinese in the world all belong to the Chinese nation. The usage of this term is usually associated with the hope that the Chinese nation or China will become as prosperous and powerful as it was during the times of ancient China. “Zhonghua minzu (the Chinese nation) as a modern concept was adopted from the writings of Meiji Japan and was associated with nationalistic writings warning the

Chinese people of the danger of annihilation under Western invasion at the turn of the twentieth century” (Zhao, 2004, p. 46). “Cultural siblings” (同胞) is another similar term used to promote this nationalistic idea. It refers to all people originating from China, suggesting the innate and strong family bonds between each other.

The outrage towards the Chinese government and its behavior was the most noticeable emotion in the commentaries in the *Sing Tao Daily*, and this emotion was obvious from the terms that the *Sing Tao Daily* used to describe the people and the event. For example, the *Sing Tao Daily* portrayed the demonstrators as “peacefully protesting and unarmed masses,” “civilians,” “student civilians,” “unarmed students,” and “peacefully petitioning people.” The unarmed peaceful features of the protestors were emphasized and contrasted with the violence used by the Chinese government to suppress the protest. Furthermore, in the *Sing Tao Daily* the students and other civilians were portrayed as having the right to demand democracy and freedom, and recognized as heroes, by using terms such as “Chinese people who sacrificed for democratic reform and bravely fought for democratic ideals,” “martyrs of a democratic movement,” and “Chinese people dying fighting for human rights.” At the same time, it recognized the protest as “a patriotic and democratic movement,” “a student movement,” and “the pride of Chinese.”

The contrast between the government’s outrage and the people’s peaceful protest, explains the anger expressed in the *Sing Tao Daily*, especially when considered within the context of the Chinese nation and cultural siblings. The outrage expressed in the *Sing Tao Daily* can be understood as making a strong link between Hong Kong Canadians and their cultural siblings from the Chinese Nation who were severely hurt. It also destroyed their hope that China could democratize, as the initiator of this tragedy was the Chinese government. The link

established between the *Sing Tao Daily* readers and the Chinese people is demonstrated in the quotes below:

1. “As oversea compatriots, we should try to help them, because it is a matter of the national destiny...” (“We must Support,” 1989, p. 4).
2. “Even though we are Canadians, our bodies still share the Chinese blood” (“Chinese and Western Speechers,” 1989, p. 2).
3. “Who doesn't like their own countries? As overseas Chinese, we more hope that China can be prosperous, rich and powerful” (“Toronto Chinese Business Association,” 1989, p. 4).

The usage of the following words such as “compatriots,” “share the Chinese blood,” and “overseas Chinese” shows the *Sing Tao Daily* constructing an image that Hong Kong Canadians were strongly bonded with Mainland Chinese. There was a deliberate message behind the use of these words; the *Sing Tao Daily* wanted to show that no matter where in the world the Chinese diaspora resided, the bond to mainland China would always remain strong, and this sentiment included Hong Kong Canadians as well.

Looking at the first quote, the theme of being part of the Chinese Nation is demonstrated. The need to support the students, who were protesting for democracy, was expressed because their protest echoed the same principles of democracy that Hong Kong Canadians also adhere to. Hong Kong Canadians believed that by helping the students, this would amount to putting the Chinese national destiny on the right course. This can be understood as both Hong Kong Canadians and mainland Chinese belonging to China and sharing the same destiny. The second quote directly links Hong Kong Canadians to China through ‘blood.’ In the third quote, again there is a direct link made between the readers and China, directly referring to Hong Kong

Canadians readers as “overseas Chinese.” The quote also says that Hong Kong Canadians have a strong desire for China to be “prosperous, rich and powerful,” and implies that China is their own country.

Other emotions expressed in the *Sing Tao Daily* during this period included sorrow and disappointment. For example, on two successive days in 1989, June 7th and 8th, the Toronto Chinese Business Association and Scarborough York Region Chinese Business Association published on the front page a huge Chinese character “sorrow” in black and white. The organizations demanded that the Chinese government immediately cease its “slaughter of students and citizens,” and announced that they would cease any activities with the Chinese authority. By publishing this, the *Sing Tao Daily* showed its solidarity with the protestors who were killed, and a general allegiance to the Chinese people; thereby creating a direct link between its readers and China.

In conclusion, during this period, articles in the *Sing Tao Daily* constructed Hong Kong Canadians as tightly connected with other overseas Chinese and Mainland Chinese, under the auspices of the Chinese nation.

4.4.3 Period 3: The Handover period. In this period, two contradictory messages were conveyed: on the one hand, the *Sing Tao Daily* distinguished between Hong Kong Canadians and Hong Kongers; on the other hand, in the reporting of the Handover, it still portrayed a strong connection between the two groups. In addition, the theme “We are part of the Chinese Nation,” prevalent in Period 2, continued in this period.

T3: *We are Chinese Canadians, and they are Hong Kongers.* Two techniques were used in the *Sing Tao Daily* to differentiate between these two groups. It either pointed out the geographical distance between them or labeled them differently. For example, when the *Sing*

Tao Daily reported on celebrations about the Handover in Canada, it reported that Chinese Torontonians at the scene sang a song together for the purpose of “sending their sincere wishes to the remote Hong Kong” (“Chinese Torontonians celebrated,” 1997, p. CAN1). In this story, the remoteness of Hong Kong was pointed out, serving to “other” them and distinguish between the two groups. In another story, the *Sing Tao Daily* quoted Marilyn Mushinski, the previous minister of the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture, and Recreation, during another celebration event in Canada: “This gathering reminds us again of the happiness of being a Canadian. We live in a free, democratic, and peaceful society” (“This National Day,” 1997, p. CAN1). Two points can be interpreted from this quotation. First, Canadian identity is constructed in a positive way. Secondly, considering that this speech was given during the celebration of Hong Kong’s Handover, it can be said that a comparison was being made to Hong Kong’s freedom, democracy, and peace, implying that they would possibly be at risk soon. Thus, in this example, the *Sing Tao Daily* distinguished between the two groups, emphasizing their differences and the advantage of being a Canadian. The idea of a Canadian identity was being constructed, and this national identity was closely associated with ideas such as democracy and freedom.

T4: Hong Kong Canadians still have a strong connection with Hong Kongers. On the other hand, in reporting the celebration of the Handover, the *Sing Tao Daily* also constructed a link between Hong Kong and Toronto/Canada, and between Hong Kong Canadians and Hong Kong. For example, in the reporting on June 28th 1997, half a page covered how different groups inside the Chinese-Canadian community were celebrating the Handover: a large parade in downtown Toronto, a lunch celebration party held by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto), a Hong Kong history photo exhibition by the Canadian-Hong Kong Museum of Literature, and a celebration dinner of different Hong Kong related associations in Ottawa. On

the government side, the *Sing Tao Daily* reported that the Chinese embassy held another photo exhibition.

A second example is how the *Sing Tao Daily* paraphrased part of Barbara Hall's speech in a story. Hall was Toronto's mayor and she pointed out the importance of Hong Kong and the tight link between Hong Kong and Toronto: The two cities have a close trade relationship, and Hong Kong Torontonians have friends and relatives in Hong Kong.

Both these examples establish a link between Hong Kongers and Hong Kong Canadians. The coverage in the first example suggested the importance of the Handover to Hong Kong Canadians, and the second example emphasized the existing connection between the two places. In addition, the usage of "Hong Kong Torontonians" specified their exact subcultural group inside the Chinese Canadian community. These examples, thus, focused on the construction of the ethnic identity of Hong Kong Canadians; in particular their Hong Kong identity.

T5: We are part of the Chinese Nation. In this last theme, the *Sing Tao Daily* promoted the idea of the Chinese Nation and simultaneously wanted to emphasize the Chinese identity of Hong Kong Canadians. An example of this assimilationist idea can be seen in a photograph titled "The National Humiliation was alleviated" ("Chinese Torontonians celebrated," 1997, p. CAN1) This photo, published on the front page and on the day of the Handover, was positioned at the top of the page. To have a photo in this location implies that the *Sing Tao Daily* editors had determined this picture was significant and deserving of attention. It featured the Chinese Ambassador, Wenxi Chen, standing in front of the Chinese flag and giving a toast. This picture emphasized that while Hong Kong had been colonized by the British, it had now been liberated and was reunited with China. Hong Kong's reunification with China ended the humiliation of having been colonized.

Conveying the same idea of ridding Hong Kong of its shameful past, an adapted editorial from the Chinese *People's Daily*, a national newspaper of the Communist party, was published. It emphasized the idea of the national humiliation, increasing pride in nationhood, and that the Chinese nation embraced all people of Chinese origin, including Hong Kong Canadians. All were to belong to this homogenous nationhood and Hong Kongers were expected to fall into line.

To conclude, Frame 3 speaks of multiple identities. First, the construction of their identity evolved along the time. A Canadian national identity started to rise and become an important part of the picture in Period 3. It can be said that a Canadian national identity was eventually emphasized. On the other hand, throughout the three periods, ethnic identity was constructed as something slightly less significant. Second, although throughout this period Chinese identity tended to be constructed as their primary ethnic identity, variations co-existed: Chinese Canadians, the Chinese Nation, and Hong Kong Canadians. Each of these terms put different emphasis on their ethnic identity, and this will be further discussed in the Conclusion.

The upcoming chapter will continue to explore how the three frames constructed the ethnic and national identity of Hong Kong Canadians, and thus how the *Sing Tao Daily* played assimilative and pluralist roles in terms of identity construction.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

As Ball-Rokeach, Matsaganis & Katz (2011) write, ethnic media are very important to diaspora communities, acting as educators, important conduits for information, and ultimately shaping identity:

Ethnic media are at the heart of the everyday practices that produce and transform ethnic identity, culture, and perceptions of race... People depend on the media for vital information that will help them understand what is going on around them and to make informed decisions about their lives... [E]thnic media can be “teachers.” Ethnic media can educate and orient newcomers to their new community and its resources, and can also teach more subtle rules about correct behaviors and what the new social values. (p. 15)

The point raised by the quotation above demonstrates the importance of ethnic media for the newly arrived minority in both shaping and transforming identity. In this research, the use of ethnic media in the construction of Hong Kong Canadians’ identity was explored. In particular, this research focused on how the selection and emphasis of stories, sources, and quotes, serve to construct a diaspora identity.

While Chapter 4 concentrated on exploring the major themes produced the three predominant frames, this chapter will focus on discussing what kind of perspective or ideas they promoted and how this speaks to their identity.

5.1 Framing the Handover: To Promote the Ideas of *Continuity and Autonomy*, and *Stability and Prosperity*

Frames 1 and 2 are centered on China’s trustworthiness after the Handover. Thus, by analyzing the framing procedure, we will see whether or not Hong Kong Canadians’ identity

continued to have close ties with Hong Kong or with China. In this specific section, I will review the themes around two principles: (a) continuity and autonomy, and (b) stability and prosperity, thus investigating how Frames 1 and 2 promoted these ideas. Both Frames 1 and 2 emphasized the significance of preserving Hong Kong's uniqueness and modern values, and the need for Hong Kong to continue with the same legal, economic, and political system after the Handover.

In Frame 1, there are four themes related to the principles of continuity and autonomy, and stability and prosperity. It is to be noted that although the two ideas are closely related, that they do not necessarily need to appear together in the same theme at the same time:

- F1. T1: China is trustworthy and reliable (from official sources of China and Britain).
- F1. T2: The Agreement and the Basic Law would protect Hong Kong, allowing it to remain autonomous and prosperous.
- F1. T4: From an economic standpoint, Hong Kong can benefit from China's economic development.
- F1. T5: Politically for Hong Kong, autonomy is the key.

In **Theme 1** 'China is trustworthy and reliable (from official sources of China and Britain),' the *Sing Tao Daily* used a range of significant official sources from China and Britain in order to affirm Chinese credibility. The *Sing Tao Daily* emphasized that China had a reputation of abiding by its international promises. As it was not made clear what these promises were, it can be assumed that this was referring to the idea that China would abide by the Agreement. The *Sing Tao Daily* encapsulated the Future Agreement with the principles of continuity and autonomy, specifically focusing on Hong Kong's social institutions, assuring that they would remain fundamentally unchanged after the Handover. By promoting these ideas, the *Sing Tao Daily* promoted Hong Kong as having unique political and economic institutions.

According to the *Sing Tao Daily*, these institutions must remain, as they are the cornerstones of future development in Hong Kong and autonomy would give Hong Kong the necessary independence to decide its own affairs. The *Sing Tao Daily* also reported that Britain would represent Hong Kong in negotiating its sovereignty, and having China and Britain sign the documents gave the sense to its readers that Britain trusted China in its ability to govern Hong Kong. A major focus, therefore, of the *Sing Tao Daily* was that Britain was portrayed as a benevolent protector who was acting in the best interest of Hong Kong, assuring that Hong Kong would retain its autonomy. In the next theme, the importance of continuity and autonomy will be further elaborated.

In **Theme 2** ‘The Agreement and the Basic Law would protect Hong Kong, allowing it to remain autonomous and prosperous,’ the *Sing Tao Daily* describes the Future Agreement in the context of the principles of continuity and autonomy, and stability and prosperity. In particular, it focused on Hong Kong’s social institutions, recommending that they would fundamentally remain unchanged after the Handover. According to the *Sing Tao Daily*, these institutions must remain the cornerstones of future development of Hong Kong, and autonomy would give Hong Kong the necessary independence to decide its own affairs. Some of the stories concentrated on explaining the significance of reinforcing continuity and autonomy, because it was believed that this would improve Hong Kong’s main industries and lead to stability and prosperity. By taking this stance, the *Sing Tao Daily* promoted preserving Hong Kong’s political and economic institutions.

Overall, during Period 1, these two themes were used by the *Sing Tao Daily* to reassure its readers that Hong Kong’s future would have both continuity and a high degree of autonomy.

In Period 3, the *Sing Tao Daily* explained in greater detail how the two principles would boost Hong Kong's prosperity.

Throughout **Theme 4** 'From an economic standpoint, Hong Kong can benefit from China's economic development,' the *Sing Tao Daily* focused on one source to promote this theme. Shuhao Zhu, who was a well-known and influential Hong Kong entrepreneur, supported China as a positive economic force for Hong Kong, and he foresaw many opportunities to come. For example, he saw Hong Kong as well positioned because of its uniqueness in its advancement of international trade and finance, which would help China. Although this theme did not particularly emphasize the significance of continuity and autonomy, by featuring the win-win Hong Kong-Chinese relationship, it demonstrated that Hong Kong's stability and prosperity would be well served for each party.

In **Theme 5** 'Politically for Hong Kong, autonomy is the key,' the focus here was to promote how autonomy would protect Hong Kong, both politically and economically. Chan, the soon-to-be first Chief Secretary of Administration of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, gave a thorough description of the ideal iteration of autonomy. Essentially, autonomy was defined as a clear boundary between China and Hong Kong. Hong Kong and China should not interfere with each other, and this should give Hong Kong sufficient space to deal with its own affairs. Its core values would be preserved and not eroded by the Chinese government. Its political structure would be able to fully respect public opinion and protect the public's rights, as required in modern politics. Chan believed that autonomy would bring confidence to international corporations, and this would be beneficial to Hong Kong's trade industry, leading to its stability and prosperity.

To conclude, the idea of continuity and autonomy work to preserve the difference between Hong Kong and China, especially to protect Hong Kong's uniqueness. In this context, what China was expected to do was to not govern Hong Kong, but to provide Hong Kong with as much independence as the Agreement regulated. Therefore, in Frame 1: China is to be trusted, we could see that China's credibility or its ability to keep promises functioned as an overarching premise. It was hoped that China would offer Hong Kong sufficient autonomy and not interfere with its affairs. The core of this frame, in fact, dealt with how Hong Kong could take full advantage from continuity and autonomy. The themes that make up this frame discussed what actions Hong Kong should or should not take to protect these principles, and what advantages the Handover could bring to Hong Kong. In particular, this frame focused on Hong Kong's uniqueness and that its modern values would be crucial to its future development, especially its stability and prosperity.

Frame 2 'China is not to be trusted' focused on the reasons why China should not be trusted as a future ruler of Hong Kong. As pointed out in the previous chapter, some of the reasons given were not particularly concrete and based more on stereotypes than actual facts. When looking at the 'analysis' given by the newspaper, it should be seen through the lens of impressions about the relationship between Hong Kong and China, as opposed to a professional dispassionate analysis. However, the criticism towards China in this frame should not be ignored, as it demonstrated the important qualities that Hong Kong would want from a ruling authority. Without these qualities, it was believed that Hong Kong's stability and prosperity might be harmed. Thus, this frame can partially be understood as the reasons why Hong Kong should remain unchanged and autonomous.

In **Theme 1** ‘Skepticism of China’s credibility to keep its general legal obligation,’ the *Sing Tao Daily* challenged whether China would actually obey the Agreement or the Basic Law. The *Sing Tao Daily* expressed doubt over whether the Agreement was simply a guise for China to retrieve Hong Kong’s sovereignty from Britain. This suspicion was based on two contrasting legal principles of Hong Kong and China, the rule-of-law and the rule-of-man. Hong Kong society believes that it should be governed by the law, despite that the governance of China is based on one individual or a group of officials, and their decisions often override the law. In this case, because this theme challenged China’s credibility to abide by the Agreement, it was directly related to whether the two core principles — continuity and autonomy, and stability, and prosperity — would be enacted.

In **Theme 2** ‘Criticism about China and blaming China (especially its political system),’ the tragedy of the Tiananmen Square Protest, was attributed to the failure of China’s political system. This criticism mostly was from editorials, on the behalf of the Chinese Nation and the Chinese Canadian community. Their disgust with China could be seen in the discourse used in the *Sing Tao Daily*. Firstly, when referring to the Chinese authority, it selected words that specified its power, replacing “the Chinese government” with terms such as “the army,” “Xiaoping Deng,” “the Communist Party,” and even “dictatorship.” The interchangeability of these terms served to demonstrate the type of governing power China was and indicated that China was to blame as the initiator of this tragedy. Verbs and modifiers were another two major elements that the *Sing Tao Daily* associated with the above-mentioned subjects and directly expressed a moral evaluation of the Chinese government. Action-related expressions that were used, for example, were: “massacre armless students,” “went against human rights,” and modifiers were “...who overlooked people’s voices and democratic demands” and “...setting

themselves against the people...” Overall, looking at the discourse in the *Sing Tao Daily*’s, it can be understood that the Chinese dictatorship was portrayed as the root of this tragedy. It can extrapolate furthermore, that the message in the *Sing Tao Daily* was that if Hong Kong was to be led by this government it might severely negatively impact its prosperity and stability.

In **Theme 3** ‘China could harm Hong Kong’s freedom and democracy,’ the *Sing Tao Daily* expressed a general concern in the Hong Kong Canadian community about Hong Kong’s future, in terms of freedom and democracy. This concern was conveyed through interviews and coverage of the comments from different people, including celebrities and regular Hong Kong-Torontonian citizens. These comments did not provide an explicit explanation of their worry, but it can be interpreted as a strong distrust.

To conclude, in the *Sing Tao Daily*’s construction of Frame 2, China was portrayed as a country that does not value modern political concepts that Hong Kong had a great faith in. China was an untrustworthy future ruling authority and Hong Kong’s stability and prosperity might not be guaranteed under its ruling. The underlying message in this frame can be understood as Hong Kong’s autonomy should be well-preserved for the sake of Hong Kong’s future, and its uniqueness in its social institutions or other aspects should be well-protected.

In spite of the opposite positions about China’s trustworthiness, both Frames 1 and 2 emphasized the significance of preserving Hong Kong’s uniqueness and modern values. In the upcoming sections, after talking about the central idea that Frame 3 promoted, I will discuss, through the three frames, how the *Sing Tao Daily* constructed Hong Kong Canadians’ identity.

5.2 Framing Hong Kong Canadians: to Promote the idea Flexible and Multifaceted Identities

The *Sing Tao Daily* constructed various identities of Hong Kong Canadians throughout the three periods, which can be seen as Frame 3: Multiple identities: We are Hong Kongers/Chinese Canadians/Ethnic Chinese. On the one hand, the *Sing Tao Daily* established the link between Hong Kongers and the Chinese Nation; on the other hand, as analyzed in the previous chapter, their Canadian identity was gradually constructed from Period 1 to 3, and further emphasized in Period 3.

Looking first at **Theme 1** ‘We are Hong Kongers and Hong Kong Canadians,’ during Period 1, the *Sing Tao Daily* did not create a clear boundary between what it was to be a Hong Kong Canadian and a Hong Konger. In two articles, when the *Sing Tao Daily* used ‘we’, it actually referred to Hong Kongers instead of Hong Kong Canadians. In addition, as argued in Chapter 4, from an insider perspective, the *Sing Tao Daily* published two articles about the influence of the Declaration on Hong Kong, requiring the readers to fully understand the situation.

In **Theme 2** ‘We are part of the Chinese Nation,’ and during Period 2, Hong Kong identity was minimized, and Chinese identity was emphasized. In reporting the Tiananmen Square Protest and criticizing the Chinese government, the *Sing Tao Daily* connected Hong Kong Canadians to this event as a means of making Hong Kong Canadians feel as if they belonged to the larger Chinese family - the Chinese Nation. Overall, the *Sing Tao Daily* strongly promoted the nationalist concept of the Chinese nation, emphasizing that China was their motherland and that all Chinese in the world were cultural siblings. It is interesting to note that in Theme 1 and 2 Canadian identity was not emphasized.

Finally, in Period 3, there were three themes indicating the multifaceted identity of Hong Kong Canadians and these were: **Theme 3** ‘We are Chinese Canadians, and they are Hong

Kongers,’ **Theme 4** ‘Hong Kong Canadians still have a connection with Hong Kongers,’ and **Theme 5** ‘We are part of the Chinese Nation.’ In this period, the Canadian identity of Hong Kong Canadians was emphasized to a certain point, and this included becoming localized into ‘Torontonians.’ At the same time, the connections for Hong Kongers between Canada, China, and Hong Kong remained strong. The *Sing Tao Daily* did not ignore their ethnic identity during this period.

In conclusion, in this frame, as analyzed in the previous chapter, an evolution of both ethnic and national identity can be observed, and this is reflected in the construction of the flexible identities of Hong Kong Canadians. In terms of the ethnic identity, from the beginning (Period 1), Hong Kong identity was their primary identity, as the *Sing Tao Daily* emphasized a strong connection between Hong Kongers and Hong Kong Canadians. However, Hong Kong Canadians’ identity started to diversify from Period 1 as well. In Periods 1 and 3, labels such as the Chinese [Canadian] Community and the Chinese Canadians were used by the *Sing Tao Daily*, yet in Period 2, the Chinese Nation was used instead. Finally in Period 3, “(Chinese/Hong Kong) Torontonians” or simply “(Chinese) Canadians” was used.

The idea of a Canadian national identity was not extensively emphasized in Periods 1 or 2. However, in Period 3, the Hong Kong Canadians’ national identity was constructed as Canadian, and similar to ethnic identity, national identity became more localized as such as “Hong Kong Torontonians.”

In summary, the above has addressed the flexibility of the identity of Hong Kong Canadians, and this how its construction was not fixed; different names for Hong Kong Canadians were used to identify them depending on the context and the period of time.

5.3 Conclusion: Media Construction of Multifaceted Diaspora Identities

This research has focused on how an ethnic media of a diaspora community can construct their multiple identities. Tolley (2016) considers media as a shaper. She explains that, “in choosing what to cover and how to cover it, the media helps to shape our understanding of the world” (p. 18). Framing is one of the ways through which the media shapes our understanding. Entman (1993) defines framing as having to do with selection and salience. He explains that “framing selects and calls attention to particular aspects of the reality described, which logically means that frames simultaneously direct attention away from other aspects” (p. 54).

This research has looked at how the *Sing Tao Daily* constructed the identities of Hong Kong Canadians through framing the Handover, and whether the *Sing Tao Daily* played an assimilative and/or a pluralist role in identity construction.

5.3.1 *Sing Tao Daily* played dual roles in framing identities

As mentioned in the Literature Review (Chapter 2), Oh and Zhou (2012) state that ethnic media can play either an assimilative role, a pluralist role, or both. In this thesis, I argue that the *Sing Tao Daily* played dual roles in framing the multiple identities of Hong Kong Canadians. By doing so, the *Sing Tao Daily* was both **assimilationist** and **pluralist** in its approach; this can be clearly seen during the Handover where Hong Kong Canadians were framed as having multiple identities.

An assimilative role: According to Oh and Zhou (2012), ethnic media helps the community assimilate into the mainstream society and produces a sense of belonging for the diaspora community into their host society. The role of ethnic media, therefore, is to provide a platform to help the new diaspora to adapt to the new unfamiliar environment and to reassure them that the correct immigration choices have been made. In other words, ethnic media have a major function in the construction and promotion of a new national identity.

In this case, the first example was how the *Sing Tao Daily* promoted a Canadian identity by framing the Handover. However, before proceeding to this discussion, it is important to examine the underlying qualities behind the two organizing principles of Frames 1 and 2, because these qualities will say something about the identity that the *Sing Tao Daily* constructed. After analyzing these two frames, it can be said that the message portrayed in the *Sing Tao Daily* was that, in order to achieve (a) continuity and autonomy and (b) stability and prosperity, Hong Kong society should continue to have several far-reaching qualities. These included continuity in the political realm, democracy, freedom, the principle of rule-of-law, and a transparent and representative government. In addition, from an economic perspective, Hong Kong had a unique advantage in international trade and finance, and keeping this status would ensure itself as a leading hub for capitalistic activity and global trade. Therefore, these qualities were repeatedly featured as something valued by Hong Kong and believed to be necessary for a just and cohesive society, something that the new Chinese administration should never tamper with.

Looking now at how the *Sing Tao Daily* promoted a Canadian identity, I argue that the newspaper advocated a strong connection with Canada. For example, in the news story entitled “This National Day Becomes More Meaningful,” there was a quote: “This gathering reminds us again of the happiness of being a Canadian. We live in a free, democratic, and peaceful society” (1997, p. CAN7). This quote pointed out that freedom, democracy, and peace are the political values of the Canadian society. This was exactly consistent with the values that Hong Kong Canadians probably had before their immigration in Canada. Therefore, I am arguing that by emphasizing these ideas in the framing of the Handover, the *Sing Tao Daily* played an assimilative function in the identity construction.

The second example was how *Sing Tao Daily* labeled their readers in Period 3. The *Sing Tao Daily* often labeled Hong Kong Canadians as “Canadians.” This label, that emphasized a distinctly Canadian national identity, was at times regionally segmented, as they were sometimes called “Torontonians.” These labels seemed to indicate that their ethnic identity was not necessary to report. Thus, it could be said that Hong Kong Canadians’ ethnic identity was not as significant in this period. In addition, this national identity was positively constructed because the emphasis was on the happiness of being Canadians — they could “live in a free, democratic, and peaceful society” (“This National Day,” 1997, p. CAN7).

A third example is the change of *Sing Tao Daily*’s layout over time, i.e., headers, news departmentalization, and the format of news stories. As discussed in the previous chapter, there was a tendency in these three areas to “North-Americanize” the layout style. In addition, as demonstrated in the change in news departmentalization, the *Sing Tao Daily* even put Canadian news forward in Period 3, in contrast to its older habit of keeping Hong Kong or Chinese news on the front pages in Periods 1 and 2. These changes in layout all spoke to the assimilative role of the *Sing Tao Daily*.

A pluralist role: Oh and Zhou (2012) also noted that ethnic media function as a platform to maintain and reinforce ethnic identity. Ethnic media allows immigrants to connect with their home countries through daily news, promote the use of ethnic language and function as a symbol of the ethnic community and a local community booster.

In this case, first and foremost, the fact that the *Sing Tao Daily* had published a substantial amount of news stories on the Handover enabled Hong Kong Canadians to obtain up-to-date information about Hong Kong. In addition, as to the *Sing Tao Daily*’s layout, although it did gradually North-Americanize, which could be understood as a promotion of Canadian style,

these stories were still written in their mother language, i.e., traditional Chinese. Therefore, this strengthened the ethnic identity of Hong Kong Canadians.

More importantly, speaking to how the Handover was framed, I argue that the political values mentioned above -- the political realm, democracy, freedom, the rule-of-law principle, and a transparent and representative government -- were constructed as the cornerstone of Hong Kong identity. The *Sing Tao Daily* is the major ethnic press aimed at Hong Kong Canadians, and its focus on the proceeding themes helped create connections with the place they came from, but it also helped distinguish themselves as uniquely different from other Chinese people. From this point of view, in framing the Handover, it can be said that the *Sing Tao Daily* was playing a pluralist function, i.e., emphasizing an ethnic identity that was distinctly ‘Hong Kong.’

Furthermore, in framing Hong Kong Canadians, the *Sing Tao Daily* promoted ethnic identity by using variable labels that had subtle emphasis. For example, in Period 1, Hong Kong Canadians were called “Hong Kongers,” and this could be understood as promoting a particular Hong Kong identity, as if they were still Hong Kongers despite living in Canada.

In Period 2, it is interesting to note that the *Sing Tao Daily* also stressed a connection with the broader Chinese nation. By identifying Hong Kong Canadians as part of the Chinese Nation, this could be interpreted as stressing a broader ethnic identity. The term ‘Chinese Nation’ means something beyond citizenship: as long as they had roots in China, this blood relationship could not be denied and this family bond would exist. In Period 3, Hong Kong Canadians were labeled as “Chinese/Hong Kong Torontonians” or simply “Chinese Canadians.” Most of the time, “Chinese” was used over “Hong Kong.”

5.3.2 Conclusion. I contend that during the time period this thesis covers, that the *Sing Tao Daily*, a major ethnic newspaper for Hong Kong Canadians, performed the dual functions of

(a) helping this community assimilate into mainstream Canadian society, but simultaneously (b) maintaining the multi-faceted ethnic identity of Hong Kong Canadians.

This conclusion corresponds with previous research done in diaspora studies on multifaceted identities, and in the media representation of identity. Hall (1990) noted that the negotiation of diaspora identities is an ongoing process between two axes: one axis that highlights the shared historical and cultural roots, and the other axis that describes the critical points of difference. In addition, the boundaries between identities are not fixed or stable; instead, they continually adjust to different environments, i.e., places, times or/and topics.

In this case, Hong Kong Canadians continued to negotiate between their collective Chinese identity and the multiple variables of their unique history as Hong Kong Canadians, including the colonization history as Hong Kongers, their immigration to Canada, and their interaction with the rest of the Chinese Canadian community and Canadian society. This process is ongoing. Throughout the three periods, under different situations, the *Sing Tao Daily* labeled Hong Kong Canadians with multiple terms, including “Hong Konger,” “the Chinese Nation,” “the ethnic Chinese,” “Chinese/Hong Kong Torontonians,” and “Chinese/Hong Kong Canadians.”

The conclusion of this research also corresponds with the idea of media construction of identities, especially the findings from Georgiou (2006) and Oh and Zhou (2012). Media representation of identities is in fact a process of identity construction, and framing is one way that media construct reality. The process of reporting constructs and reconstructs social imaginaries of diaspora communities. In this research, I argue that in portraying the Handover to Hong Kong Canadians, the *Sing Tao Daily* used three frames to promote a particular understanding of their identities to its readership. In Frames 1 and 2 the *Sing Tao Daily*

repeatedly associated Hong Kong with the key concepts of *continuity and autonomy*, and *stability and prosperity*, and thus connected the above mentioned political values with their identities. They were the core of their Hong Kong identities, as well as the motivation underlying why they immigrated to Canada in the first place. In addition, the media helped to construct the multiple identities of Hong Kong Canadians by using different labels to define themselves under different situations. To conclude, this research rests in two related academic fields in sociology and journalism, one that deals with diaspora identities, and the other with media construction of multifaceted identities.

5.4 Suggestions for future studies about the Chinese Diaspora in Canada

Since 1947, when the Chinese Immigration Act that banned most Chinese immigrants from entering Canada was repealed, the number of Chinese immigrants has increased. Today, Chinese Canadians are an integral part of Canadian society and have gravitated to urban areas: 40.1% are in Toronto and 31.1% are in Vancouver. According to the 2011 National Household survey, Chinese Canadians make up the second largest visible minority group in Canada. They number over 1,324,700, accounting for 21.1% of the population of all visible minorities in Canada and for 4% of the total population. Of particular relevance to this thesis is that most are first-generation immigrants; 73.3% of these Chinese Canadians were born outside of Canada (National Household Survey, 2016).

Currently, China is Canada's second-largest source of new immigrants (National Household Survey, 2016), and I argue that this group of people, thus, is worth the academic attention. There are many subcultural communities amongst Chinese immigrants, and each of them uses different media to obtain information. As this research only focused on one subgroup,

Hong Kong Canadians, it will be interesting to see whether there would be differences in terms of identity construction across various subcultural ethnic media.

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