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Shifting Journalistic Paradigms: Mass Media and Political Transition in Hong Kong

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by

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Mass Media and Political Transition in Hong Kong

(Synopsis)

Britain has agreed to return Hong Kong to China in 1997. Consequently the Colony's once monolithic authority is challenged by the rise of Xinhua (New China News Agency, the surrogate embassy of China in Hong Kong) as an alternative power center, forming a dualistic power structure. This is a study of how the press adapts to this political realignment in their "journalistic paradigms" -- defined as gestalt worldviews that inform the media as to what social facts to report (and what not to report) and how to interpret them. It is found that journalistic paradigms, as manifested in organizational strategies, editorial policies and symbolic contents, have shown a general shift to accommodate Xinhua (China) as the political master to be. Overall, the press has responded positively to Xinhua's cooptative strategies: The mainstream newspapers have switched from an initial stance that favors continual British rule to one that concurs with China's plan of retaking Hong Kong. Publishers and journalists have been officially incorporated into political institutions which Xinhua (China) has established for the transition. Mediated discourses on public affairs are now subject to the parametric constraints of China's Hong Kong policies.

The paradigm shifts are contingent upon the press' political affiliations that differentiate Hong Kong's newspapers into four types: (1) the ultra-rightist papers that are controlled by the Kuomintang Party (KMT); (2) the rightist papers that are traditionally tilted towards the KMT and are commercially owned; (3) the centrist papers that are market-directed and not linked to any party; and (4) the ultra-leftist papers that are controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The rightist papers gradually converge with the centrist in their accommodation of Xinhua (China). These papers also have a dualistic role with CCP and KMT. One of the two ultra-rightist papers has closed while another has remained and slightly moderated its anti-communist rhetorics. Since the beginning of the transition period, the ultra-leftist newspapers have moderated their anti-colonial overtones and have shown unprecedented support of the colonial government. This movement towards the colonial regime from the left, along with the movement towards Xinhua (China) from the right, is seen as part of an overall cooptation process that leaves Hong Kong system as a whole far more homogeneous in tone than it had been. This is a result of political compromise which affects the press as well as all groups and agencies within the social system.

In a political change that is gradual and peaceful, as typified by the case of Hong Kong, the shift in journalistic paradigm is cumulative and incremental, in tandem with the political transition and the crisis that preceded the transition. The new journalistic paradigms are born of the old. They have shown both continuities and

discontinuities. The changes observed add up to what may be called a paradigm shift with respect to the power centers. However, the shift is not complete yet. It is expected to deepen and to consolidate as the political transition draws closer to 1997 when power formally changes hands. But given Hong Kong's existing private ownership of enterprise in general and of media in particular, as well as the structural constraints on China to keep its promise of preserving Hong Kong's capitalism intact beyond 1997, there will continue to be a pluralistic construction of reality with respect to local affairs. In fact, all non-leftist newspapers have expressed considerable concern for Hong Kong's autonomy and local interests which seem to have become a salient feature common to the emergent mainstream journalistic paradigms.

Preface

This monograph is an abridged version of my doctoral dissertation.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Prof. Philip Tichenor, my advisor at the University of Minnesota, for his penetrating remarks and helpful directions.

Thanks are particularly due to Prof. Chin-Chuan Lee, also at the University of Minnesota, who has advised my Master's thesis in Hong Kong and has unfailingly provided counsel on this research when needed. This study can be seen as part of a program of research that we initiated several years ago and continue to pursue; the framework in Lee and Chan (1986) has provided a basis for this dissertation and I have also drawn on our previous work.

I have also profited from the advice, comments and support from the late Prof. Gerald Kline, Profs. Roy Carter, David Cooperman, Ted Glasser, Joseph Galaskiewics, Donald Gillmor, Dan Wackman and Jean Ward, all at the University of Minnesota.

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Promises of anonymity do not allow me to publicly thank the publishers, journalists, media critics, Xinhua cadres and Government officials who have kindly granted me interviews.

For mistakes and deficiencies that remain in this report, I myself shall take the blame.

Introduction

After two years of painful negotiation, in September 1984 the United Kingdom and the People's Republic of China came to sign a Joint Declaration which decrees the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997. Hong Kong will then become a "special autonomous region" of Socialist China, with its present capitalist system unaltered for 50 years. Such is the essence of China's scheme of "one country, two systems" which China has invented to lure Hong Kong into reunification.

Hong Kong has entered into a transitional phase which is characterized by the drastic redistribution of power and authority and the realignment of social forces. The most significant and dramatic consequence has been the formation of a transitional and dualistic power structure brought about by a rapid decline of the traditional British colonial dominance and a corresponding rise of China in Hong Kong. The monopoly of power once enjoyed by the colonial regime is now being shared, dismantled, challenged and replaced by the the newly legitimated alternative power center -- China's official representative in Hong Kong -- Xinhua News Agency Hong Kong Branch.

Of central concern to us is the conduct of the press in face of this political change. Political transition makes Hong Kong a rare living laboratory for observing how different political configurations influence mass media and how the mass media adapt to immense environmental pressure. This is a study how the press adapt to this power change in their "journalistic paradigms" -- defined as

the gestalt worldviews that inform the media as to what social facts to report (and what not to report) and how to interpret them.

The paradigm shifts are hypothesized to be contingent upon the press' political affiliations that differentiate Hong Kong's newspapers into four types: (1) the ultra-rightist papers that are controlled by the Kuomintang Party (KMT); (2) the rightist papers that are traditionally tilted towards the KMT and are commercially owned; (3) the centrist papers that are market-directed and not linked to any party; and (4) the ultra-leftist papers that are controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Conceptualizing Journalistic Paradigm

Drawing on Kuhn's (1970) concept of a "paradigm," Chan and Lee (1984) in an earlier work defined "journalistic paradigm" as above.¹ In essence, journalistic paradigm refers to the set of assumptions that governs the newsmaking process. As an organizational imperative, a journalistic paradigm enables journalists to process information efficiently and relating it effectively to the audience.

While not all information-producing fields are organized around paradigms, paradigms are fairly common in knowledge-producing fields that display such characteristics as control over the training of practitioners, standardization of methods of gathering information, and authoritative internal review of new claims and contributions. Journalism possesses many characteristics of such a paradigm-based field (Bennett, Gressett and Haltom, 1985).

A growing number of studies on newsmaking have suggested the existence of such a journalistic paradigm and have outlined some of its major components. Chan and Lee (1984) applied this concept to the study of an ambiguous social protest. The choice of a protest whose motivations and causes were ambiguous -- at least during the initial stage -- is to bring the journalistic paradigms, if they exist, into full view.² It is found that journalistic paradigms in Hong Kong are chiefly determined by the press' political ideology or affiliation and greatly affects the newspapers' perception and interpretation of the protest. As a result, the press with different journalistic paradigms presented the publics with widely varying versions of social reality in Hong Kong.

If journalistic paradigms exist, then, like all paradigms, they need to confront the occasional problem of how to handle anomalous cases. There exists a tendency for existing paradigms to persist by "normalizing" the anomalies and assimilate them into their explanatory framework. So, by studying how the mass media try to normalize an ambiguous case, news paradigms are expected to reveal themselves. This is the logic inherent in Bennett, Gressett and Haltom's case attempt to unravel the existence and logic of a "news paradigm". Indeed, when an ambiguous case slipped through journalistic gates, they found that a powerful system of news logic was activated to "repair" it, rendering visible the logic underlying news and boundaries of what is newsworthy and what is not.

The notion of journalistic paradigm is similar to Gitlin (1980)

and Tuchman's (1978) conceptualization of "news frame."³ "Frame," originally used by Ervin Goffman (1974), refers to the principles by which one organizes everyday experience. In a more elaborate fashion, Gitlin (1980:7) defines news frames as "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which journalists routinely organize discourse, whether visual or verbal." Other formulations that share the same notion include Gans' (1979) discussion of "news perspective", and Altheide and Snow's (1979) analysis of "media logic."⁴ To avoid redundancy, we just mention their names and references in passing here.

A review of the literature on newsmaking reveals that the composition of a journalistic paradigm is closely linked with its cultural context. Studies done in western democracies (e.g. Gans, 1979; Tuchman, 1978) seem to carve out professionalism or news objectivity as the major component of the journalistic paradigm. A comparative examination across nations shows that this professional notion of journalistic paradigm is not universal (Edelstein, 1982; Lee, 1984) Political ideology or affiliation plays a more important role in determining the journalistic paradigms in some Western European nations and most of the Third World. Gerbner (1964), for example, found the press distributed along a political spectrum from left to right differed greatly in their coverage of a legal controversy in France. In effect, there is not just one paradigm shared by all journalists but there is a plurality of paradigms which

speak to the very nature of news: it is socially constructed rather than a reflection of absolute reality (Tuchman, 1978).

The journalistic paradigms' referent that we are particularly concerned in this study is political power center as represented by a government and a quasi-government. With respect to power centers, the professional journalistic paradigm as typified by Tuchman (1978), Gans (1979), and Bennett, Gressett and Hatom (1985), presumes that authority is objective. Put otherwise, the practical problem of "objectivity" is solved by establishing an official reference point for news event. The presumption that authority is objective therefore becomes an objectification of the status quo. Newsmaking becomes the construction of legitimacy. This confusion of authority and legitimacy with objectivity makes the news an active agent in the construction of a narrow but compelling version of reality -- a version that is created by and for the establishment.

Shifts in Journalistic Paradigms

According to Kuhn (1962), switch in scientific paradigms will happen only when the old paradigms fail consistently to reconcile with newly discovered phenomena. Broadly speaking, this observation seems to hold when we apply it to the analysis of the stability and change of journalistic paradigms. As evidenced by Bennett, Gressett and Halton's (1985) study, news paradigm persists even in face of an anomalous case. Rarely do anomalies become so troublesome that journalistic paradigms have to be restructured or redefined to

accommodate them. Paradigm shifts are likely to occur after the repeated failure of routine attempts to dismiss, or to repair the problematic case.

Both Gitlin (1980) and Gans (1979) seem to agree that journalistic paradigms originate, persist and shift in historical times. As they suggested, shift in journalistic paradigms on social movements is a result of social or political crisis brought about by social formations (defined as the interpenetration between the state and society in general as well as the coalitions of dominant groups in particular). Indeed, mass media not only reflect the perspectives of the powerful but also power relations in society (Olien, Tichenor and Donohue, 1982). Mass media are likely to continue to project the dominant perspective unless another group develops a countervailing power base. Serious challenges lead to uncertainties or crises in power relationships which are conducive to the shift of journalistic paradigms.

Schudson's (1978) historical study of the evolution of objectivity provides further revelation of the linkage between reconfiguration of social forces and shift in journalistic paradigms. According to Schudson, the prevailing mode of news representation (in our terms, journalistic paradigm) in the United States at the beginning of the eighteenth century could be characterized as "partisan" or "story-telling." It was until the rise of the "democratic market society" in the 1830s that the partisan press gave way to the "penny press" or commercial newspapers which tried to

claim independence from partisan control and started to explore objectivity as a professional ideal. A detailed account of the evolution of objectivity is beyond the scope of this review, suffices it to remark that the shift from "partisanship" to "objectivity" is brought about by, among other factors, general social formations exemplified by the rise of the "democratic market society."

The shift of a journalistic paradigm may or may not follow the abrupt nature of a scientific revolution. In a Kuhnian sense, the rise of a scientific revolution -- which entails abandoning an old paradigm and adopting the new paradigm simultaneously -- is far from a cumulative process. In fact, the new scientific paradigm puts the old data in new light by changing some of the field's most elementary theorems. A journalistic paradigm can be radically transformed in times of political revolutions (for the case of Iran, see Tehranian, 1979; for China, see Pye, 1977). When a political regime loses power, the media it controls sweeps away their journalistic cadres and paradigms. The "reality" is thus interpreted anew.

In the absence of a revolution, however, the shift of journalistic paradigms is likely to be a cumulative and incremental process. If the shift is more abrupt than public awareness, a news organization runs the great risk of being perceived as "caving in to pressure," thus detrimental to their lifeblood:credibility. In a gradually phased-in political transition, there is an anticipated schedule to transform the sociopolitical order and journalistic paradigms. Such is the case of Hong Kong.

Hypotheses and Methodology

Viewing mass media as a social subsystem that is conditioned by the configuration of social forces, we hypothesize that paradigm shifts are likely to occur when major changes occur in the society's power structure. Structural change in the distribution of political power is expected to set the general direction of adaptation for media organizations and also limits the options of strategic choice open to them. The new power centers are likely to incorporate the mass media through the use of cooptative strategies. Being external-resource-dependent institutions, the pressure is for media organizations to respond positively to those cooptative strategies. However, environmental constraints do not usually reduce the adaptation strategies to just one. Environmental pressure is not uniformly perceived and evaluated by all parties because of difference in social locations, political affiliation and other endogenous constraints. These differences are likely to result in differential adaptations. Those institutions that are ideologically and organizationally flexible are expected to show a greater degree of accommodation to the power realignment. On the contrary, groups that hold extreme positions are much less likely to accommodate as they have less latitude of movement. They may choose to opt out or to take on extreme positions.

The power change that this study focuses on is the formation of a dualistic power structure, consisting of the once supreme British

Government and the emergent Xinhua News Agency (Surrogate embassy of China in Hong Kong). Specifically, we hypothesize that all mainstream newspapers (centrist and rightist), by virtue of their relative ideological and organizational flexibility, will show a general shift in journalistic paradigm to accommodate Xinhua as the new political power. This shift is expected to be much greater than that of the ultra-rightist, if any. The ultra-rightist newspapers may take on extreme positions or simply close down. At the same time, we expect the ultra-leftist newspapers to shift its paradigm with respect to the Hong Kong Governemnt, from a critical stance of anti-colonialism to a generally supportive one.

In methodological terms, the hypothesis involves three variables: (1) changes in political power structure; (2) the press's political affiliations and (3) changes in journalistic paradigms. For analytical and heuristic purposes, we may further classify the first variable (power change) as the independent variable and the third variable (journalistic paradigm) as the dependent variable. The second variable (press'affiliation) serves as an "intervening variable." The effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable, theoretically speaking, can be direct or mediated by the "intervening variable."

Our research question focuses on how the structural relations between mass media and power centers change over time. We decided to approach the research problem in a holistic fashion by using multiple methods, hoping that it will enable us to have a more comprehensive

understanding of the processes by which the press adapts to political realignment on the one hand and that the methods will complement one another on the other. The methods include: (1) Interviews with journalists, Government officials, Xinhua cadres, and social analysts; (2) documentation analysis of newspaper and magazine clippings and journalists' memoirs; (3) intensive comparative reading of newspaper editorials and news over the whole range of newspapers and (4) quantitative analysis of news coverage over time. Each of these methods has its strengths and weaknesses. Which one to be used depends on the nature of the variable we are studying.

The paradigm referents for this study are power centers as represented by the British colonial government and Xinhua (China). Shifts in journalistic paradigms, in this case, is indicated by how the media switch their orientations towards each of the two power centers before and after the emergence of the dualistic power structure, as signified by Britain's announcement in April 1984 of its intention to return Hong Kong to China in 1997. Operational indicators of such shifts include (1) the media's adaptation strategy on the institutional level; (2) internal organizational changes; (3) changes in editorial policy and (4) media content. Information about adaptation strategies, organizational changes and changes in editorial policy will be gathered chiefly through interviews with journalists and publishers and through documentation analysis. Data about the symbolic manifestations of paradigm shifts will be derived from both qualitative and quantitative content analysis. For the

quantitative content analysis, the indicators of journalistic paradigm include the following: (1) the frequency of reporting a newsmaker; (2) volume of coverage; (3) prominence of news display and (4) direction of news.

The independent variable, change in power structure is represented by the decline of the Hong Kong Government and the corresponding rise of Xinhua as an alternative power center. To learn about this power change, we shall rely heavily on the documentation analysis and interviews with journalists, Xinhua cadres, government officials and social analysts.

The press' political affiliation (the "intervening variable") and the sample of newspapers will be discussed in the next section.

Partisan Newspapers in a Colonial Marketplace

Out of 66 registered newspapers in Hong Kong, 45 are Chinese-language dailies and 5 English-language dailies. Among the Chinese-language dailies, 36 cover general news, both local and overseas, while others concentrate on horse-racing tips, gossips, cartoons, entertainment, especially television and crime news (Hong Kong Annual Report, 1986).

Compared with China and most Asian nations, the government's control of the press in Hong Kong is the least direct and strict.⁵ The printed media are allowed to operate in a commercial environment, resulting in a pluralistic press system whose constraints are similar to those in western nations. Anyone, including KMT or CCP

affiliates, who is willing to pay a safety deposit of US\$1,200 or provide two guarantors acceptable to the government can start a publication. In effect, the party-subsidized press coexists with the commercial newspapers.

Seymour-Ure (1974) observes that in Europe and the Third World, a close "parallelism" exists between the press system and the party system: the press is linked to political party organizations, is loyal to party goals, and caters to partisan audiences. This press-party parallelism also exists in Hong Kong which, however, has no formal party of its own. It is either called a "colonial city-state" (King, 1975) or an "administrative no-party state" (Harris, 1978). Parliamentary democracy does not exist. In the absence of local political parties, politics in Hong Kong is sharply divided along the line of China's inter-party conflict between CCP and KMT which has structured Hong Kong's press system. This press-party parallelism grows not out of local politics but is a residual extension of modern Chinese party politics. The press of Hong Kong in the last century was intertwined with the political changes on the mainland: the press tried to effect structural changes in China on the one hand and was influenced by them on the other. Throughout this period, Hong Kong served as a key listening post and propaganda base for Chinese politics, with many dissident journalists and politicians taking refuge in Hong Kong to advocate their doctrines (Lee-Hsia, 1974). The protracted KMT-CCP struggle has made Hong Kong's press system a microcosm of yesterday's China.

As noted previously, the British have been tolerant of partisan journalism as long as it does not disrupt social order or ruin their ruling legitimacy. Hong Kong therefore serves as a battleground for propaganda wars between KMT and CCP, with the British Government keeping the rules of the game. Even today there are papers directly financed by the CCP or the KMT and still others, though not directly financed, are clearly identified with either party in goal orientation. Prior to the political transition, these papers were only peripherally concerned about local affairs. Their fundamental concerns resided in Taiwan or China while local issues and news had been slighted.

Against this large backdrop, not until the 1970s did "centrist" newspapers, loyal to Hong Kong and critical of both Beijing and Taipei, began to prosper. These profit-motivated commercial papers are beneficiaries of Hong Kong's rapidly expanding economy and its formidable advertising industry. Since the early seventies, Hong Kong has developed into what is generally called a mass consumption society.⁶ While devoting significant coverage to Chinese politics, these papers appear to focus more on local issues and the immediate concerns of Hong Kong citizens at large. It is not in their interest to identify too closely with either outside party.

Newspaper dailies in Hong Kong fall into four categories of political ideology or party affiliations: ultra-leftist, centrist, mainstream rightist and ultra-rightist. They are categorized on the basis of the following criteria: (1) source of financial support and

party linkage; (2) place of registration; (3) choice of national day celebration and calendar; and (4) ways of addressing the Beijing regime and the Taipei regime (Lee and Chan, 1986). The sample of newspapers for our study, constituting a total of nine, are categorized as follows:⁷

(1) **Ultra-leftist:** As the CCP's propaganda mouthpieces supervised by Xinhua Hong Kong Branch, they include Ta Kung Pao and Wen Wei Pao. Being registered in Hong Kong and Mainland China, they celebrate National Day on October 1, adopt the Western calendar, refer to Taiwan as "Taiwan Province," "the Taiwan authorities," or "the Chiang Clique," but call Beijing "our country," "our government," "the People's Republic of China," or "China."

(2) **Centrist:** The centrist papers are market-oriented, ad-supported and not linked to any political party. They register only with the Hong Kong Government, adopt the Western calendar, do not observe either national day, call the Taipei regime "Taiwan," "the National Government" and the Beijing regime "Communist China," "Mainland China," or "China." The centrist papers we sampled include Ming Pao, Sing Pao and the Oriental Daily News.

(3) **Mainstream rightist:** Most prominent are Sing Tao Jih Pao and Wah Kiu Yat Pao, two of the oldest that still exist in Hong Kong. Because of its historical presence, they embody Hong Kong's past and present. They are responsive to the Hong Kong market, yet mildly tilting to Taiwan out of political ideology and historical ties with the KMT than for financial assistance. They register both in Taiwan

and Hong Kong, observing the KMT's National Day on October 10, calling the Taiwan regime "the Republic of China" or "China" and referring to Mainland China as "Communist China," "the Mainland," instead of the "People's Republic of China".

(4) **Ultra-rightist:** These include the Hong Kong Times and the Kung Sheung Daily. The Times was established by the KMT in 1949 as a propaganda outpost in the wake of its defeat by the Communists on the mainland and withdrawal to Taiwan. It serves as KMT's mouthpiece in Hong Kong, at the threshold of Mainland China Kung Sheung was once a mainstream paper -- mainstream in terms of its historical presence and loyalty to the colonial regime. Its owes its ultra-rightism to its bitterly anti-communist fervor that bears a strong resemblance to the Hong Kong Times'. In an inaugural editorial in 1925, Kung Sheung professed to check the "communist tide" which was surging in China.⁸ Its close ties with KMT increased over the Anti-Japanese War and later years.

Formation of a Dualistic Power Structure

In the absence of political parties and electoral politics, the administrative bureaucracy was the only significant political institution in the colony. While the boundary of this bureaucracy almost coincides with that of the polity in Hong Kong, its political system approximates the ideal type of a bureaucratic polity -- a form of government in which national decision-making is relatively insulated from social and political forces outside the highest elite

echelons of the bureaucracy (Lau, 1982:25). In a political game whose rules were made by itself, the bureaucratic polity was always the winner, with other political actors, as individuals or groups, dependent upon its initiative for political privileges.

Although Britain was one of the first countries to officially recognise the People's Republic of China (PRC), Britain has been adamant about protecting its colonial dominane in Hong Kong. Xinhua News Agency (Hong Kong Branch) was founded in 1948 at the peak of the KMT-CCP civil war. Since the establishment of the PRC in 1949, Xinhua has always acted as its official representative in Hong Kong. This was because Britain had rejected Beijing's repeated requests to set up an official mission in Hong Kong for fear that it might create an alternative power center, thus threatening the British rule.⁹ While the British would let the PRC establish a consulate in Hong Kong, China declined the offer which, if accepted, would have amounted to a de facto recognition of Hong Kong as a British colony. (Miners, 1976; Lau, 1985)

Because of this unique political situation, Xinhua since 1949 has been playing double roles -- as a news agency and as an official representative of China. Only 30 among 500 of its staff are in the news division, with the rest assigned to various departments responsible for various tasks. Xinhua coordinates and supervises China's interlocking organizations (banks, trade companies, schools, motion picture and publication companies and labor unions) in Hong Kong and represents China in dealing with the colonial regime.¹⁰

Xinhua was generally treated as a foreign agency not powerful enough to constitute a power center countervailing against British dominance. Operated as if an underground agency, Xinhua was a mystery to the public. Xinhua had refrained from asserting its influence with regard to Hong Kong's domestic policies whereby its potential power remain hidden and unrealized. All this began to change with the emergence of the future issue of Hong Kong. Xinhua consequently came to the foreground, commanding the keenest social attention and consolidating its influence as a power center.

The establishment of Xinhua as a second power center corresponds initially to the development of the Sino-British negotiation which lasted from 1982 to 1984 and then to the political transition which has been underway since the two countries reached an agreement. During the negotiation period, the colonial regime had undergone a legitimation crisis. No sooner had the talks started tensely in late 1982 than controversies arose over the validity of the Nanking Treaty which provides the very legal basis for Britain to rule over Hong Kong. The authority of the Hong Kong Government was further eroded by subsequent events. Most damaging was its failure to persuade China to let Hong Kong preserve the status quo beyond 1997 and its submission to China's political pressure.¹¹

Within China's political structure, Xinhua assumes the equivalent of a provincial-level organization. Since Xu Jiatun, a member of the CCP Central Committee assumed its directorship in 1983, Xinhua was subsequently reorganized to comprise 10 departments

mimicking the colonial government structure. Recently, it has set up three district offices to extend its influence and to monitor public opinions on a more local basis. Regarded as a "shadow government" in Hong Kong, Xinhua has also actively recruited local talent, accounting for half of its 500 staff, to cope with the political transition and to fill the power vacuum to be left by the British in 1997 (Loong, 1985).

Entering the political transition after the conclusion of the Sino-British accord, Xinhua's influence has increased more rapidly and spread to all realms of Hong Kong society. Xinhua currently engages itself in organizing, coordinating and supervising the political transition that is underway. It has set up a Basic Law Drafting Committee consisting of both Hong Kong and Chinese leaders to formulate a constitution to govern post-1997 Hong Kong. The basic law is of paramount importance for it will lay out the social, economic, political and legal systems of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Xinhua has so far succeeded in weaving a cooptative fabric which stretches from institutional absorption to friendship bondage, from powerful media owners to young reporters. An illustration of how Xinhua forms its united front by making friends: Xinhua many times invites publishers, chief editors, news editors, and even reporters to banquets. Through repeated encounters, friends are made. Journalists that I have interviewed agreed that it is very difficult for you to be very critical of a man if you know him, particularly if

you are to meet him from time to time. A publisher who has been invited to several such banquets is reported to have interpreted Xinhua's intentions as follows: "The message is implicit: China is maintaining a dialogue with you. China has changed for the better. Given us face and write less about the dreadful past." Very few journalists that we interviewed seemed to have missed this message. Friendship, in the Chinese context, implies obligation in addition to good interpersonal relationships. A person usually is obliged to repay, one way or the other, if someone treats him well.

Journalistic Paradigms in Flux (I)

This section reports the shifts in journalistic paradigms as manifested in the press' organizational and editorial policies. The following table links ideologically determined journalistic paradigms to the dualistic power structure between the colonial regime and Xinhua before and after the appearance of the new political situation. The table indicates (1) the press policies that the power centers have for the press (the first row for each type of press); and (2) the shift of journalistic paradigms from the vantage point of the media, as responses to the power centers' policies (the second row, in italics).

Table 1. Journalistic paradigms as responses to the press policies of the two power centers

Press' political Affiliations/ Journalistic Paradigms	The Hong Kong Government		Xinhua (the PRC)	
	Past	Present	Past	Present
<i>Ultra-rightist</i>	Partial Cooptation <i>Cooperation</i>	Virtual Exclusion <i>Cooperation</i>	Hostility <i>Hostility</i>	Cooptation <i>Hostile & defensive accommodation</i>
<i>Rightist</i>	Cooptation <i>Cooperation</i>	Cooptation <i>Cooperation</i>	Little Relationship <i>Mild Opposition</i>	Cooptation <i>Cooperation</i>
<i>Centrist</i>	Cooptation <i>Cooperation</i>	Cooptation <i>Cooperation</i>	Little Relationship <i>Mild Opposition</i>	Cooptation <i>Cooperation</i>
<i>Ultra-leftist</i>	Exclusion (1949-79) & Partial inclusion since 1979 <i>Suspicion and Criticism</i>	Uneasy Cooptation <i>Moderation</i>	Control <i>Submission</i>	Control <i>Submission</i>

Rightist and Centrist Journalistic Paradigm

In the past, the rightist as well as the centrist newspapers are characterized by their cordial relationships with the Government and their rejection of China. So far, the centrist and rightist papers have responded positively to Xinhua's cooptive efforts. Mainstream rightist papers' historical allegiance to KMT is reduced and their historical antagonism towards China is softened, resulting in a

gradual convergence of the rightist and centrist journalistic paradigms. All these changes are dramatically evidenced by the incorporation of the publishers or editors of Ming Pao(centrist), Sing Pao(centrist), Sing Tao(rightist) and Wah Kiu(rightist) into the Basic Law Drafting and Consultative Committees (political bodies China set up to prepare a constitution for Hong Kong beyond 1997).¹² This represents a very conspicuous symbolic success scored by Xinhua's united front work.

The active participation of a newspaper's chiefs in such committees has profound influence on journalists serving under them. To quote from an editor in a centrist newspaper: "Our hands are tied in dealing with news relating to activities of the Basic Law Drafting and Consultative Committees because no one wants to embarrass one's boss." Put otherwise, social exchanges between Xinhua and the media executives is an important source from which journalists derive their editorial policy.

It is widely observed that these papers have exercised considerable self-censorship in criticizing China partly out of fear of punishment, partly due to the success of Xinhua's cooptation, and partly triggered by realism that necessitates acquiescing to reality in order not to "rock the boat." (Lau, 1984, 1986; Leung, 1986; Y. Lee, 1986; Asiaweek, 1984) Since further resistance to Communist rule seems futile, some deem it more "socially responsible" to open a dialogue with Xinhua and to replace harsh criticisms with mild encouragement.¹³ Led by Ming Pao (centrist), most commercial

newspapers have openly accommodated Xinhua's dominance, abandoning their previous critical stance towards China and even praising the supreme "wisdom" and "farsightedness" of the "one country, two systems" conception (Cha, 1984). The politically apathetic Sing Pao has increased its pro-China editorials, so has the Oriental Daily News softened its criticism of China through the avoidance of explicit political commentary. Rightist Sing Tao and Wah Kiu's comments no longer question the legitimacy of the Chinese plans of "one country, two systems." Their comments are all within the parameters provided by the Sino-British Joint Declaration.

The cordial relationship between the Hong Kong Government and the rightist and centrist newspapers remain relatively unchanged even though they have accommodated Xinhua as the new power center. By the very nature of a scheduled transfer of power, the two power centers are supposed to coexist during the transitional period even though one may be declining while the other is rising. Allegiance on the part of the papers is therefore not locked in a zero-sum game. They can have two or even multiple loyalties which are strained only if conflicts break out between the two power centers. Orientation towards the three governments of China, Hong Kong and Taiwan used to serve as good indicators of a newspaper's position along a left-right continuum. Now these indicators have lost some of their validity. The leftists may support the Government. The rightist may support China and Taiwan at the same time. The prosperity of these mainstream newspapers are tied to Hong Kong's immediate stability and

prosperity, in which the Government remains the chief actor. All being very concerned about immediate livelihood, the press subtly shows preference for the Government if it has to make a choice between the two power centers.

The Ultra-Rightist Journalistic Paradigm

Since China made known its intention to regain Hong Kong, Xinhua began to take a two-pronged policy on the ultra-rightist papers. On the one hand, it promised the ultra-rightist newspapers the freedom to operate and to criticize beyond 1997 as far as it does not create "two Chinas" or "cause trouble." Xinhua extended its invitation specifically to the managing director of Hong Kong Times, Eddie Tsang, to sit on the Basic Law Consultative Committee. Xinhua's guest list also include the Times' and Kung Sheung's executives and journalists, and it regularly alerts them to impending news events. On the other hand, Xinhua guards against the possibility that KMT may cause troubles and takes measures to isolate its influence. So far Xinhua has not gone open to counter-attack the views of the ultra-rightist newspapers. It leaves the job to the leftist newspapers which do not hesitate to pose point-counter-point arguments.¹⁴ Xinhua, on the whole, maintains a condescending stance towards the ultra-rightist newspapers.

Both Kung Sheung and the Times owed their editorial stands to the KMT's policy of non-recognition of anything associated with the People's Republic of China. To indicate their non-recognition, both

papers extensively put quotation marks around bodies that are set up or related to Xinhua. From the outset, they asserted that the notion of "one country, two systems" was nothing but a united front trap. To them the feasibility of such a scheme is simply out of the question. They would rather have the British continue their rule beyond 1997.

However, Kung Sheung and the Times are different as far as ownership is concerned. The former is privately owned while the latter is directly controlled by KMT. This difference allows some disparity in the way they adapt.

Kung Sheung was more flexible than the Times in its approach to Xinhua. Kung Sheung did accept Xinhua's party invitations. To show a little reluctance, instead of sending its editor-in-chief who was invited, the paper sent its deputy editor-in-chief. Kung Sheung dispatched reporters to cover the Sino-British negotiations in Beijing and local Xinhua activities.

Financially, Kung Sheung had suffered losses for almost a decade. But the Ho family, the chief owner, and other board members were rich enough to continue investing in it. The impending exchange of sovereignty, however, dealt a deadly blow to its will to persist. What the environment holds for Kung Sheung is very uncertain, if not gloomy, unless it switched its anti-communist stand. Kung Sheung, however, was not ready to bend with the political wind and chose to close down in late 1984.

The Times' adaptation strategy is a function of Taiwan's policy towards China. Adhering to Taiwan's "three no" policy (no trade, no

correspondence and no traffic), Eddie Tseng, the Times' managing director declined Xinhua's invitation to sit on the Basic Law Consultative Committee. Presently, however, it has no immediate plans to retreat because it serves as the only mouthpiece for Taiwan, but more importantly, for the local rightist forces. Its withdrawal is analogous to the fall of a symbolic flag that will likely trigger an organizational collapse of associations friendly to Taiwan which KMT loathes to witness.

KMT is not a monolithic entity. The power shift in Hong Kong has induced split within KMT. What began as a factional fight within the Times evolved into a political fight which ended in an organizational reshuffling in which six staunch anti-communist columnists were expelled and a page that was devoted to hardline anti-communism was cancelled (Leung, 1985).¹⁵ The Times began to fill the empty space with entertainment news and apolitical information. Its anti-communist rhetorics is becoming more rationalized, if not softened. Some leftists have described such changes as "progressive" signs.

The Ultra-leftist Journalistic Paradigm

Prior to 1979, the ultra-leftist papers are not only excluded from the Government's cooptative effort but also on the Government's enemy list. As early as 1952, the Government suspended the ultra-leftist Ta Kung Pao and prosecuted the owners of Wen Wei Pao in an open attempt to check the propaganda influence from the newly

established People's Republic of China. The hostility between the Government and the leftist papers intensified during the 1967 riots which were started by the leftists to subdue the Government. In retaliation, the Government threatened to take action against these papers and arrested a number of leftist journalists and media owners. The leftist all-out anti-government movement waned only when the Government released leftist journalists in exchange for the release of British diplomats who were held as hostages in Beijing. Even though the leftists failed to subdue the Government as planned, they have shown their strength. Consequently, the leftist papers were allowed greater freedom to criticize the Government.

Quick at picking issues with the Government, these papers tended to cast them in anti-colonial overtones. All government reforms, be they welfare programs or housing projects, were labelled as "cooptation policies" and charged for having the ulterior motive of smoothening colonial rule. This cold relationship began to thaw since 1979 when Deng Xiaping started his liberalization program on the mainland. The most symbolic breakthrough came when the Government empowered Wen Wei Pao to be one of the few prestigious papers to carry legally valid ads. This trend towards more cordial relationship was consolidated and sped up by the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration. Since then the party line has changed. It appears to be in the interest of CCP to preserve Hong Kong's capitalism under the scheme of "one country, two systems" -- the success of which depends, first of all, on a smooth political

transition which in turn depends on the Hong Kong Government's cooperation. While gradually overtaking the power of the Government, Xinhua is not acting to weaken the "lame duck" so much so that it fails to maintain an effective rule. To toe this party line, ironically, what were once staunch anti-government papers begin to cooperate with colonial government and to praise the government when it acts to preserve stability and prosperity in Hong Kong. As a leading leftist journalist confessed: "What the Hong Kong Government is doing now will be inherited by China. Continuing to criticize every policy of the existing government up till 1997 will make a change in orientation then very awkward and difficult."

Journalistic Paradigms in Flux (II)

This section, concerning the symbolic manifestations of shifts in journalistic paradigms, consists of two parts: The first is a quantitative analysis of news over two periods: before and after the onset of the political transition in Hong Kong. The second part is a qualitative analysis of a near-population sample of the editorials on the future issue of Hong Kong that were published between 1982 and 1986.

The quantitative analysis of news is an attempt to examine whether the press shifts its journalistic paradigms with respect to each of the two power centers as indicated by (1) reporting of newsmakers; (2) newshole allocation; (3) prominence of news display and (4) direction of news coverage. It is expected that the centrist and rightist newspapers, and much less so, the ultra-rightist, will show a general accommodation of Xinhua (China) as a new power center. Meanwhile, the ultra-leftist newspapers are expected to be increasingly favorable in their coverage of the Hong Kong Government. We shall test these general hypotheses against each of the said indicators. In each test, we shall compare the press' conduct before and after the inception of the political transition.

The first period is from July 1, 1983 to April 30, 1984 -- when the Sino-British negotiation was going on and prior to the British announcement of its intention to withdraw from Hong Kong. The second period is from July 1, 1985 to February 28, 1986 -- when the political transition was well underway. A constructed week from each

period provides the sample for analysis. Only public affairs news printed in local news pages is analysed.¹⁶ Spot news such as crimes and traffic accidents and other non-public-affairs news are excluded.

(1) Reporting of Newsmakers: "Newsmaker" is operationalized as the source of information, be it a person or institution, mentioned in a news article. If there are more than two newsmakers, the one that precedes all others in the article is designated as the "chief newsmaker." Who is newsworthy and who is not depends on one's power base. We therefore expect that Xinhua, as it is being legitimated as the power master to be, will gain in frequency as a chief newsmaker. This is supported by the findings as tabulated in the following table.

Table 2. The press' shift in reporting of each of the two power centers as the chief newsmaker

Press Types	Past				Present			
	HK Gov	PRC	Others	Total	HK Gov	PRC	Others	Total
Ultra-Rightist (n)	75%	2%	23%	100%	79%	3%	18%	100%
				Change (94)	+4%	+1%		(105)
Rightist (n)	74%	5%	21%	100%	70%	13%	17%	100%
				Change (269)	+4%	+8%		(328)
Centrist (n)	78%	7%	15%	100%	62%	24%	14%	100%
				Change (151)	-16%	+17%		(284)
Ultra-Leftist (n)	56%	9%	35%	100%	53%	23%	24%	100%
				Change (127)	-3%	+14%		(262)

Codes:
n = number of public affairs news articles

HK Gov = Hong Kong Government which includes the Government itself, its affiliated institutions and their officials.
PRC = Xinhua News Agency, the transitional political institutions that it has set up, the PRC officials and China-based institutions.
Others = Other newsmakers which may include social leaders, social institutions, business groups, pressure groups, individuals and the like.

The reading of Table 2, for example, goes like this: Out of 94 pieces of news articles published in the ultra-rightist press in the past, 75% portrayed the government as the chief newsmaker while only 2% did so with Xinhua. Likewise, out of 105 news articles printed in the ultra-rightist newspapers at present, 79% reported the government as the chief newsmaker while only 3% did so with Xinhua. To check for shifts, we shall be comparing the newspapers' reporting of a power center (e.g. HK Gov) in the "Past" with the corresponding column (HK Gov) at "Present." The difference between the "Past" and the "Present" is recorded in the row of "Change."

The most notable shift occurred in the centrist and rightist newspapers' reporting of Xinhua as a newsmaker. For the centrist, the proportion of public affairs news articles in which Xinhua was the chief newsmaker increases by 17% while that for rightist newspapers increases by 8%. The corresponding increase for the ultra-rightist is negligible (1%). The increase on the part of the ultra-leftist newspapers (14%) is to be interpreted as a reflection of change in party policy which leads to shift in editorial attention as Xinhua gains power.

The only finding inconsistent with the hypothesis is the small decline in proportion of news in which the ultra-leftist newspapers treat the Government as the chief newsmaker (-3%). However, as we shall see later, the shift of ultra-leftist journalistic paradigm with regard to the Government seems to provide more supportive evidence than unsupportive ones. The rightist and centrist

newspapers have displayed some decline in the tendency to treat the Government as the chief newsmaker (Centrist, -16%; Rightist, -4%), reflecting the gradual decline in governmental authority and legitimacy, a decline which journalists would be expected to recognise and take into account in reporting political news.

(2) Newshole Allocation: Newshole is a scarce resource, the use of which reflects the journalists' judgment of what is important and what is not important as news. As Xinhua increases in power, we expect that the volume of news devoted to the coverage of this new power center as a percentage of total newshole to increase. We also expect the ultra-leftist newspapers, to be in accordance with China's policy to support the Hong Kong Government during transition, to allocate a higher proportion of newshole for the Government. These hypotheses seem to be supported by the findings which are tabulated in Table 3:

Table 3. Press' shift in newshole allocation (as percentage of total newshole) for the two power centers

<i>Press Types</i>	<i>Past</i>				<i>Present</i>				
	HK Gov	PRC	Others	Total	HK Gov	PRC	Others	Total	
<i>Ultra-Rightist</i> (Total newshole)	38%	1%	61%	100%	40%	2%	58%	100%	
				<i>Change</i> (20458)	<i>+2%</i>	<i>+1%</i>		(23214)	
<i>Rightist</i> (Total Newshole)	32%	0%	68%	100%	39%	11%	50%	100%	
				<i>Change</i> (69266)	<i>+7%</i>	<i>+11%</i>		(60673)	
<i>Centrist</i> (Total newshole)	25%	1%	74%	100%	35%	29%	36%	100%	
				<i>Change</i> (39107)	<i>+10%</i>	<i>+28%</i>		(46296)	
<i>Ultra-Leftist</i> (Total newshole)	22%	4%	74%	100%	27%	23%	50%	100%	
				<i>Change</i> (36923)	<i>-5%</i>	<i>+19%</i>		(59892)	

Codes:

Total newshole covers all the newspapers' local pages in a week and is measured in square centimeters.

HK Gov = Hong Kong Government which includes the Government itself, its affiliated institutions and their officials.

PRC = Xinhua News Agency, the transitional political institutions that it has set up, the PRC officials and China-based institutions.

Others = Other newsmakers which may include social leaders, social institutions, business groups, pressure groups, individuals and the like.

The centrist and the rightist newspaper have changed their newshole allocation after the transition. The centrist increased its use of Xinhua information by as much as 28% while the corresponding increase for the rightist papers is 11%. The ultra-leftist has also raised its newshole for Xinhua by 19%. The increase for the ultra-rightist newspaper is very slight, from 1% to 2%. This pattern of change illustrates again that adjustment to changing politics is greater among groups at middle-of-the road positions, whereas the extremists change less or not at all. The greater is organizational commitment, the less is the change.

That we expect the ultra-leftist newspapers to increase its use of newshole for the government seems to be supported as well (+5%). Both the rightist and centrist have shown similar increases (centrist, +10%; rightist, +7%) which seem to be inconsistent with what is revealed in Table 2. It is possible that the declining legitimacy of the Government may appear initially in less mention of sources and later in attention per se. A group losing power takes on a label based on the group itself rather than personalities. In effect, the centrist and rightist newspaper's tendency to see the Government as a chief legitimizer is reduced but not so in terms of news value. This reasoning seems to be borne out in the next table which shows that there exists a tendency for mainstream newspapers to display less the Government in leading articles.

(3) News Display: The leading article in a page is normally reserved for the most newsworthy happening as perceived by

journalists. Therefore, an examination of whether the newspapers change their designation of leading articles with respect to the two power centers or not is expected to reveal if there is any shift in journalistic paradigms. Following the rationales that we have given for previous hypotheses, we expect to find an increase in proportion of leading news articles devoted to Xinhua as the political transition began. We also expect the ultra-leftist newspaper to designate a higher proportion of leading articles for the Government. These hypotheses seem to be supported by the results which are tabulated in Table 4.

Table 4. Display of either power center in leading news articles before and after the onset of the transition

Press Types	Past				Present			
	HK Gov	PRC	Others	Total	HK Gov	PRC	Others	Total
Ultra-Rightist (n)	62%	0%	38%	100% Change (13)	92% +30%	0% +0%	8%	100% (12)
Rightist (n)	75%	2%	33%	100% Change (55)	72% -3%	16% +14%	12%	100% (50)
Centrist (n)	100%	0%	0%	100% Change (12)	71% -29%	21% +21%	8%	100% (34)
Ultra-Leftist (n)	19%	19%	62%	100% Change (21)	40% +21%	40% +21%	20%	100% (30)

Codes:
n = number of leading public affairs news articles

HK Gov = Hong Kong Government which includes the Government itself, its affiliated institutions and their officials.
PRC = Xinhua News Agency, the transitional political institutions that it has set up, the PRC officials and China-based institutions.
Others = Other newsmakers which may include social leaders, social institutions, business groups, pressure groups, individuals and the like.

The centrist, rightist and ultra-leftist newspapers all have allocated more leading article space for Xinhua since the transition. In the past, the centrist did not portray Xinhua in any of its leading articles. Now 21% of its leading articles do so. The corresponding increase for the rightist is 14% and that for ultra-leftist is 21%. In no cases has Xinhua been the subject of a leading article by the ultra-rightist newspaper, either before or after the transition.

In accordance with our expectation, the ultra-leftist newspapers have designated a higher proportion (+21%) of their leading articles to the Government. This reflects the political compromise China has made in its contractual cooptation of the British regime as signified by the Sino-British Joint Declaration. The ultra-leftist newspapers have moved from a former extreme position on the Government towards the center, resulting in a "mainstreaming" phenomenon. The centrist and rightist have reduced prominent display of the Government (centrist, -29%; rightist, -3%). This seems to lend support to the expectation that the press' use of a resource as scarce as the leading article space reflect the decline in the Government's authority. On the contrary, the ultra-rightist tends to display the Government even more conspicuously (+30%). This seems to speak to the scarcity of resources at the disposal of the ultra-rightist newspaper in dealing with the political situation and its reliance on the Hong Kong Government in maintaining its position and influence.

(4) Direction of Coverage: The direction of news coverage is

judged on whether the titles and content of news is favorable, neutral or unfavorable to each power center in the use of words, selection and emphasis of information. The judgment sometimes assumes the coders' knowledge of Hong Kong's socio-political context and the subtle use of Chinese which is the language the newspapers used. For example, a reference to Xinhua merely as "the leftist newsagency" would be coded as "unfavorable" while a mention of Xinhua's efforts to listen to public opinion is coded as "favorable." Accusations or criticisms of a power center are regarded as "unfavorable." Government's achievements or construction plans and Xinhua's explicit concern for the welfare of Hong Kong people would be considered as "favorable" to each respectively. The "neutral" category refers to those situations in which no clear direction can be detected.

We expect the rightist and centrist papers to show favorable shifts in the direction of their coverage with Xinhua and the ultra-leftist a similar shift with the Government. The results, as tabulated in Table 5, generally support these hypotheses.

Table 5. Press' shifts in direction of news coverage

<i>Press Types</i>	<i>Hong Kong Government</i>			<i>Xinhua (PRC)</i>			
	<i>Past</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Change</i>	
<i>Ultra-Rightist</i>	Favorable	58%	58%	+7%	0	0	0%
	Neutral	45%	30%	-15%	0	19%	+19%
	Unfavorable	4%	12%	+8%	100%	81%	-19%
(n)	100%	100%		100%	100%		
	(74)	(90)		(14)	(16)		
<i>Rightist</i>	Favorable	50%	48%	-2%	43%	49%	+6%
	Neutral	41%	41%	0%	14%	30%	+16%
	Unfavorable	9%	10%	+1%	43%	20%	-23%
(n)	100%	100%		100%	100%		
	(209)	(242)		(14)	(69)		
<i>Centrist</i>	Favorable	46%	53%	+7%	45%	50%	+5%
	Neutral	48%	34%	-14%	36%	38%	+2%
	Unfavorable	6%	13%	+7%	19%	12%	-7%
(n)	100%	100%		100%	100%		
	(120)	(180)		(11)	(86)		
<i>Ultra-Leftist</i>	Favorable	21%	40%	+19%	89%	75%	-14%
	Neutral	57%	48%	-9%	6%	23%	+17%
	Unfavorable	22%	12%	-10%	6%	2%	-4%
(n)	100%	100%		100%	100%		
	(82)	(165)		(18)	(93)		

Codes:

n = number of news articles on a power center in a period of time

Hong Kong Government includes the Government itself, its affiliated institutions and their officials.

Xinhua (PRC) includes Xinhua News Agency, the transitional political institutions that it has set up, the PRC officials and China-based institutions.

The coverage of the Government in non-leftist newspapers remain highly "favorable." The ultra-rightist and centrist newspapers have even shown some increases in the proportion of news that gives "favorable" coverage to the Government (ultra-rightist, +7%; centrist, +7%). As expected, the ultra-leftist has raised its proportion of news favorable to the Government (+19%). Meanwhile, the proportion of "unfavorable" news is reduced by 10%.

Both centrist and rightist newspapers have shown some change in favor of Xinhua. The proportion of news articles favorable to Xinhua published by rightist papers increased by 6% while that for the centrist increases by 5%. It is also noticed that the proportion of news unfavorable towards Xinhua is drastically reduced in rightist newspapers by 23%. On the contrary, the ultra-leftist newspapers seemed to have become more subdued in their coverage of Xinhua (The "favorable" decreases by 14% while the "neutrals" increases by 17%). This seems to reflect their adoption of less overt ideological strategies to attract non-leftist audience. Some degree of "neutralization" towards Xinhua is observed to have occurred with the ultra-rightist newspapers as well (+19%) and some "neutralization" away from the Government happened with the centrist papers (-14%). This indicates that a cooptation strategy in operation is to induce less extreme coverage of the increasingly more powerful center -- Xinhua. The evolutionary process is not so much of the various papers showing total "conversion" as it is towards supporting the newly emerging Xinhua center as a political reality and power to be

acknowledged. This is analogous to what has happened in the so-called "objective" model of western journalism -- to rally around a "balanced" or middle position. All papers have moved towards this middle position, so that in the "present" content comparison, the differences between ultra-leftist and rightist newspapers, on these measures, have declined substantially, resulting in a "mainstreaming" phenomenon.

Journalistic Paradigms in Flux (III)

A litmus test of whether the newspapers have shifted their perception of the new power center is their evaluation of China's plans to retake Hong Kong. The future of Hong Kong was the issue that dominated the news from September 1982 to February 1986. The unfolding of the issue corresponds to the zig-zags of the Sino-British negotiation, its conclusion in the signing of the Joint Declaration and the inception of a transitional political program. The emphasis of this analysis is on the newspapers' editorial stance on the question of returning Hong Kong to China in 1997 under the scheme of "one country, two systems." We shall illustrate our observations with relatively lengthy quotations to explore the context of change as fully as possible.

Editorials relevant to the future issue of Hong Kong published by the sampled papers between September 1982 and February 1986 are included in our content analysis, which in this case means intensive comparative reading. A distribution of the editorials that we have content analysed is tabulated in Table 6.

Table 6. Distribution of editorials analysed

Ultra rightist	<i>Hong Kong Times</i>	96
	<i>Kung Sheung</i>	229
Rightist	<i>Sing Tao</i>	114
	<i>Wah Kiu</i>	62
Centrist	<i>Ming Pao</i>	310
	<i>Sing Pao</i>	60
	<i>Oriental Daily News</i>	121
Ultra-leftist	<i>Wen Wei</i>	85
	<i>Ta Kung</i>	55

N = 1132

With the exception of Sing Pao whose old issues are not all available, the pool of editorials we examined form a near-population sample.

Overview of Paradigm Shifts

The paradigm shifts are in tandem with the political transition and the crisis that precedes the transition. When China revealed in 1982 and 1983 of its intention and plans of regaining Hong Kong, the ultra-rightist, rightist and centrist responded with distrust and doubts. The general conclusion was that Hong Kong's stability and prosperity could not be maintained once China resumes its rule. While specific directions of editorials was not counted in the content analysis, these newspapers appeared to support the British Government in negotiating for the continuation of British presence beyond 1997. Cracks in the centrist and rightist journalistic paradigms became discernable after Hu Yaobang, head of CCP, announced in July 1983 that China would retake Hong Kong on July 1, 1997. It seemed that the pace and methods of accommodation varies among the mainstream newspapers whose overall shift in stance was precipitated by the British announcement of forfeiting Hong Kong in April 1984 and the initializing of the Joint Declaration in September the same year. Some showed more abrupt change in their stances. What was once cited to argue against Chinese policies can be reinterpreted in their favor. Some accommodated gradually, in close tandem with the unfolding of the political situation. This often occurred with

Chinese officials speaking through the editorials of these papers in lengthy quotations and elaborations. Meanwhile, the ultra-leftist journalistic paradigm adjusted to the political development by moderating its anti-colonial stance. The ultra-rightist journalistic paradigm is the only one that persists editorially even though this one has shown some signs of accommodation. In the subsections below, we shall report how each newspaper adjusts its editorial stance with respect to the Sino-British negotiation and its outcome.

Rightist Journalistic Paradigm

Sing Tao(rightist): Between the two mainstream rightist newspapers, Sing Tao and Wah Kiu, the former is relatively more persistent in voicing its support for continual British rule. At the inception stage of the sovereignty issue, Sing Tao reflected its preference for the British position clearly in its editorials. It said:"There is no place for the British in Communist China's blueprint for Hong Kong. Under this circumstance, would the British remain to take up some administrative responsibilities? Definitely no. But whether the British has the full administrative power or not is the determinant of confidence and movement of capital. Beijing leaders have missed this point."¹⁷ Like many non-leftist newspapers Sing Tao had confidence in the British initial apparent commitment to fend off mainland China from retaking Hong Kong. Right after Britain agreed to negotiate with China over the future of Hong Kong in 1982, Sing Tao editorialized: "Mrs. Thatcher, in the first hours of her

first day in Hong Kong, has twice pledged that Britain would be responsible to Hong Kong people and to express their interest during negotiations with mainland China.....Because she has correctly grasped the 'reality' of Hong Kong people and their desire to maintain the status quo, she is really qualified to perform the promised responsibility and to express Hong Kong people's interest."¹⁸ Sing Tao continued to show its support of the Hong Kong and British Governments throughout the negotiation period.¹⁹ The British promise of commitment, coupled with overestimation of China's economic dependence on Hong Kong and underestimation of her political considerations, Sing Tao, like many mainstream newspapers came to conclude that there were "absolute reasons" to believe that Hong Kong had a "bright future" (i.e. maintaining the status quo).²⁰

Right after the initialization of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, Sing Tao began to reverse its editorial stand. It acquiesced to the political formation on the one hand and to place its confidence in Beijing on the other, saying: "The five million people of Hong Kong have no choice but to have confidence in the 'Sino-British Agreement' which determines Hong Kong's future. It is superfluous to doubt whether Hong Kong people have confidence or not. Moreover, there is no reason why the Chinese majority of the local population who have created prosperity during British rule cannot maintain Hong Kong's prosperity when it is returned to China. It is clear that the rise and fall of Hong Kong, from now on, depends not only on the Hong Kong people but primarily on Beijing. If Beijing

has confidence in implementing the 'Sino-British Agreement' and the scheme of 'one country, two systems,' Hong Kong's future prosperity will certainly be greater than it is now." ²¹

Since the beginning of transition, Sing Tao has been quite consistent in rendering its editorial support to Xinhua's policies in general. Past worries about economic collapse induced by China's plans of retaking Hong Kong seemed to have been replaced by growing confidence. In late 1984, it positively evaluated the economic situation, saying: "Businessmen and government economic agencies from all the world have revived their confidence in investing in Hong Kong in the past ten months. The speed and magnitude of investment growth is unparalleled. This is very important for it at least erases people's worries about Hong Kong's future and the gloomy atmosphere, encouraging Hong Kong citizens to strive on for further economic prosperity and social stability." The very first condition for the growth of confidence in Hong Kong, according to the same editorial, is to implement the 'Sino-British Agreement.' ²²

In an annual review editorial, Sing Tao even showed national pride in regard to the political development. It said: "The dust aroused by the two-year-long negotiation over Hong Kong's future is now settled as a result of the formal signing of the Sino-British Agreement. The wounds and tears caused by the Opium War on the sons and daughters of China will soon fade into history. The life style that Hong Kong people value is guaranteed for fifty years in black and white. At the same time, both Mainland China and Taiwan have

scored notable achievements in developing their economies and living standards. They together with the steadily progressing Hong Kong -- each with its own merits -- form a tri-partite system which incidentally constitutes an economic force to be able to compete with Japan." ²³ Such an optimistic vision was unthinkable just one year ago. So is this conclusion in one of its more recent editorials: "First we must have confidence in Mainland China in implementing the 'Sino-British Joint Declaration' (which it formerly called the 'Sino-British Agreement' after the British fashion). Second, we should consciously and voluntarily work for a stable transition. Lastly, we should be proud to be Chinese and to return a perfect Hong Kong to China (which it formerly referred to as 'Communist China' or 'Mainland China'). Every citizen should work for this from now on." ²⁴

Wah Kiu (Rightist): It shared with Sing Tao these initial propositions: (1) China was unlikely to retake Hong Kong for economic and strategic reasons; ²⁵ (2) The British Prime Minister and other British officials were trustworthy as negotiators on behalf of Hong Kong people. ²⁶ Wah Kiu is different from Sing Tao in some respects: One is that Wah Kiu did not voice so strong an opposition to China's principal policies such as "letting Hong Kong people administer Hong Kong". When it did, it spoke indirectly through quoting other social leaders who happened to dissent. ²⁷ The other is that it explicitly argued against internationalization of the Hong Kong issue, as strongly urged by the ultra-rightist newspapers and Sing Tao. ²⁸

(3) Wah Kiu seemed to show signs of acquiescence earlier than Sing Tao. It is observed to have quoted Chinese officials more often and at greater length even before Britain made known public its intention to withdraw from Hong Kong. During the heat of negotiation in 1983, Wah Kiu quoted lengthily from Hu Yaobang, chairman of CCP, who had proclaimed the exact date of retaking Hong Kong, saying: "Now Hu Yaobang has once and for all stated the date, we no longer need to guess and speculate. Given a definite period, we had better prepare in our own social positions for the new reality that is emerging."²⁹ Clear signs of accommodation did not appear until January 1984. It said in an editorial: "For China (formerly referred to as 'Communist China' or 'Mainland China') to retake Hong Kong's sovereignty as well as jurisdictional power is absolutely righteous because Hong Kong is part of Chinese territories and its inhabitants are Chinese. If China, which owns the land and the people, is not entitled to Hong Kong's sovereignty and jurisdiction, what kind of ridiculous world would it be?"³⁰ Even shortly before the Joint Declaration was initialized, Wah Kiu already asserted that Hong Kong people then "had no reasons to feel uneasy for lack of confidence in the future of Hong Kong."³¹

The above analysis leads us to conclude that the rightist journalistic paradigm has shifted in favor of Xinhua as hypothesized.

Centrist Journalistic Paradigm

Oriental Daily News(Centrist): It used to publish a very short editorial which seldom touches on controversies and commands very little respect even among its own journalists. An overhaul of all these short editorials reveal that only on really important occasions such as the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration did it comment on Hong Kong's future. When it did, it merely restated what is generally accepted. It appears that the Oriental Daily has avoided taking a formal and explicit stance before and during the political transition. As previously mentioned, it chose to indicate its preference through other means such as its signed columns. It is the Miu Yu Column, written by a deputy chief editor, displayed prominently in the international news page and generally regarded as its "surrogate editorial", that we content analysed to detect if there is any paradigm shift on the part of the Daily.

At the inception of the Hong Kong issue, Miu Yu held the position that nationalism was an "abstract" principle which, however, did not dictate the return of Hong Kong to China. He said: "From the hundreds of readers' letters sent to me, not a single one agrees to the immediate retaking of Hong Kong. Does this indicate that the Daily's readers do not care about the righteousness of nationalism? When righteousness contradicts a little with interest, we need to keep cool in the analysis of costs and benefits. This is not to say that the righteousness of nationalism can be done away with. But in the last analysis, nationalism is mental, conceptual, theoretical and

abstract in nature while interest is concrete and personal. At this juncture, labelling other people as 'traitors to Chinese nationalism' does not speak to the righteousness of the labellers but their craziness."³² He often reiterated the concern for China's "inevitable" interference in Hong Kong affairs should it become China's special administrative region. He commented: "Despite that the Chinese constitution may be drawn upon to protect 'one country, two systems' or 'one country, two sets of law', it is inevitable that the lawmakers will include some Mainland Chinese other than British and Hong Kong citizens and that the present supreme court of appeal in London will be relocated in Beijing -- by then the spirit of the rule of law in the British tradition will be all scraped."³³ In short, in Miu Yu's estimation, "one country, two systems" is an infeasible idea.

Signs of positional shift can be detected as early as December 8, 1983. Miu Yu concluded one of his columns as follows: "Beijing has sufficiently understood the importance of Hong Kong's prosperity. What the Hong Kong people are afraid of is that Communist China may fail to recognise this and "irrationally" act out in Hong Kong. But all indicators seem to point out that this fear is unnecessary."³⁴ Miu Yu's increasingly favorable portrayal of Xinhua is further evidenced in a column that commented on Xu Jiatun's (Director of Xinhua in Hong Kong) first new year speech. It is the first time that the head of Xinhua Hong Kong Branch has ever made such a speech. In the past, no media organizations had invited the highest Chinese

representative in Hong Kong to make such kind of speeches. This happening indicates that Xinhua's increasingly significant role in Hong Kong affairs begins to command greater attention from the mass media. Director Xu Jiatun's acceptance to make the speech is not a 'super-governor's' act to overwhelm Hong Kong. On the contrary, only a rejection (of invitation to speak) will pose himself as a 'super-governor'."³⁵

In the past, Mu Yiu often asserted that CCP was not trustworthy by virtue of its historical record. He seemed to have developed a very different perspective by April 1984. He said: "The present leaders of CCP have repeatedly self-criticized (their past radical lines) in their public speeches. In light of their ideals and interest, the sincerity of their self-criticism is not to be doubted. This new consciousness has induced the birth of the concept of 'one country, two systems' which is different in nature from the CCP's deceptive policies on nationalist bourgeoisie in the fifties."³⁶ If we analyse Communist China's policies in Hong Kong merely in light of its past record and neglect all its present changes, we may be far from the truth."³⁷ Miu Yu began to exemplify "one country, two systems" as a solution for solving many international conflicts. He said: "In fact, the 'one country, two systems' concept invented by China is receiving increasing international attention and is generally evaluated to be a very honest and solid formulation that may be applicable in numerous international conflicts such as those between the Germanies and the Koreas."³⁸ From then on, Miu Yu

continued to expound on the Chinese policies on Hong Kong in his columns,³⁹ quoting economic figures to support his optimistic evaluation of the future and sometimes to explain away what he saw as misunderstanding between Chinese leaders and the local press.⁴⁰

Sing Pao(Centrist): Its editorial position during the early stage of negotiation is generally mild and somewhat obscure, and its apoliticality was evidenced by the absence of editorials until mid-1983. A more revealing editorial, then, was published on September 23, 1983 saying: "China always says that it will reclaim Hong Kong when the time is right. Is the expiration of the lease of the New Territories the right moment? Following the major goal set by China, let us use modernization as the criterion of judgment. Leaving Hong Kong as it is facilitates China's modernization while the opposite is true. Taking modernization as the criterion is a flexible way of doing things while overemphasis on the expiration of the lease is an indication of rigidity. It is not only rigidity, it also damages a friendship (between Britain and Hong Kong) that has lasted for more than 30 years."⁴¹ Sing Pao's editorial stance to maintain the status quo was somehow precipitated by Jardine Company's (a leading corporation historically tied to Hong Kong) decision to relocate at Bermuda. With a sense of urgency, it said: "Communist China should renew its understanding of Hong Kong, do away with the 'emotional part' and revise the plans concerning Hong Kong's future. Within the principle of retaking Hong Kong's sovereignty, formulate policies on the concrete basis of the situation to preserve Hong

Kong's stability and prosperity and to facilitate the modernization of our mother country and its whole unification.In fact, the assumption of sovereignty itself is sufficient (to fulfil nationalism) -- after that, Hong Kong should be left alone to become a sufficiently autonomous, free, democratic, prosperous and stable international city."⁴²

Sing Pao's appraisal of the final outcome of the negotiation, in contrast, is much less reserved. When the date of initializing the Joint Declaration was drawing near, Sing Pao began to emphasize the legal-binding power of the Joint Declaration and to portray it as the brainchild of 'far-sighted politicians'.⁴³ Sing Pao's highly favorable evaluation of the scheme of "one nation, two systems" is revealed in a series of editorials after the initialization of the Joint Declaration. One of them said: "The general reaction to the Joint Declaration just released is good because it is unexpectedly detailed and specific. It is better than expected. Overall, the majority of Hong Kong people have accepted it. What differs is only their extent of acceptance."⁴⁴ In another editorial, Sing Pao pointed out the implication of the Joint Declaration as follows: "We thought the most significant meaning implied by initialization of the Joint Declaration is that Hong Kong people will gradually become the master of Hong Kong, holding their fate and future in their own hands." Sing Pao's positive assessment of China's policies in Hong Kong seems to increase with time. On January 7, 1986 it said: "In 1985 which just ended, the greatest achievement of Hong Kong is its enhanced

political stability. One year after the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, the feasibility of 'one country, two systems' has become more and more deeply rooted in people's hearts."⁴⁶

To sum up, Sing Pao has switched from a relatively obscure editorial stance in favor of maintaining the status quo to one that is supportive of Chinese policies on Hong Kong or the new status quo. It was a paper heavily identified with the existing power and one of the first to shift when the power balance shifted. It is a case demonstrating the paper's commitment to power per se rather than to an ideological base.

Ming Pao(Centrist): Besides making responses to unfolding events, it often made suggestions to mediate among the positions of all three parties that are affected by the outcome of negotiations: the Chinese, the British and the Hong Kong people. Its accommodation of Xinhua as a power center occurs in very close tandem with the political development. In effect, its paradigm shift, particularly during the period prior to the British announcement of its decision to give up Hong Kong's sovereignty, is very gradual and smooth. Its shift becomes more obvious only as the dust surrounding the future was about to settle.

Ming Pao is one of the newspapers that urged that Hong Kong's future be dealt with explicitly for economic reasons.⁴⁷ At the inception of the issue, Ming Pao seemed to be confident that China would not retake Hong Kong as soon as 1997. It observed in 1981: "Thorough studies on the historical, legal, economic, political,

"Thorough studies on the historical, legal, economic, political, diplomatic and strategic aspects of the [future] issue have been made. The consensus is that it is quite unlikely that China will take back Hong Kong or the New Territories in 1997 when the New Territories lease expires."⁴⁸ Ming Pao revealed its political preference in its analysis and the use of parables: "Some people hold the view that following the takeover by China and the introduction of limited changes to the system here prosperity may still survive. This is from an idealistic rather than a pragmatic point of view and is not founded on facts. Hong Kong is a strange goose laying golden eggs. It is not beautiful at all, offensive to the eyes for many others. However, if it is stripped of its ugly feathers and dressed in phoenix or peacock feathers, it will cease to lay golden eggs."⁴⁹ While Ming Pao's trust in Britain's commitment to Hong Kong was not as strong as the rightist papers, it had voiced in defence of Mrs. Thatcher's promise of moral responsibility towards Hong Kong against leftist newspapers' criticism.⁵⁰ It upheld the belief that the British, being on the weak side of the negotiation table, had three cards in their favor. One is the "public opinion card" which means that the majority of Hong Kong's citizens do not like to have any political change. The second is the "prosperity and stability card" which refers to the Chinese concern to preserve Hong Kong's status quo for economic reasons. The third is the "international treaty card" which refers to China's obligation to observe the Nanking Treaty by which Hong Kong is ceded to Britain. With these

three cards in hand, Ming Pao predicted that the British will have more to bargain for than simply giving up Hong Kong's sovereignty and agreeing to the plan of "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong."⁵¹ Ming Pao, in general, is doubtful about the practicability of the Chinese policies which were being disclosed. In an editorial commenting on a leading Chinese official's promises of no changes in Hong Kong after 1997, Ming Pao was explicitly worried about the continuity of China's policies when its leaders passed away.⁵² Meanwhile, Ming Pao did not think that the Chinese leaders would be willing to state their promises in black and white.⁵³

After Hu Yaobang, head of CCP, made it known that China would regain Hong Kong on July 1, 1997, Ming Pao was observed to have shown growing accommodation to China's plans. Commenting on Ji Pengfei's (head of China's Hong Kong and Macao Office) promises of high degree of autonomous rule by Hong Kong people, the rule of law and the free flow of capital, Ming Pao said: "For fairness' sake, we would say the measures enumerated by Ji Pengfei are liberal enough to make the people here feel satisfied. There are still some issues to be touched upon.... But these can hardly be described as key issues."⁵⁴ Since then Ming Pao began to publish lengthy editorials to provide economic, political and strategic rationales for Chinese policies, saying that they might not be untrustworthy after all.⁵⁵ While Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang took the initiative to reiterate the Chinese policies on Hong Kong during his address to the joint session of the Canadian parliament in June 1983, Ming Pao was quick to point

out that it represented "official pledge and guarantee to the people throughout the world" and reflected China's "sincerity" in implementing its pledge.⁵⁶

Ming Pao's editorial show of accommodation appeared to have made a quantum leap as the date of initializing the Joint Declaration drew near. It is observed to have quoted Xinhua or Chinese officials lengthily and favorably in its editorials or to explain what it perceived to be public misunderstanding of China's policies.⁵⁷ This accommodation finally culminated in a series of editorials which gave very high evaluations of the concept of "one country, two systems" and the Sino-British Joint Declaration. In an article especially written for the People's Daily (CCP's official paper), Louis Cha, publisher and frequent editorial writer of Ming Pao, reiterated the idea that the concept of "one country, two systems", being "far-sighted and grand in scope", serves as a model of conflict resolution for all the world. Quoting an old Chinese saying, Cha concluded that it is "a dictum that can teach a hundred generations."⁵⁸ Ming Pao has argued that Hong Kong people should have confidence in the scheme of "one country, two systems" because it is born of concrete situation and not out of ideological orthodox and is linked to China's primary goals.⁵⁹ Evaluating the Joint Declaration, Ming Pao said: "After a detailed reading of the agreement, we discovered the demands that have been raised in the past two years have all been incorporated. We may say that both China and Britain have accepted all -- not just the basic ones but 100% of the requests made by the majority of Hong

Kong people. We cannot really think of what else to add to such an agreement. Hong Kong people have got what they wished, what else can they ask?"

Being a prominent member of both the Basic Law Drafting and Consultative Committees, Cha has professed to participate actively to effect a smooth political transition. As evidenced by Ming Pao's editorials since formal commencement of the transitional period, it has served the important functions of fostering Hong Kong people's general confidence, clarifying and legitimating the policies as promulgated by Chinese officials.⁶⁰

Ultra-rightist Journalistic Paradigm

The ultra-rightist newspapers, Kung Sheung and Hong Kong Times, have taken very critical editorial positions towards China's policies. The ultra-rightist journalistic paradigm as evidenced by the papers' editorial stance persists to a large extent but there are also signs of accommodation. During the Sino-British negotiation, the ultra-rightist newspapers strongly supported the British Government in securing continual rule over Hong Kong. In an editorial welcoming Mrs. Margaret Thatcher to visit Hong Kong, the Times said: "In an interview with BBC, Mrs. Thatcher repeatedly stated that Britain is responsible to the five million people of Hong Kong. She also mentioned that Hong Kong's prosperity is attributable to British rule over the years. Hong Kong citizens have faith in Britain which is responsible to them. The British prime minister has

also restated that Britain will keep the three Sino-British treaties which cannot be repealed at will. Our previous quotations from Mrs. Thatchers prove that this British Prime Minister pays considerable attention to the interest and wishes of the Hong Kong people."⁶¹ Both Kung Sheung and the Times seemed to agree that "the nature of the Hong Kong problem" could not be summarized in concepts like "national interest" or "nationalism" but the "livelihood of the Hong Kong people." Kung Sheung suggested that the "autonomous independence" of Hong Kong was the appropriate realization of "nationalism."⁶² The Times tended to emphasize that China is not a legitimate negotiator with Britain over Hong Kong's sovereignty. It simply denied the validity of the Joint Declaration which is produced by the negotiation.⁶³

A recurring theme of the ultra-rightist newspapers before and after the signing of the Joint Declaration is that "one country, two systems" is nothing but a "united front gimmick" designed to deceive Hong Kong people.⁶⁴ In an editorial, the Times drew on China's tumultuous history in the past thirty years and described China's policies as "sugar-coated poisons".⁶⁵ Exactly the same simili had been used by Kung Sheung in its reference to China's promise of autonomous rule in Hong Kong. It said: "The slogan of 'Hong Kong people adminsiterring Hong Kong' and the idea of turning Hong Kong into a 'special administrative region' have dangerous ulterior motives. They are sugar-coated poisons designed to kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand, they soften Hong Kong people's

determination to maintain Hong Kong as it is. On the other, nationalism, as they seemingly imply, disarms the Hong Kong people from resisting."⁶⁶

Since the commencement of political transition, the editorial agenda of the ultra-rightist newspapers paralleled the transitional program initiated by China. These papers have responded to the signing of the Joint Declaration, the establishment of the Basic Law Drafting and Consultative Committees, the Xinhua and Chinese officials' elaborations of the concept of "one country, two systems."⁶⁷ In terms of editorial direction, neither the Times nor Kung Sheung, before its closure in late 1984, showed signs of paradigm shift. However, the political realignment has induced the Times to take a tactical turn from hardline anti-communism to more "rational" anti-communism as reflected in the ouster of staunch anti-communist columnists, the cancellation of a page for anti-communism and the softening of its rhetorics. The Times has also printed news about local rightist groups which called upon Beijing officials to let Hong Kong have parliamentary democracy. This theme is reiterated in the Times own editorial as well. Such acts represent an indirect and subtle way of acquiescing to the political development. Meanwhile, Kung Sheung has opted out in face of what it perceived to be an increasingly hostile political environment.

Ultra-leftist Journalistic Paradigm

The ultra-leftist newspapers are similar in their editorial stance, which has become far more moderate toward the Hong Kong Government. The papers toned down its anti-colonial rhetoric, perceiving in a new light the institutions and policies they once criticized.

As late as mid-1983, Governor Youde was portrayed by Wen Wei in an editorial as a local agent of the British Empire whose interest is far from being congruent with that of the Hong Kong community.⁶⁸ In the heat of the "public opinion war" amidst negotiation deadlocks, Wen Wei and Ta Kung published several editorials which in effect tended to delegitimize colonial rule. One of them asked a series of rhetorical questions: "What is the Hong Kong Government? A fair coordinator and distributor of interest or a partial ruler in favor of corporate interest at the sacrifice of public welfare? Does the Government really listen to public opinion or does it merely act from its own interest and the opinions of a few? We have often heard of boasts about the Government's respect for public opinion and the perfection of its political system, but on the issue of price raises, where is this respect for public opinion?"⁶⁹ No sooner had the Joint Declaration been initialized in 1984 than both papers switched their editorial stance to legitimize the Hong Kong Governor as a ruler serving common good. In an editorial commenting on the Governor's annual report, Wen Wei said: "At the conclusion of the Sino-British negotiation, people doubted whether Hong Kong's prosperity could be

preserved, Governor Youde's third report has given positive answers."⁷⁰ In the same vein, the ultra-leftist newspapers have moderated their traditionally critical evaluations of the Government's performance, as evidenced by Wen Wei's annual review of Hong Kong in 1985 which gave this "considered" and "upbeat" comment on the economy's decline in growth: "In spite of the general slackening of the world's economy and the rise of trade protectionism, Hong Kong's economy remains stable and has secured some growth. In light of the neighboring area's zero or negative growth, we can only conclude that Hong Kong's economic achievement is not easily achieved."⁷¹

Whenever a critical agency shifts to support a new configuration of power, that agency will ordinarily be rewarded for such modification. The moderation of the ultra-leftist newspapers in their stance towards the Government is China's crucial acknowledgement of the Government as a fundamental part of the machinery for maintaining social stability.

Likewise, one of Hong Kong Government's institutions, the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), once labelled as a reformist organization designed to rectify corruption inherent in colonial capitalism and to serve the function of lengthening and smoothening colonial rule, are now cast in very different terms. Commenting on the ICAC's interrogation of a number of social celebrities involved in a fraud, Ta Kung Pao extolled ICAC's acts as symbols of a society being ruled by law and unequivocally proclaimed

ICAC as a "positive factor" for Hong Kong as a whole. It said: "The people charged by ICAC will certainly be tried according to strict legal procedures. Hong Kong remains a society ruled by law and the citizens still have confidence in legal justice. People need not speculate about what is behind the scenes. What we want to point out is this: The establishment of ICAC is no doubt a positive factor for Hong Kong society."⁷² In the same vein, Wen Wei Pao has shown unprecedented enthusiasm for the Government's decision to go on with a construction project. It seized the chance to confirm the existence and future of Hong Kong's stability and prosperity which in the past the ultra-leftist papers often described as "deceptive" or "distorted."⁷³

In the past, the ultra-leftist newspapers seldom commented on Government-sponsored elections. When they did, the comments were generally not so favorable. The Government's plans in the seventies to promote a sense of belonging were perceived as attempts to check the potential growth of nationalism among the students. Entering political transition, the ultra-leftist newspapers have adopted a more encouraging stance towards such elections. In an editorial on district council elections in early 1985, Wen Wei argued that "an active participation in public affairs" is "essential."⁷⁴ Besides, it suggested that the Government practise civil education to ensure that the voters know what they are doing. In conclusion, it expressed its wish for a sense of belonging, saying: "Hopefully, this District Council Election can enhance the citizens' sense of social

participation."

The moderation of anti-colonialism does not imply that the ultra-leftist press refrain from criticizing the Hong Kong government in toto. It is only that the criticisms are now framed as "constructive" suggestions to perfect the system while in the past they were voiced as structural deficiencies of colonial rule.

Summing up, as evidenced by the newspapers' editorial stance on the future of Hong Kong, journalistic paradigms have undergone a general shift in favor of Xinhua and China. This shift is most notable with the centrist and the rightist newspapers. While the ultra-rightist newspaper continues to adopt a "non-recognition policy" towards China and the Sino-British Joint Declaration, it has shown a slight level of accommodation in its call on the citizens to strive for democracy and to maximize Hong Kong's autonomy under the scheme of "one country, two systems." The ultra-rightist press has moderated its anti-colonial stance and has become generally supportive of the Hong Kong Government.

Conclusion

The primary research question of this study is how the mass media relate to fundamental change in the configuration of political power. Evidence in terms of the press' organizational adaptation strategies, changes in editorial policies and newspaper content have convergently shown that the press, on the whole, has responded positively to the cooptative strategies of both power centers. Particularly notable is the centrist and rightist general shift from an initial preference for continual British rule to final acquiescence to China's plans for retaking Hong Kong. Publishers and journalists, among other social leaders, are disproportionately represented in the political institutions China has set up for the transition. Xinhua is generally given heavy coverage. All newspapers have shown a shift towards a middle position towards Xinhua in news reporting, attesting to a mainstreaming process in Hong Kong's newsmaking. Mediated discourse is now subject to the parametric constraints implied by the concept of "one country, two systems." Social stability and prosperity which used to be upheld by the press as the most significant criteria in evaluating social happenings, are now defined and discussed in changing parameters. Formerly, they were viewed to be inseparable from, if not equivalent to, the continuation of colonial rule. Now, they are cast in light of the preservation of capitalism within a socialist country.

The journalistic paradigms are found to shift with the press' political ideology or affiliation. As expected, the centrist and

rightist newspapers, by virtue of higher organizational and ideological flexibility, have shown much greater accommodation to Xinhua than have the ultra-rightist newspapers. While responding positively to Xinhua's cooptation strategies, the rightist press began to play duplicity with CCP and KMT, thereby blurring the ideological distinction that used to differentiate the rightists from the centrists which claim to be equidistant from both parties. The two ultra-rightist newspapers, Kung Sheung and Hong Kong Times, have adopted expected but different paths of adaptation. Kung Sheung has chosen to opt out while the Times has chosen to stay (at least for now) and has softened its hardline anti-communism rhetorics. As 1997 draws nearer, the pressure on the Times to acquiesce to the scheme of "one country, two systems" is expected to grow, to which it may respond by accommodating Xinhua as a legitimate power center or committing to an extreme position and leaving Hong Kong altogether. The ultra-leftist newspapers, while directed by Xinhua to serve China in the exposition and interpretation of China's policies in Hong Kong, have moderated their anti-colonial overtones and have shown unprecedented support of the colonial government since the onset of the political transition. These emergent cordial relations between the leftist newspapers and the Government is expected to continue in the run-up to 1997 because the sino-British Joint Declaration has decreed that China should provide the Hong Kong Government with the necessary cooperation to maintain stability and prosperity in Hong Kong.

The market mechanism has been found to be both a facilitating and limiting factor of the press' accommodation of Hong Kong's political realignment. Market considerations not only affect the conduct of the commercial press (centrist and rightist) but also the party-controlled newspapers as they are all bound in a competitive environment. Locked in a competition, it has been a general policy for the press to ensure not to exclusively omit an important piece of information. This results in heavy coverage of Xinhua and thus accelerates its legitimation as a power center. At the same time, the market can be a restraint to the press' pace and extent of journalistic paradigm shift because too quick and too great a shift in favor of the new power center is estimated to be detrimental to the press' lifeblood -- credibility. Consequently, the press tends to balance itself between political demands and audience acceptability. The paradigm shifts in a partisan and commercial press like Hong Kong's is therefore essentially the resultant of the interaction among three variables: (1) social formation as represented by the emergence of the dualistic power structure; (2) the press' political ideology or partisanship and (3) the market mechanism that binds all the newspapers. The theoretical question that follows is to identify the limits of such interactions.

In a political transition that is gradual and peaceful, as typified by the case of Hong Kong, the shift in journalistic paradigm is cumulative and incremental, in tandem with the political transition and the crisis that preceded the transition. The new

journalistic paradigms are born of the old. They have shown both continuities and discontinuities. The changes as mentioned above add up to what may be called a paradigm shift with respect to the power centers. However, the shift is not completed yet. It is expected to deepen and consolidate as the political transition draw closer to 1997 when power formally change hands. But given Hong Kong's existing private ownership of enterprise in general and media in particular, as well as the structural constraints on China to keep its promise of preserving Hong Kong's capitalism intact beyond 1997, there will continue to be a pluralistic construction of reality with respect to local affairs. In this regard, a reduction of all journalistic paradigms to a single one that is submissive to Xinhua and China is therefore inconceivable. In fact, all non-leftist newspapers have expressed considerable concern for Hong Kong's autonomy and local interest which seem to have become the salient feature of the emergent mainstream journalistic paradigms.

The shift of journalistic paradigm is not necessarily a linear and irreversible process. Paradigms may regress when the undesirable scenarios previously predicted by the press seems to be borne out by reality, i.e. when there is a change in power that is damaging to the very interest of the newspapers and the groups they serve. Specifically, paradigm regression may ensue if China is perceived to fail to carry out its promise as stated in the Sino-British Joint Declaration. Regression is expected to be small-scale and temporary if such "broken promises" are relatively limited in scope.⁷⁵ Should

China drastically reverse its policy to preserve capitalism in Hong Kong, extensive and lasting regression may happen. Regression as such may take the form of opting out or outright denial of "one country, two systems" as a feasible scheme. Given the configurations of international relations and China's goals to modernize and to reunify with Taiwan, it is unlikely that China will make drastic policy reversals. It follows that large-scale paradigm regression is unlikely to happen. Longitudinal studies over the coming decade in Hong Kong should provide us with a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of paradigm shifts.

From an international vantage, this is a case study. As with all case studies, it can be accused of atypicality. Admittedly, this study is embedded in the socio-political and cultural context of Hong Kong whose specificity may reduce the generality of the model of shifting journalistic paradigm as explicated here. However, what appears to be the uniqueness of this study may contribute to the formulation of a more general model of paradigm shifts if enough cases over a wide range of situations are available for comparison. Specifically, the shift of journalistic paradigms in gradual and scheduled political change, as in the case of Hong Kong, can be fruitfully compared with cases where power change hands more abruptly or violently such as the cases of the Iranian, the Phillipine and the Chinese Communist revolutions.

Notes

- 1 Thomas Kuhn introduced the concept of "paradigm" in 1962 to explain the growth of science. Since then, he has kindled a series of discussion and debates in both the physical as well as social sciences. Kuhn used the term in some twenty senses which Masterman (1970) has boiled down to three main types: The first is labelled "metaphysical paradigm," a total worldview, gestalt, or Weltanschauung within a given science. Paradigm is a way of "seeing", a general organizing principle governing perception, a "map" that describes which entities exist and how they behave. In effect, a paradigm defines the concerns and the non-concerns of a scientific community, guides the scientists where to look (and where not to look) and informs the scientists what he can expect to discover when he finds and examines the entities of concern in his field. The other two definitions are only parts of the metaphysical paradigm. One defines paradigm by an "exemplar" and another by "specific tools" and "instruments." Although the original thrust of Kuhn's notion of paradigm is derived from its metaphysical use, Kuhn (1970a,b) seemed to have retreated from this definition in face of criticism of the looseness of the concept (Lakatos and Musgrave, 1970). As Ritzer (1975) rightfully argues, it is exactly this gestalt view of the concept that is most inspiring and useful for his attempt to structure sociological theory. Likewise, it is primarily the gestalt view of paradigm that we want to borrow to refer to a set of broadly shared assumptions about how to gather and interpret information relevant to information-producing fields in general and newsmaking in particular.
- 2 Psychologically speaking, Fensterheim and Tresselt (1953) argue that the less well defined the stimulus, the greater the contribution of the perceiver. Analogously, Hall (1970) pointed out that the role of the media in the labelling process is at its maximum in situations that are unfamiliar or ambiguous.
- 3 Strictly speaking, there may be a distinction between "journalistic paradigm" and "news frame". News frames seem to be concrete manifestations of journalistic paradigms which are more general and encompassing in nature. However, when used collectively, news frames are equivalent to journalistic paradigms.
- 4 Herbert Gans, in concluding his extensive study of journalists, urges that news be freed from the constraints of the prevailing news perspective and let "multiperspectival" news bloom. Altheide and Snow (1979:10) view media logic as consisting of "a form of communication; the process through which media present and transmit information. Elements of this form include the various media and the formats used by these media. Format consists, in

- part, of how the material is organized, the style in which it is presented, the focus or emphasis on particular characteristics of behavior and the grammar of media communication. Format becomes a framework or a perspective that is used to present as well as interpret phenomena."
- 5 From a legal point of view, the colonial regime in Hong Kong has immense coercive power at its disposal in dealing with the press. Hong Kong's ordinances run into hundreds, of which over thirty set exceedingly tough restrictions on press freedom (Shen, 1972; Lau, 1986). If the law means every bit what it says and if the Government, the courts and police are to translate zealously the letter and the spirit of the ordinances and regulations into action, Hong Kong's mass media, especially the press, would be drastically affected. The ordinances have been enforced in some rare cases (such as the riots in 1956 and 1967).
 - 6 An indicator of a consumption society is its advertising budget. In the early seventies, advertising revenue in Hong Kong ranges from \$400 million to \$500 million. In 1984, it has leapfrogged to \$1.5 billion, an increase of three times as much. (Hong Kong Standard, February 8, 1984). The number of advertising firms increases from 150 in 1975 to 649 in 1981 ("Survey of Employment, Vacancies and Payroll 1975-1981). Associated with the growth of advertising is the development of the consumer market. The Japanese calculate that Hong Kong is only lagging behind Japan as a consumer society by about four years. Hong Kong has presumably entered in the mid-seventies the mass consumption stage that Japan entered in the early 1970s. It is expected that Hong Kong will follow Japan into an age of more sophisticated consumption on the back of its property-owning, young, affluent middle class. ("Survey Hong Kong," the Economist, May 11, 1985).
 - 7 Needless to say, a random sample is meaningless because when stratified by party affiliation, each press type has a subpopulation of only a few. The sample were chosen on the basis of the papers' social significance within each press category.
 - 8 "Inaugural Proclamation," Kung Sheung, July 8, 1925. (In Chinese)
 - 9 China is known to have made such requests in 1956 and 1973. The Governor in 1956, Sir Alexander Grantham, was reported to have remarked on the issue, saying: "There's no room for two governors in Hong Kong." (Miners, 1976:244)
 - 10 Officially, the CCP's coordinating body in Hong Kong is called the Hong Kong-Macau Work Committee. It has always been headed by the Director of the Xinhua news agency, Hong Kong Branch. (Lau, 1985) Among the 50-strong Chinese corporations based in Hong Kong, the three most important ones are the Bank of China, China Resources

and China Merchants Steam Navigation Company. The Bank of China is the flagship of 13 China-based banks which have a combined asset of 90 billion in Hong Kong dollars, accounting for about 7.5% of the total asset of the Hong Kong banking industry. These banks also have a combined sum of 60 billion deposit (also in Hong Kong dollars) or 15% of Hong Kong's total. The Chinese banking system has a total of 262 branches in Hong Kong, only second to the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank group. The trade volume of the China Resources, under the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade, has increased from US\$1.6 billion in 1977 to US\$6 billion in 1983. China Merchants Steam Navigation Company, representing the Ministry of Communications, has a total asset of over US\$10 billion in 1985. The leftist Federation of Hong Kong Unions has 90 member unions. In addition, there are leftist motion picture and book companies, schools, and other investment companies -- all commanded by Xinhua (K.K.Lee, 1985; Loong, 1985)

11 At first, the British wanted to extend the Nanking Treaty so that they could continue their rule. Having failed, they tried to gain China's concession for a right to administer Hong Kong as a condition for returning sovereignty to China, but again to no avail. Negotiation deadlocks caused each side to extend their struggle from the conference room to the society at large. Playing what was called "the public opinion card," each side employed strategies which were directed to mobilize public opinion in Hong Kong for its own cause. Antagonistic positions taken by both sides created social repercussions far and wide: economic growth was powerfully blunted amid a huge capital exodus, rampaging inflations, deepened confidence gaps, public panics and despairs. When the exchange rate of the Hong Kong dollar was declining rapidly in 1983, China's economists, along with the leftist newspapers and some local critics, strongly urged the Government to do something about it. The Government which always boasted of the success of its long-held economic policy -- "positive non-interventionism" -- was forced to intervene in the foreign currency market by fixing the exchange rate, to the satisfaction of China. Outcomes of similar battles between Britain and China spoke to the decisive power that China has in determining the fate of Hong Kong.

12 The newspapers may share one or more of these rationales for joining the Basic Law Committee: First, they want to establish dialogues with China in order to know first hand what is happening. Such information is crucial for their final decision to stay or to leave. Second, they may want to establish institutional links for economic and political benefits. Third, they may want to be in a position to control the future from the vantage point of local interest. Fourthly, they want to have the socio-political status or they do not want to offend Xinhua with rejection.

- 13 The mass media's acquiescence to political development is well reflected in an editorial of the Express, a sister paper of the rightist Sing Tao (October 4, 1985): ".....Merits should be given to the Basic Law Consultative Committee whenever it deserves it. To describe the Consultative Committee in black and white terms is to show one's political bias. In light of trends in the political sphere, we can only aim lower for a betterment of the existing conditions through the Consultative Committee." This rationale speaks to journalists' practice of realism and resignation.
- 14 For instance: In the midst of the Sino-British negotiation, the Times and Kung Sheung advocated that international force should participate in the final solution of the Hong Kong problem. The leftist newspapers bombarded these papers for complicating the problem by unnecessarily bringing in third parties.
- 15 On one side were the hardliners who asserted that they should fight communism for the sake of fighting communism. The opposing faction thought it was for "truth" that they fought communism. The major difference between these two approaches is that the first regards anti-communism to be a permanent goal which does not change with times while the second asserts that anti-communism should be practised in a "rational" way and should give "due" regards to changes within China.
- 16 Public affairs news refer to reportage that relates to the Government's activities and policies, China's policies on Hong Kong, Xinhua's activities and other social issues. The news section of Hong Kong newspapers is often divided into the international and local compartments. Normally, news about China is treated as international news or separately in China page. However, China's policies on Hong Kong is often included as part of the local news package. Only the news about China reported in local pages is content analysed.
- 17 "Continual absence of assuring news for Hong Kong People," Editorial, Sing Tao, December 4, 1982.
- 18 "The female prime minister commits to moral responsibility with iron shoulders," Editorial, Sing Tao, September 29, 1982.
- 19 For example: "Have confidence in London's promises," Editorial, Sing Tao, July 6, 1983, "The Hong Kong Government has successfully diverted disaster," Editorial, Sing Tao, September 28, 1983.
- 20 "Hong Kong has a very bright future," Editorial, Sing Tao, September 30, 1982.

- 21 "After the initialization of the agreement on Hong Kong's future." Editorial, Sing Tao, September 27, 1984. Sing Tao showed its acquiescence to the political development right after British Foreign Minister Howe announced Britain's decision to return Hong Kong to the PRC in April, 1984 ("The three main points in Foreign Minister Howe's announcement," Editorial, Sing Tao, December 8, 1984.)
- 22 "Revive the confidence to invest in Hong Kong," Editorial, Sing Tao, December 14, 1984.
- 23 "Again the last day of a year," Editorial, Sing Tao, December 12, 1984.
- 24 "To discuss with Ji Pengfei on seven issues," Editorial, Sing Tao, December 12, 1985.
- 25 "Peng Zhen's talk and Hong Kong's future," Editorial, Wah Kiu, July 21, 1982; "The history and reality that deserve respect," Editorial, Wah Kiu, August 4, 1982; "Looking at the Beijing-London-Hong Kong relationship in a broad and long-term perspective," Editorial, Wah Kiu, September 24, 1982; "What Mrs. Thatcher cannot disclose at will," Editorial, Wah Kiu, September 29, 1982.
- 26 "Welcoming the British Prime Minister Mrs. Thatcher to visit Hong Kong," Editorial, Wah Kiu, September 27, 1982; "What Mrs. Thatcher cannot disclose at will," Editorial, Wah Kiu, September 29, 1982; "Negotiation on Hong Kong future progressed into the second stage," Editorial, Wah Kiu, July 4, 1983; "Governor Youde's burden on a long road," Editorial, Wah Kiu, July 28, 1983.
- 27 "The right directions for negotiations on Hong Kong's future," Editorial, Wah Kiu, May 26, 1983.
- 28 "Some principles for negotiation over Hong Kong's future," Editorial, Wah Kiu, January 3, 1984. Also see: "Dangerous arguments to be keenly watched," Editorial, Wah Kiu, January 27, 1984.
- 29 "The data on which Hong Kong's sovereignty will be retaken is decided," Editorial, Wah Kiu, August 17, 1983. An editorial that best illustrates Wah Kiu's tendency to speak indirectly for Beijing at this early stage is: "The concept and outline of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region," Editorial, Wah Kiu, October 17, 1983.
- 30 "Dangerous arguments to be keenly watched," Editorial, Wah Kiu, January 27, 1984.

- 31 "Hong Kong people's wish," Editorial, Wah Kiu, August 2, 1984.
- 32 "The righteousness of nationalism," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, February 5, 1983. The same idea is reiterated in two other Miu Yu Columns: "The righteousness of nationalism," Oriental Daily News, February 5, 1983; "Imperialism," Oriental Daily News, October 17, 1983.
- 33 "Hong Kong law ruling Hong Kong," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, June 24, 1983.
- 34 "Negotiating the future," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, December 8, 1983. Shortly after this, Miu Yu indicated in his column that he had learnt of the British decision to withdraw from Hong Kong ("See who changes first," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, January 25, 1984.)
- 35 "High evaluation of Hong Kong people," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, January 1, 1984.
- 36 After CCP consolidated its power in early 1950s, it launched programs to nationalize the economy. In its transitional phase, the nationalist bourgeois were promised of "co-ownership" which was finally swept away by CCP's speedy measures to root out the private sector.
- 37 "The new is different from the old," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, April 6, 1984.
- 38 "Twelve points of policy for Hong Kong," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, April 28, 1984.
- 39 e.g. "Sino-British Accord," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, August 2, 1984; "Moral responsibility," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, September 13, 1984.
- 40 e.g. "Those who believe will be saved," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, April 30, 1984; "Don't be afraid of interference," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, October 6, 1984; "Rumour feeds on rumour," Miu Yu Column, Oriental Daily News, October 7, 1984.
- 41 "How to evaluate the Hong Kong question," Editorial, Sing Pao, September 23, 1983.
- 42 "Immediately alleviate the 'Jardine Shock'," Editorial, Sing Pao, March 30, 1984.
- 43 "The Agreement or Joint Declaration has legal-binding force," Editorial, Sing Pao, September 18, 1984; "The blueprint for a smooth transition," Editorial, Sing Pao, August 2, 1984.

- 44 "All the reactions to the Joint Declaration," Editorial, Sing Pao, September 29, 1984.
- 45 "Actively participate to practise civil rights," Editorial, Sing Pao, September 28, 1984.
- 46 "Competition for Lunar New Year stalls shows confidence," Editorial, Sing Pao, January 7, 1986.
- 47 "Three requirements for an arrangement on Hong Kong's status," Ming Pao editorial, February 19, 1981; "When will the conditions ripen?" Ming Pao editorial, September 24, 1982.
- 48 "Three requirements for an arrangement on Hong Kong's status," Ming Pao editorial, February 9, 1981.
- 49 "Strange goose that lays gold eggs," Ming Pao editorial, October 14, 1982.
- 50 "Britain's moral responsibility towards Hong Kong," Ming Pao editorial, October 20, 1982.
- 51 "Three cards in the British hand," Ming Pao editorial, July 4, 1983.
- 52 "Same as before and free entry and exit," Ming Pao editorial, November 25, 1982.
- 53 Same as previous note. Also see: "Horses must be fed to make it work," Ming Pao editorial, July 7, 1983.
- 54 "Ji Pengfei on concrete measures for 'Hong Kong administered by Hong Kong people'," Ming Pao editorial, October 15, 1983.
- 55 e.g. "From '79' to '97'," Ming Pao editorial, October 24, 1983; "Making use of Hong Kong over a long time rather than imposing reforms," Ming Pao editorial, October 25, 1983; "Fundamental demands by China, Britain and Hong Kong," Ming Pao editorial, December 15, 1983.
- 56 "Pledge and guarantee of an international nature," Ming Pao editorial, January 24, 1984.
- 57 "Den Xiaping talked about the confidence problem of Hong Kong people," Ming Pao editorial, June 27, 1984; "How policies on Hong Kong are made," Ming Pao editorial, August 11, 1984.

- 58 Cha, Louis, 1984: "An innovation applicable to the whole world," People's Daily, September 26, 1984. Similar ideas were voiced earlier in a Ming Pao editorial entitled "A model applicable to the world," published on June 29, 1984.
- 59 "Confidence is to be based on what kind of foundation?" Ming Pao editorial, July 2, 1984.
- 60 Editorials exemplifying this observation include: "The working style of the Basic Law Drafting Committee," Ming Pao editorial, July 7, 1985; "The trend to deviate from the Joint Declaration," Ming Pao editorial, November 29, 1985; "On the methods that generate Consultative Committee members," Ming Pao editorial, October 1985.
- 61 "Welcoming the British Prime Minister to visit Hong Kong," Editorial, Hong Kong Times, September 26, 1982.
- Similar comments are reiterated in Kung Sheung's editorial, "The British Prime Minister's stand on the Hong Kong question is firm," November 5, 1983.
- 62 "Comments on the visit of the 'intellectuals' tour' in mainland China," Editorial, April 14, 1983.
- "On the question of 'Hong Kong's Sovereignty," Editorial, Kung Sheung, October 22, 1982; "Nationalism' dictates 'autonomous independence'," Editorial, Kung Sheung, April 4, 1983.
- 63 "Stay calm amidst changes, unite and self-help," Editorial, Hong Kong Times, September 27, 1984; "The unglorious 'initialization'," Editorial, Hong Kong Times, September 24, 1984; "Hong Kong people do not recognise the 'Joint Declaration'," Editorial, Hong Kong Times, September 4, 1984.
- 64 For example: "Hong Kong people definitely do not believe the Communist Party's promises," Editorial, Hong Kong Times, April 16, 1984; "Communists' words cannot be trusted," Editorial, Hong Kong Times, August 3, 1984; "The two cutting edges of local communists' united front tactics," Editorial, Kung Sheung, September 16, 1984; "The so-called 'Hong Kong model'," Editorial, Hong Kong Times, December 24, 1984.
- 65 "Don't eat sugar-coated poison," Editorial, Hong Kong Times, January 12, 1984.
- 66 "Hong Kong administering Hong Kong's sugar-coated poison," Editorial, Kung Sheung, December 9, 1982.

67 Editorials, on the Joint Declaration: e.g. "Analysing the 'Joint Declaration Draft'," Editorial, Kung Sheung, September 27, 1984; "Stay calm amidst changes, unite and self-help," Editorial, Hong Kong Times, September 27, 1984.

Editorials on the Basic Law: e.g. "Hong Kong People have the absolute right in making the 'Basic Law'," Editorial, Kung Sheung, October 25, 1984.

68 "Who does Duke Youde represents?" Editorial, Wen Wei Pao, July 9, 1983.

69 "Check the trend of price raises to ensure the public's livelihood," Editorial, Wen Wei Pao, September 16, 1983. Other exemplary editorials that raised serious doubts about the Government's respect for public opinion include: (1) "Has public opinion ever been respected? Editorial, Wen Wei Pao, September 5, 1983. (2) The loud calls for the preserving the public's livelihood," Editorial Wen Wei Pao, September 19, 1983 "How constructive the 'Lobo Motion' can be?" Editorial, Ta Kung Pao, March 15, 1984.

70 "An Aggressive and Solid Annual Report," Editorial, Wen Wei Pao, October 7, 1984.

71 "Reviewing Hong Kong in its first year of transition," Editorial, Wen Wei Pao, December 31, 1986. This generally favorable review can also be contrasted with Ta Kung Pao's generally critical review two years earlier: "Reading Youde's administrative report," Editorial, Ta Kung Pao, October 16, 1983.

72 Ta Kung Pao, "Editor's Words," February 27, 1986.

73 Such characterization of Hong Kong's prosperity is scattered over the ultra-leftist newspapers' editorials in the past. A more recent illustration can be found in Ta Kung's short editorial, "High land price is devastating," published on December 4, 1982.

74 "On District Council Election," Editorial, Wen Wei Pao, January 22, 1985.

75 A temporary regression seems to have happened about one year after the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration when China openly accused Britain of deviating from the accord in its implementation of a democratization program in Hong Kong. The row did not end until Britain agreed to suspend its political reforms and to ensure that any political change will converge with the plans to be laid out in the Basic Law being drafted by a China-appointed committee. In the heats of controversy, some newspapers (notably the centrist Hong Kong Economic Journal, the

rightist Express and the English-language South China Morning Post and a number of columnists in various newspapers), regarded China's accusation as an interference in Hong Kong's internal affairs which is what they have fearfully predicted all along. The apparent confirmation of this fear ignited a process of regression in which the press temporarily returned to a previous stance which casts doubt on the "one country, two systems" arrangement. Commenting on the issue, for example, the South China Morning Post raised fundamental doubts about the Joint Declaration which it once rectified as "the best of a bad deal," it said, "we are under no illusions that we are heading for self-government, much less independence, but we were promised a high degree of autonomy, with Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong and with two systems in one country -- to quote all the tired cliches of this depressing aftermath of the Joint Declaration." ("Hong Kong's Mood Serious Concern," South China Morning Post editorial, January 22, 1986).

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更變中的新聞範式： 香港的大眾傳播媒介與政治過渡

(中文摘要)

陳翰文(陳文)著

自英國答應於一九九七年把香港交還給中國後，香港隨即進入過渡期，政治權力結構起了重要的變動。以往香港政府幾乎獨攬所有政治權力，是唯一的權力中心；隨著過渡期的開展，中國政治勢力崛起成爲另一個權力中心，從而構成一個「雙權」的政治格局。

香港報章的「新聞範式」如何因應以上的政治變遷？這是本研究的主要課題。新聞範式是媒介對事實界定、詮釋和選取的參照系統，也就是影響它們報導及立論的世界觀。研究結果顯示，香港報章的新聞範式，無論反映在立論取向、報導內容及組織策略各方面，都有所更動，已接受了中國爲未來的政治主人。

大體來說，報章已正面接受了中國的統戰或籠絡(cooptation)策略：主流報紙已由先前主張英國繼續治理香港的立場退下來，而附和中國收復香港的計劃。多位發行人及資深新聞工作者已被吸納入中國創設的政治組織中，這包括基本法起草委員會及其諮詢委員會。中國「一國兩制」的構想及中國的對港政策亦已成爲新聞媒介立論之框架。

新聞範式對權力結構變動的具體適應因報紙的政治聯繫而有差異。根據其政治聯繫，香港的報紙可以分作四類：(一)由國民黨操控的「右派報紙」；(二)傳統上傾向國民黨而又商營的「中間偏右報紙」；(三)商營、不從屬國共兩黨而認同香港政府的「中間派報紙」；(四)由共產黨操控的「左派報紙」。一間右派報紙已於中英簽署聯合聲明時結束營業；選擇繼續營業的一間則已採取較溫和的反共姿態。中間偏右的報紙逐步與中間派報紙看齊，接受中國(同時保留與台灣的聯繫)。過渡期開始以來，左派報紙已減弱其反殖姿態，對香港政府表示空前的支持。上述右派報紙及中間偏右報紙向中國靠近及左派報紙向香港政府移動，反映了報業整體向中間歸聚的現象。因爲香港社會的整體已作出政治妥協，並已接受中國的籠絡，所以上述報紙的「中移」現象不獨可見於新聞界，也反映在別的社會團體行爲上。

正如香港這個案所標示，假如政治轉變是和平漸進的，新聞範式的變更不會是突然及強制的，而是隨著政治危機及政治過渡的開展，亦步亦趨地由量變累積而成。新的範式脫胎自舊的範式，既留有傳統的痕跡，亦有新添的特徵。雖然變

更的過程還未完結，香港報紙相對於權力中心的新聞範式已起了基本的轉變。隨著「九七」的臨近，相信新聞範式的變更會獲得鞏固及進一步深化與廣化。

雖然如此，假如促使中國在香港奉行資本主義的結構性因素在「九七」後仍然有效，而香港媒介的私有制又可保留，那香港報章對本地事務的言論基本上仍會是多元化的。事實上，非左派的主流媒介已開始側重香港的自主性及本地利益，並以此作爲未來新聞範式的出發點。