"They can wash away all the posters and protests, but they cannot wipe out the history …"

An interdisciplinary study of the collective identity of the Umbrella Movement

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Content

Foreword

After working on my bachelor's thesis of the University of Amsterdam for nearly a year now, I am more than happy with the final result. Although writing my thesis often was a struggle, it also turned out to be an incredibly fun and challenging process. When I started my study abroad at the University of Hong Kong I never expected this to change my life so much. I had the unexpected experience to get involved in a social movement that influenced the whole city. This did not only make the four months I spent in Hong Kong unique, it also affected my interests, study direction and future.

I would like to thank a few people that helped and supported me throughout the process. First off, I would like to thank Yatun Sastramidjaja for offering useful and critical feedback and vision. Your knowledge and passion for social movements has been truly encouraging for me. Secondly, I thank Sam and Clarisse, for sharing this experience with me in our countless field trips and conversations regarding the movement. I would also like to thank Jeremy, for offering support and distraction in Hong Kong, and Jet and my family, for doing the same on long distance. But most importantly, I would like to thank all my respondents and fellow student-protesters, thank you for the help, information and friendships. It has been an inspiration to experience your passion for the future of Hong Kong.

Abstract

This research presents a case study of the collective identity of the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement. Using methods of participant observation and semi-structured interviews, it analyses the developments concerning the rise, fall and everything in between on a micro level. The Umbrella Movement has a strong sense of community that is expressed in collective emotions, symbols and grievances. This is placed in a macro perspective in relation to Hong Kong's historical, social and cultural background. The collective identity of the movement is seen as a result from a conflict between personal and imposed social identity. Though the movement is comprised of a diverse group of protesters, both political and cultural shared grievances were found. The collective identity of the Umbrella Movement turned out to be closely related to the cultural Hong Kong identity that conflicted with the imposed Chinese identity. The main difference between the cultural and collective identity was however the level of political participation.

1. Introduction

In September 2014, part of the Hong Kong population started to protest against their government. The people participated to claim their rights to democracy. The protesters occupied main roads in the financial Admiralty district and the commercial Causeway Bay and Mong Kok districts. Thereby, they disrupted traffic in large parts of Hong Kong. The police responded to the protests with violence and teargas. The protesters tried to protect themselves with umbrellas. It became the symbol of Hong Kong's democracy movement; the Umbrella Movement. The diversity of the movement made it difficult to determine the collective identity. This research will analyse the rise and fall of the movement, its participants and collective identity, taking the unique history and political situation of Hong Kong into consideration.

Hong Kong has a long British colonial history, but in 1997 the city was reunited with China. However, it was not fully reunited - Hong Kong still has its own market system and government, under the rule of the Chief Executive, Leung Chun-ying. According to the protesters, the Basic Law states that Hong Kong should be a democracy by 2017. China, however, has a different view on how this democracy will be implemented: in August 2014 the Chinese government stated that it will nominate the candidates for Chief Executive, on which the Hongkongers can vote. The participants of the Umbrella Movement did not see this as the universal suffrage that was promised to them. This statement of the Chinese government in August 2014 resulted in a weeklong class boycott of Hong Kong students at the end of September. Two pro-democracy student organisations, Scholarism and the Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS), initiated this. All eight universities of Hong Kong participated and even scholars showed their support by giving public lectures at the protest site in Tamar Park. The boycott started peaceful, but at the end of the week, the students tried to break into civic square, a place that has a status as protest site. This resulted in police violence. The next day, on September 28th, Benny Tai, one of the organisers of Occupy Central, another pro-democracy organisation, stated that the occupation has officially started.

The Umbrella Movement fights for a democracy for one city in the socialist China, where one party has absolute power that is strongly opposed to democracy. In 1989 a democracy movement arose in Beijing, which resulted in the Tiananmen Square Massacre. To achieve a democracy in China, a movement must be very strong and determined. This research stresses the relevance of this movement for the future of both Hong Kong's and China's political situation.

The focus of this study specifically lies in the identity politics that resulted in the emergence of the movement. The movement was organised by three different parties: Occupy Central, Scholarism and the Hong Kong Federation of Students. Hongkongers partly supported the movement, but it was also widely opposed. Scholars, as well as middle- and lower-class and elderly citizens joined the student protests. This made the movement very diverse. This diversity obviously put forward many different ideas, motivations and perspectives within the movement. But what were the overarching grievances that led this movement to arise? And what was the role of identity for the emerging discontent? And to what extent does this lead to a collective identity?

The research is based on participant observation and interviews in each of the three protest sites: Admiralty, Mong Kok and Causeway Bay. The purpose of this study is to describe and analyse the emergence and eviction of the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong, the main focus being the collective identity of the movement. In the summer of 2014, the student boycott unexpectedly turned into the occupation of three major roads of the city. During that time I was on study exchange at the University of Hong Kong, and got involved in the boycott. I therefore had the opportunity to experience the developments within the movement. This opportunity led to a study on the collective identity of the movement.

My fieldwork started immediately when the movement unexpectedly took over the streets of Hong Kong. The research is therefore constructed by the process of grounded theory. Due to the sudden rise of the movement, the theoretical framework had to be constructed during and after the protests had ended. The theoretical framework therefore is formed in an iterative process; after the fieldwork was conducted, the theories to analyse the research findings were collected. The results of this research are described and analysed anthropologically. The personal narratives of the protesters of the movement are analysed and hereby the collective identity of the protesters in the political Umbrella Movement are explained.

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework consists of several parts. The first section elaborates on general theories on social movements and the roles they play in cities and new social movement theory. This is followed by theories on identity. Identity is a complex concept and therefore several disciplines are used to explain it. Lastly, collective identity is clarified through the process identity politics and how collective identity is of importance within social movements.

2.1. Social movements

Social movements have played an important role in history (Tilly, 2004). Social movements can be seen as a form of collective action that can evolve around social change. David Snow, Sarah Soule and Hanspeter Kriesi (2004) analyse social movement theory and find that there are several agreements: social movements are based on collective action, they have change-based goals, there are forms of organisation and they have some degree of temporality. They define social movements as "*collectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are a part*" (Snow et al., 2004: 11).

The Umbrella Movement is one that strives for democracy. It tries to achieve this goal by acting outside of the authority of the current government, because the participants of the movement feel that this government is not ruling the city as they would like them to. The protesters are demanding universal suffrage. This makes the actions of the movement an act of discontent from the civil society.

Manuel Castells (1983) also theorises urban social movements and mainly looks into the change-based goals. He recognises the central role this form of grassroots mobilisation plays in the formation of modern cities. His approach is based on the assumption that urban theories are always theories of social conflict. Although there is a wide diversity of cities around the world, Castells believes that urban social movements can be defined by three goals, though not all social movements share each goal.

First, urban social movements are the result of dissatisfaction with the way a city is exploited. This can be done by the state, corporations or another authority. When residents see their city turn into a commodity, a place that is sold, this can result in mobilisation. Castells

(1983: 319) calls this 'collective consumption trade unionism': the exchange value of the city transcends the use value. This results in high prices in for instance, housing. The second goal of social movements that Castells mentions is a search for cultural identity. For these movements, a sense of community and local cultures is important. The third goal is political: the search for increased power of local government. With this goal people fight against the unifying and centralised state, to achieve more local power (Castells, 1983).

New social movement theory is a more recent approach in theorising collective action. New social movements move beyond interests related to class, or economic or political goals, to issues related to recognition of identity (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: 286). These forms of mobilisation do not emerge from fixed categories like race, gender or class, but from complicated relations in both cultural grievances, or the right to existence, and the political goals, and its institutional context, to achieve this (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: 287-288). This results in a creation of collective claims by a social movement. Rather than focussing on economic grievances, new social movements focus on collective "*beliefs, symbols, values and meanings related to sentiments of belonging to a differentiated social group*" (Johnston et al., 1994: 7), that result in the formation of new identities.

In the emergence of a social movement, it is important to take emotions into account. The collective grievances result in collective action when these are experienced with a form of emotional stress (Marx & Holzner, 1977). James Jasper (2011) stresses the importance of ideology in social movements, the participants desire to make an impact on the world they live in. This desire is the result of a sense of fear, anger or threat, and therefore the participants take action. Another, more positive, motivation to take action is hope (Jasper, 2011: 14.7).

Hong Kong has a history of what the Hong Kong sociologist Siu-kai Lau calls political aloofness (Lam, 2004). The political apathy is explained by the de-politicised education during the colonial period. Lam (2004) contests this vision: Hong Kong does have a civil society that has the potential to mobilise, but these movements were mostly class or labour related. These movements did not have extensive support and participation among the civil society. From the 1970s onwards, the civil society started developing to be more active and this resulted in the rise of social movements, including several student movements and pro-democracy rallies (Ma, 2009). According to Ma (2009), this was a period in which the Hong Kong people were actively involved in collectively shaping their future and identity.

2.2. Identity

Identity is a topic that is repeatedly discussed in the different disciplines of social sciences. These disciplines all approach the concept differently. Anthropology generally views identity as a trait that can be explained by formation through culture, sociology treats identity as a characteristic that emerges through institutions and psychology sees it as inherently individual and unique. These different perceptions on identity are each valid approaches and the complex concept of identity therefore needs an interdisciplinary analysis.

In anthropology, identity is mainly seen in terms of cultural identity, or the sense of belonging to a certain social group (Rapport & Overing, 2000). This culture can be a national culture, but also subcultures have distinct identities. Anderson (1983) describes socially constructed communities and culture as 'imagined communities'. An imagined community is a community that is not necessarily a close network. This is for instance a nation, it is a shared communal feeling among a population. Hong Kong has a strong sense of imagined community, or as they call it *Hong Kong identity*.

Hong Kong is a city unlike other Chinese cities. The city was a colony of the United Kingdom for over 140 years, in 1997 Hong Kong was handed back to China. But long colonial rule by the British resulted in a different history, values and sense of identity. Although Hong Kong has always been a part of China, even during British colonial times, the two cultures grew apart (Chan, 2014). The Hong Kong society distinguishes itself from the Chinese society. When visiting Hong Kong, the differences in the culture are perceivable through small signs: in China people drive on the right side of the road, in Hong Kong it is the opposite, the city has a different flag and also developed its own popular music culture: Cantopop. But a significant difference is the language: the Chinese speak Mandarin, whilst the Hongkongers are proud of their Cantonese language. Besides cultural differences, Chan (2014) stresses the considerable differences in national and local identities: China is perceived as the "other" by Hongkongers since colonial times, and this sense of distinction from the Chinese culture is growing. According to Chan, scholars have argued that Hongkongers conflicted with China's political identity, but he stresses that the resistance against cultural-economic China is growing. It can be argued that the Hong Kong society with its identity is an imagined community. This community is located in the bigger community of China, but the identification with this country exists to a lesser extent.

From the perspective of sociology, identity can be seen as an entity that is formed through institutions. Hodgson (2006: 2) defines institutions as: "*systems of established and prevalent social rules that structure social interactions.*" Institutions are the recurring structures in society that explain patterns of behaviour. Such institutions include the law, language, organisations, family and values. Society influences the identity of the individual through institutions. In Hong Kong, several institutions can be seen as having a great influence on identities. As mentioned previously, language can be seen as an aspect of culture, but also as an institution. Another institution that structures the early lives of many people is education. The Hong Kong education system is different from China's. During the colonisation of Hong Kong, the British always kept education very depoliticised, until the last years before the handover. The British started introducing ideas of democracy, freedom of speech and press and critical thinking (Leung & Ng, 2004). Through the British education system, in particular in its final years, "Western" values like freedom of speech, democracy, civic rights and universal suffrage were established. These values are widely respected amongst the Hongkongers (Chan, 2014: 27).

In psychology, identity is perceived as a trait that is unique to a person. A term often associated with personal identity is the self. Identity is constructed through personal experiences and interactions. Every individual has different experiences and accordingly, identities are unique. The interactions, however, are shared and thus can result in a shared reality within a group of individuals. Tajfel (1982) looks at the psychological aspect of identity in terms of groups. According to Tajfel (1982: 2), groups can be defined both internally and externally. Internally, identification with a group concerns a cognitive sense of awareness of membership to the group, this membership results in value connotations and emotional investment. Externally, the group has to be acknowledged by other group for intergroup relations. Personal identity is the result of the individual's group relations. In the case of the Umbrella Movement, students are a large group that is participating. Philip Altbach (1970: 74) mentions the role of student groups in social and political activism. He explains this by knowledge of modern ideas and easy to mobilise. The boycott of the Hong Kong students is a form of group activism.

Social identity is a form of identity that can be studied through both sociology and anthropology. As previously mentioned, it is formed through culture and institutions within society. Individual identity is formed through personal histories. In analysing the Hong Kong situation and the collective identity of the Umbrella Movement, both individual and social

identity should be considered, using theories from sociology, anthropology and psychology. By doing this, the emergence of the Umbrella Revolution can be explained.

2.3. Collective identity

Although strongly related to social and individual identity, another form of identity can exist within a collective. Snow et al. (2004) stress the importance of interactions within social movements and the formation of a collective identity through these interactions. They mention the importance of collective identity within social movement theory, because it keeps people committed to the movement. Hunt and Benford (2004) conceptualise the intertwined relationship of collective identity and social movements. They begin this conceptualisation with an analysis of the origin of the concept within general sociology.

Marxist theories focus on class conflict within modern societies. Conflict and social movements are related to class consciousness. Collective consciousness is the thought that when actors collectively realise they are kept in a certain position, this can result in a form of revolt against this suppression (Marx & Engels, 1848; cited in Calhoun et al., 2012: 162-4). This is when a social movement arises. However, contemporary urban social movements are very differentiated and the conflicts do not simply derive from class conflict or other traditional markers of collective identity such as gender and ethnicity (Castells, 1983; Polletta & Jasper, 2001).

Another approach to collective identity, aligned with Marx's conflict theory, is identity politics. Identity politics is a way to cope with oppression by means of shaping a sense of community and identity (Heyes, 2012). The individual identity, or the self, is considered an authentic form of identity. It is what is unique to a person, it can be appearance, personality, beliefs, or personal history. Contrasting to individual identity is social identity, this is comprised out of the society in which the individual lives. The society as a whole has certain norms, values, institutions, categories and roles to which the individual has to conform. This form of identity is imposed on the individual and determined by "the other". When there is a misrecognition between the individual and social identity this can lead to conflict and when this conflict is experienced by a larger group in a society, a collective identity can emerge. According to the stress-strain model, a social movement emerges when the strain between the individual and the society is experienced by a group with exceeding emotional stress (Marx & Holzner, 1977: 418).

The goals of social movements that Castells (1983) analyses, discussed above, can also be related to identity politics, because the goals are an expression of the imposing of social identities upon the individual.

Émile Durkheim, like Marx, conceptualises collective consciousness. Collective consciousness is considered a set of common norms, beliefs and values among groups within the society. This collective consciousness is a social fact; it is constituted by individuals, but exists outside of individuals as well. In modern societies social cohesion changes; societies get bigger and collective conscience disappears (Durkheim, 1893; cited in: Calhoun et al., 2012: 225-6). Within smaller groups, social cohesion does still exist. This is how solidarity and identification within a collective is constituted, just as in social movements (Hunt & Benford, 2004).

Hunt and Benford (2004) further discuss the indicators to study collective identity of a social movement. The formation of this identity happens through boundaries, consciousness and negotiation. Boundaries are defined by the structures of the challenging movement that differ from the dominant society. Boundaries are a form of inclusion within the movement and exclusion of others. Consciousness is the building of frameworks that define the interests of a social movement. Indicators of group consciousness are talks, narratives, an imposed identity by outsiders and emotion work, or emotional investment by group members. Lastly, Hunt and Benford mention negotiation. This is constituted by interactions between several individuals within the movement. These interactions are on how to direct their actions and interests. This also is a way of framing a movement, or the construction of reality and agency of the participants of social movements (Benford & Snow, 2000). When frames are successful, they construct a stronger sense of collective identity and result in solidarity, which further motivates people to keep participating in the movement (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: 291). Hunt and Benford's (2004) indicators of boundaries and consciousness accords with Tajfel's (1982) analysis of group identity.

Collective identity is strongly related to the intensity of participation of people within the movement. Klandermans (2004) sees collective identity as one of the reasons people participate in a social movement, alongside instrumentality and ideology. However, collective identity and participation have a dialectical relationship; collective identity stimulates people to participate, while participation results in the strengthening of the collective identity (Hunt & Benford, 2004). Hunt and Benford (2004) stress the importance of solidarity and commitment in social

movement participation. The groundwork of collective identity is built up by micro-mobilisation; this is the coordination of participation among the individuals taking part in the social movement. According to Polletta and Jasper (2001: 291) 'groupness' does not necessarily lead to collective identity, but political activity provides reasons for participation through solidarity. Solidarity has two forms; internal, or the sense of belonging in a group; and external, the identification with one's own group and non-identification with other groups

In conclusion, collective identity can be the result of a mismatch between the personal and socially imposed identity. When this happens with emotional stress, a social movement can emerge. Social movements are groups that share an internal similar sense of identity and external conflicting intergroup relations.

Collective identity is a characteristic that develops over a longer period of time. Hong Kong has a history of social and political activism (Cheng, 2014). This activism is not just mobilisation, but also political discussions or symbolic forms of protest. Egao-politics, a form of political satire, is popular amongst the Hong Kong youth. Egao is the practice of mocking serious social or political topics in a funny manner that is shared mainly through social media (Ng, 2014). According to Ng (2014), Egao is a form of expression of the Hong Kong identity, in opposition to the Chinese identity. Chan et al. (2013: 5) mention the growing political participation of the Hong Kong youths on Facebook.

Social movements are competing with dominant culture and therefore it is important to understand the ideology they originated in (Swidler, 1986). This ideology is a set of stories and symbols that result in collective action. The role symbolism can have for social movements is illustrated by this quote from Michael Taussig's *I am so angry, I made a sign* (2012: 77), an ethnography on the Occupy Wall Street movement:

"*We use our magic to thwart their magic. They have pepper spray. We have burning sage. They prohibit microphones. We have the people's microphone. They prohibit tents. We improvise tents that are not tents but what nomads used before North Face. They build buildings higher than Egyptian pyramids, but that allows our drumming to reverberate all the louder and our projections of images and emails at night to be all the more visible and magical, taking advantage of the mega-screens that the facades of these giant buildings provide.*"

The quote shows how forms of power can be subverted by small actions taken in a movement. To understand a movement, it is important to understand the culture, stories and symbols of the movement. Clifford Geertz (1964) mentions the importance of symbols for a collective. Collectives with a certain ideology are tied together by emotional meanings of solidarity.

2.4. Interdisciplinarity

This research will combine several disciplines to clarify developments in the Umbrella Movement. Because of the complex issues surrounding the movement, interdisciplinary research is the inevitable consequence.

When politics are discussed, this is often done through researching government institutions. But politics is more than governments, it is also civil society and the social movements that develop as a way of expressing the discontent of the citizens. Social movements can be analysed from different disciplines, which need to be integrated to achieve a complete vision of the collective identity of the movement. These disciplines include grand sociological theories on collective consciousness, the sociological subdiscipline of social movement theory, anthropology, to analyse and deepen the culture identities and psychology to analyse the role of group identity. These disciplines are integrated in writing an ethnography on the Umbrella Movement and its collective identity.

James Clifford (1986) explains the interdisciplinary grounds of writing an ethnography. It is a framework for writing about issues regarding the complex concept of culture. But by doing this, ethnographies have to take the background of culture into account, which integrates other disciplines. In other works, Clifford (2000: 103-106) stresses two benefits of writing an ethnography: first, it offers opportunities to study social groups in the margins of society, it can include those, who are excluded in other disciplines. Second, ethnographies simultaneously takes into account what the backgrounds are of these marginal groups are. Ethnography, traditionally a framework to study culture in anthropology, integrates historical background, political relations, in- and exclusion and interactions. This particular ethnography combines disciplines as follows:

The assumption of collective identities in social movements results in a study of the resistance of the Umbrella movement as a marginal culture per se. It examines the grievances, symbols and the complex group dynamics of the movement that distinguishes itself from people who do not participate. It is important to consider the collective identity formation from an

anthropological, psychological and sociological perspective and this is integrated in identity politics.

Furthermore, it is important, both sociologically and anthropologically, to take the Hong Kong's historical, cultural and societal background into account. Hong Kong's history led to a distinction from the Chinese society. This did not only create Hong Kongs own market system, but also political and cultural differences with China. The formation of the cultural Hong Kong identity and the city's institutions that reproduce this are therefore important components of this research. This is the culture in which the movement emerged.

3. Problem definition

3.1. Introduction

The Umbrella Movement strived to achieve universal suffrage in Hong Kong. Democracy movements are often mentioned to be part of new social movement theory. Theorists of this field stress the changing goals of social movements (Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Whereas class movements emerge to achieve economic benefits or political influence, new social movements arise due to conflict with complex identity issues. These movements often have both political and cultural goals. Castells (1983) argues similar issues play a role in the rise of urban social movements.

Social movements often emerge from a collective identity (Snow et al., 2004). According to Heyes (2014), collective identity is created through a conflict between social identity, which is imposed by the society and the authorities, and the individual identity, that suffers from this. When the imposed social identity is experienced in a larger group, this can lead to an alternative identity that expresses itself in collective action by this group.

The protesters of the Umbrella Movement that were claiming real universal suffrage consisted of a very diverse group. Hong Kong has a long history of political resistance (Cheng, 2014), but the democracy protests in 2014 were the longest and largest act of civil disobedience in the history of the city. The wish for democracy in Hong Kong showed that there is some sort of discontent among this diverse group of protesters with the current political system and the Chinese authorities. The majority of the movement consisted of students, but there were also others supporting the fight for a democracy: in Mong Kok the protesters were older and lower class people and the middle class was also participating. Within a diverse group of people, a diverse set of opinions, grievances and differences exists. People were from different classes, have varying occupations, education and backgrounds. But the grievances of the protesters led to the collective occupation of the roads for over two months.

Media questioned the diverse set of protesters and splintered tactics of the movement (Li, 2014; Kuo, 2014; Leavenworth, 2014). Identity politics assumes that shared grievances of individual can result in a collective identity. But what are the shared grievances that result in the collective identity, if any at all? This research attempts to combine both identity politics and new social movement theory to analyse the emergence of the diverse Umbrella Movement, its organisation and to what extent the group of protesters share a collective identity.

3.2. Research questions

This research will look into how the diversity of participants and their grievances of the Umbrella Movement influence the movement's collective identity. The question this research attempts to answer is: *To what extent do the different grievances of the various participants of the Umbrella Movement result in a collective identity?* To answer this question, three sub-questions will be treated, they are as follows:

What are the various grievances of the Umbrella Movement? The movement fights for a democracy in Hong Kong. Why do they feel the current political system is not working? Do they experience difficulties with the current way of life in Hong Kong? The Umbrella Movement claims their constitutional rights to a democracy. But what do they want to achieve with a democracy? This question will focus on why the participants have this political goal. New social movement theory will be used to analyse the grievances.

How does the protest facilitate various forms of organisation and expression of discontent? This question describes the participants, the protest sites, how the protests are organised and the development of the movement. The different organisation of each protest site will be described and analysed to achieve insight in the differences and similarities between the camps. It will also analyse the strategies of action of the protesters. The group identity of the movement is examined by a focus on both internal and external conflicts regarding the movement.

How is the collective identity of the Umbrella Movement constructed? This question will describe if a collective identity of the movement is constructed through the process of identity politics. To do this, the individual and conflicting social identity of the diverse protesters are examined. Secondly, the collective identity of the movement is described in terms of symbols, emotions and solidarity. By doing this, the relation to the social and individual identity is analysed.

After answering questions about the grievances, protesters, organisation and the collective identity, these findings can be integrated to analyse to what extent the Umbrella Movement has a strong collective identity among the diverse group that participates in it and why this is so.

3.3. Relevance

This research is socially relevant because it elaborates on the motivations and the identity politics that resulted in the emergence of the Umbrella Movement. Thereby, it aims to clarify why people in Hong Kong struggle for democracy and how they believe this democracy should be practised. Furthermore, the Umbrella Movement is a recent development in Hong Kong politics. It is important to outline how and why this movement could originate and to look into the problems addressed by this movement. The Umbrella Movement is significant for Hong Kong's history due to its duration and the wide support amongst the population.

Besides the historical and political meaning of the Umbrella Movement, the relevance of this research is also the detailed and empirical description of the movement. During the rise and fall of the movement in the last months of 2014, it received both support and opposition. By experiencing this as an outsider to the grievances of the protesters, I had the opportunity to empirically observe the developments regarding the movement. This research tries to place the movement in the Hong Kong society as objective as possible.

The academic relevance of this research is to analyse the role of identity politics for the emergence of social movements. Although the case of the Umbrella Movement is unique and thus not generalisable to other social movements, collective identity is a concept that is related to social movement theory (Snow et al., 2004). The process of identity politics is academically relevant to study in other social movements, because it clarifies collective identity. This research also analyses identity, specifically collective identity, from an interdisciplinary perspective and thereby aims to explain the complexity of the concept.

Furthermore, studies on democracy movements often focus on the political grievances of the movement. This research also takes the cultural grievances into account, which places the movement in bigger societal context. The combination of political and cultural grievances results in an interdisciplinary approach on the Umbrella Movement. This enables possibilities for the movement in a cross-cultural debate on similar student or political movements. The interdisciplinary approach sheds new light on the recurring comparative studies between China and Hong Kong.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research strategy

The strategy adopted in this research is qualitative (Bryman, 2008: 22-23). It has a qualitative approach because people's stories, opinions and motivations to join forces to reach their goal of democracy will be explored. This research by no means intends to generalise outside of this movement. Qualitative research offers the opportunity to analyse the differences and conflicts in the movement. This research focuses on gaining a deeper understanding of the movement, its emergence, grievances and collective identity.

The data of this research is analysed through an epistemology of interpretivism (Bryman, 2008: 15-16). The collected data are considered to be complex and therefore need intensive analysis through interpretation. The research focuses on the actions taken by the protesters and seeks to understand their motivations to take these actions. The diverse composition of the movement might result in very different results between the subgroups, which in turn might influence the collective identity. There is no absolute truth in the results of this research, but it tries to describe and explain a subjective understanding of the social movement. This is to preserve an open-ended perception on the movement that occupied the roads of Hong Kong.

The researched actors are considered to be socially constructed and therefore the ontological approach of the research is constructivism (Bryman, 2008: 19). The social actors involved actively change the situation in Hong Kong. The protesters try to achieve a democracy, whereas the government tries to stop them from protesting. The social actors involved therefore influence and give meaning to the reality they exist in. The data of this research are interpreted from a constructivist perspective (Bryman, 2008: 549), and by no means implies to be objective. This means that the world of the participants in the movement is constructed by social interactions. These interactions take place within and outside of the movement and result in forms of protest, expression of discontent and new forms of identity. The research is adapted according to the changes and developments in the movement. The different perceptions on the movement are displayed. The social actors in this movement participate in the protests to change their discontent with the current government. Collective identity is also a concept that is constructed actively by group members according to the symbolic interactionists (Hunt & Benford, 2004).

4.2. Research design

The research design of this study is a case study, or the intensive examination of a specific case (Bryman, 2008: 55-56). The Umbrella Movement is considered a case study because of its complex history and the diversity of its participants. The political situation this movement is revolting against is one of a kind: the China's 'one country, two systems' relation to Hong Kong is unique. This makes the situation in which this movement evolved exceptional in its kind and therefore it requires intensive analysis. Because of the unique timing and place, the results of this research are not generalisable to other social movements. However, the extensive case study of this democracy movement attempts to enable possibilities for cross-cultural connections with similar movements. Through a detailed examination of this case, this research sheds light on the complex political developments and the unique interactions within the social movement that arose in Hong Kong. The case study of this movement helps other researchers to have a clearer insight into the complexity and diversity of the participants and their collective identity. Moreover, the interdisciplinary approach on the concepts of identity provides useful insights in the emergence of social movements.

4.3. Research methods and respondents

Two methods were used to construct the research; participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Participant observation is the involvement of the researcher in a certain social group. This is done to gather deeper insights into this social group and its functioning. The social group in which the data are conducted is the Umbrella Movement. The observations establish a detailed description of this movement, the way of protesting and the profile of participants. The ethnography is described through two forms of fieldwork.

First, the observations have been conducted to gather in-depth understanding of the movement and its people. These have been conducted during protests and through informal conversations with participants in the different camps. With this research method data is gathered to describe the composition of the protests; not only what the protest sites look like, but also how people behave within the movement. Did people carry out certain functions? What was a day like at the Umbrella Movement protest site?

The participant observation are done at the three protest sites in Hong Kong: Admiralty, Mong Kok and Causeway Bay. Since Admiralty was the first and the biggest protest site, most

observations are done here: twenty observations starting from September 28, including two overnight stays in the tents on Harcourt Road. Mong Kok was a slightly smaller occupation site on Nathan Road. Ten field visits are done here. Causeway Bay was a small and quiet protest site, therefore three observations seem to suffice here. With these observations, it is possible to clearly display differences within and between the camps.

Secondly, nine semi-structured interviews are conducted with different participants of the protests, to deepen information perceived during the participant observation. Two are done with protesters of the Causeway Bay protest site, three with Mong Kok protesters and four with Admiralty protesters. The number of interviewees at each protest site again is depended on the size of the site. In these interviews several topics are discussed, including grievances for protesting, the goals the protesters hoped to achieve, differences in the movement and the Hong Kong future. The interview is without a definite structure, this depended on the answers given by the respondents. This makes the interview flexible and open-ended to ensure insight in different views and opinions of the participants (Bryman, 2008: 437). The contacts with these participants are made during the observations at the protest sites.

Respondents for the interviews are sampled according to their age. The sample size is also dependent on the protest site. In Admiralty, the average age group of the protesters was below the average in Mong Kok. In Admiralty, mostly students were participating in the protests, while in Mong Kok more elderly people were protesting. Purposive sampling was used in accordance with the relative composition of each different protest site. These samples were also based on conversations during the participant observation. My interviewing sample was limited to those able to converse with some fluency in the English language. This influenced the results of the interviews, because lower class people do not always speak the English language.

Due to the unexpected escalation of the movement, the theoretical framework had to be built during the protests. This resulted in a lack of time on theorising the concepts that would be of importance for this movement. After conducting the interviews and observations, the theoretical framework had to be adjusted. During the fieldwork some other concepts turned out to be of greater importance than initially anticipated. Especially the Hong Kong identity was a concept that turned out to be very important for many of the protesters. These concepts had to be added after the fieldwork was conducted.

Finally, the results of the conducted fieldwork are documented in an ethnographic framework. The use of this framework results in two , the research pays attention to the differences in identity in both Hong Kong and China. It examines a group that tried to gain access to power. The descriptive nature of an ethnography helps to gain greater understanding of the movement, its organisation and their grievances. This framework is chosen to tell the story of the Umbrella Movement on a micro-level, but at the same time offers the opportunity to see the data in a bigger perspective of the society the movement emerged in.

4.4. Operationalisation

The concepts that were analysed in the theoretical framework were conceptualised into indicators to collect data during fieldwork (see Table 1). The main concept of the research is collective identity. Collective identity is an alternative form of identity that is significant for the rise of social movements and it is the result of identity politics. The dimensions of social and personal identity explain the emergence of this concept through the process of identity politics. These forms of identities are also complex and therefore sub-dimensions are added to the table. These sub-dimensions are divided into empirical indicators that are used during the fieldwork. The indicators will be measured during both participant observation as the interviews.

Social identity can be explained in terms of both sociological, or institutional, identity, and anthropological, or cultural, identity. Institutional identity in Hong Kong is constructed by factors like education, political background or democratic ideals, and can also be measured by the goals given by the protesters of the political Umbrella Movement. Cultural identity measures how Hong Kong's culture influences the social identity of the movement. During the fieldwork, attention is payed to indicators like proudness of culture, distinction from Chinese identity and the use of symbols in the movement.

The dimension of personal identity is conceptualised as group identity, because it is assumed that personal identity is a combination of several group identities. These group identities together construct the individual. Groups result from internal and external criteria (Tajfel, 1982). Awareness of membership, value connotations and emotional investment are the internal indicators of a group identity, and boundaries for others are part of the external criteria.

Table 1 – Operationalisation scheme

Concept	Dimension	Sub-dimension	Indicator
Collective Identity	Social Identity	Institutional Identity	Education Democratic ideals Goals of the movement
		Cultural Identity	Proud of HK identity Distinction from Chinese identity Symbols in the movement Motivations
	Group Identity	Internal	Awareness of membership Value connotations Emotional investment
		External	Boundaries of group

4.5. Ethical considerations

Due to the political tension around the topic of Hong Kong's politics, it is considered extremely important to protect the anonymity of the participants of this research. China currently does not have freedom of speech, and this makes protesters political enemies of the Chinese state. This research does not wish to harm any of the protesters in any way. Therefore names of interviewees and protesters I met during my observations are changed to ensure their safety.

During observations of collective protests, participants did not know I was doing research on the movement. In this manner, I was able to observe the protesters, movement and action in a genuine way. However, I did not actively participate in the protest, I passively looked and documented significant developments. This was to ensure an open-ended opinion on developments in the movement. For the scientific purpose of this research it was important to maintain as objective as possible regarding the movement. During the observations photos are

taken to document the protests. Some of these photos are included in the next chapter to illustrate the discussed themes, but faces of people in the pictures are covered up.

During the interviews, I did present myself as a researcher. I did not express my opinion in this research, to ensure the participants felt free to elaborate on their grievances, the movement and their role in it. The interviews were recorded with permission of all respondents. These interviews will not be published. All names of interviewees have been changed. Hong Kong's political situation is sensitive because of its relation to China. In China there still is no freedom of expression. This tense situation resulted in a reserved attitude in some of the interviews. Other people I met were not willing to do interviews for this reason.

5. Results

5.1. Research process

The participant observation started during the student boycott preceding the official start of the protest on the 28th of September. These observations continued throughout all 78 days of the occupation. I attended both the claiming of Admiralty as a protest site, and all three clearances of Mong Kok, Admiralty and Causeway Bay towards the end of 2014. During the observations I shot pictures and videos, and I talked to people about recent developments in the movement and politics. This created contacts with protesters and kept me updated on the situation. I met many people at the protest site, some of whom I interviewed later on, but with most I held informal conversations. When it was announced that Admiralty would be evicted in the beginning of December, I lost some of my contacts at that protest site without having their contact information.

A total of nine interviews was conducted, including one duo-interview with Adam (29) and Mavis (23) from Causeway Bay. The interviews lasted between 20 minutes to 1,5 hours. Respondents were approached during the observations at the protest site. A wide range of protesters was interviewed. Out of nine, five respondents were male and four were female. The age of the interviewees ranged from Katy (16) to Victoria (60s). Six of the interviewees were students (including one still in secondary school), two worked jobs in their daily lives, and one was retired. All, except for one, of the respondents were born in Hong Kong, and all considered themselves to be *Hoeng Gong Yan* (Hongkonger).

All interviews took place after the clearances of the protest site. This might have influenced the answers that the respondents gave. The interviews were mostly conducted inside restaurants or cafes, and one of the interviews took place in Tamar Park. Interviews and conversations during the observations were conducted in English, which sometimes proved to be difficult. Especially in Mong Kok it was difficult to make conversation with people, because of the language barrier. Some people did not want to do an interview with me for this reason. During one of the interviews I was asked to turn my recording device off to explain the question I was asking. Other times I had to explain the question again, and this clarification sometimes resulted in directive questions. Nevertheless, this resulted in useful information because respondents gave clarification when the question was answered.

5.2. Research findings

After conducting the fieldwork by doing participant observation at the protest sites and interviewing several of the protesters, results can be analysed. The data of the research have been organised around a total of eight themes. In the sections below, the themes that were perceived during the fieldwork are described and analysed.

5.2.1. Organisation

This section focuses on the organisational aspects of the movement. A description of each of the camps is given and of how the protesters organise their lives at the protest sites. It will analyse the functioning of the sites.

On the morning of the 26th of October 2014, I woke up in a warm tent in the middle of Harcourt Road. Normally this is one of the major highways on Hong Kong Island, but for the past month no car had driven on this road. It had been an uneasy night, despite my borrowed mat and sleeping bag, the concrete ground was hard and it started raining around 2 in the morning. I felt exhausted after sleeping at the site for one night and could not imagine how tired I must have been if I would have slept at the occupied protest site every night since the protests started on the 28th of September. When I got out of my tent, people were already very active. I walked over to the tent registration office to check out my tent.

The tent registration is one of the aspects that showed the high degree of organisation and functionality of the Umbrella Movement. From the beginning the movement was internationally praised for cleaning up and recycling the mess at the Admiralty site after the first day of protesting (Daerden, 2014). In the days that followed, each of the protest sites, in Admiralty, Mong Kok and Causeway Bay, developed rapidly. There were first aid stations, garbage recycling points and

Image 1 – Recycling at Admiralty

places to get free food, water and other drinks, all donated by supporters of the protesters. According to Victor (23), a first aider at the Admiralty site, there was a special 'supply team': "*They are in charge of the food supply, they would just contact, like: hey we need medical supplies, or we need water, food, and then put it on the website, and the citizens would buy this.*"

When days turned into weeks, protesters started to realise that they might be occupying for a longer time, so they started to settle in more permanently. Besides food and drinks, people started donating all kinds of materials. Shampoo, toothbrushes, soap and toilet paper were collected at the two wash room areas at the Admiralty site. Every time I arrived at the Admiralty site, plenty seemed to be going on. People always were busy with organising activities or lectures. There was a guarded phone-charging point, where you would get a ticket when handing in your phone, so you could pick it up an hour later with the battery charged. Since the population of protesters was still largely made up of students, a 24/7 library was built with donated wood, energy running on a generator and two bicycles generating green energy. There was a construction team that strengthened the barricades to keep out the police, built chairs for older people, who could not sit on the ground all day, built a main stage for lectures and speeches, and installed stairs to climb over the concrete blockades that normally prevented cars from crashing into
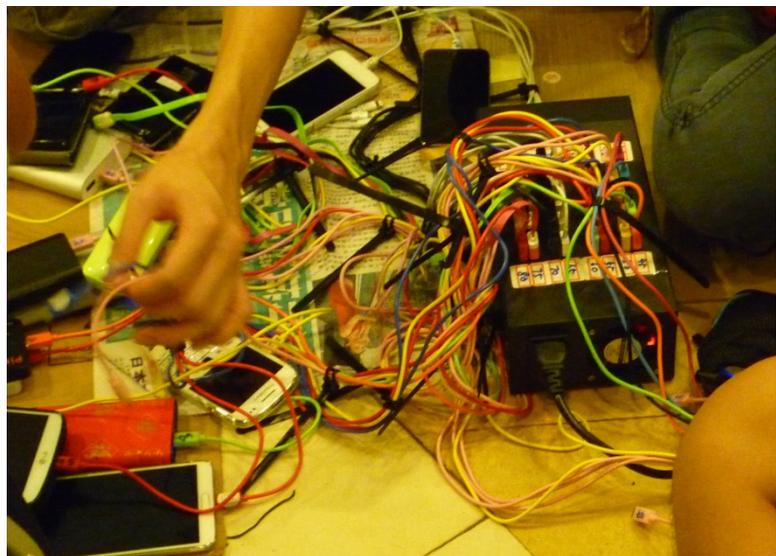
Image 2 - Phone charging at Admiralty

each other. People donated sleeping bags, mats and tents, resulting in the tent registration, free of charge of course, only two conditions were put forward: clean up your tent after leaving and check out time is noon the next day.

Besides its organisation, the Umbrella Movement was also very diverse. The diversity of the Hong Kong democracy protests becomes clear by just looking at all the different names the movement has. Soon after the riots in late September, the movement was referred to as the Umbrella Revolution, due to the umbrellas the protesters would use to protect themselves from

the teargas fired by the police. Joshua Wong, 17-year-old founder of Scholarism, explicitly asked protesters and media to not call them a revolution, because of the movement's peaceful nature. Therefore the Hong Kong democracy protests were most commonly called the Umbrella Movement. When Benny Tai announced that Occupy Central officially had started after the riots on the 28th of September, students became angry because they felt Tai was taking over their movement. Initially the media portrayed the protests as a student movement, since two of the organising bodies, HKFS and Scholarism, were student groups. But soon it received much wider support, so it was also described as a political or democracy movement.

The Admiralty protest site was located in front of the Admiralty MTR station. The choice of location was both coincidental and strategic. In 2003, Benny Tai, founder of Occupy Central, wrote an article on occupying the streets of Central when China would deny Hong Kong its democracy. Harcourt Road in Admiralty, although closely located to Central, eventually got occupied when students were denied access to Tamar Park, where other student protesters were located. Tamar Park was where the student boycott took place and is located next to several governmental buildings like the Legislative Council. Due to its size and since all three of the main organising bodies, HKFS, Scholarism and Occupy Central, were located at Admiralty, this was seen as the main protest site.

The other protest sites, in Mong Kok and Causeway Bay, also showed some degree of organisation, but both camps had a different atmosphere. These sites were occupied on the same night as Admiralty, James (40s) told me that he walked from Admiralty to Causeway Bay on the particular night. The Mong Kok occupied area was the second largest. It was located on the juncture of Nathan Road and Argyle Street and stretched a couple of 100 meters on both sides of each street.

Causeway Bay was the smallest site. It was located on Yee Wo Street, near the Causeway Bay MTR station. In Causeway Bay it was always more quiet than in Admiralty, probably due to the difference in size. Many shoppers would be passing by, since Causeway Bay is a major shopping district, which remained in business during the protests, but at the camp people were inclined to keep to themselves. People would have discussions, study in the improvised library and give lectures. Adam (29), one of the Causeway Bay occupiers, described his camp as: "*We were like a class room. We would have some volunteer lecturing. Our main concept, our main thing, was like a class.*" Due to its small size, the Causeway Bay site was often forgotten by both

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the media and by protesters of other camps. That was one of the frustrations of the protesters there, they feel like their opinions were not heard or less valued.

Mong Kok seemed to be lacking the sense of organisation that the other sites had. There was often a chaotic and tense atmosphere. The protesters were different as well, people generally seemed older, over their 60s even. Here many topics were discussed as well, but this happened differently than in Causeway Bay and Admiralty, in Mong Kok lots of people would be involved in a discussion and start screaming at each other passionately, the conversations were less structured. The course of the day at Mong Kok was always quite chaotic, but maybe this was due to the lack of security the site had to deal with.

I was often warned about going to Mong Kok as well. The protesters at the Mong Kok site were supposed to be violent, especially towards foreigners, because the protesters might feel intruded by my presence. When I was walking around with Victoria (60s) in Mong Kok, Beatrice, a friend of Victoria, warned me about the male protesters at the particular site. According to Beatrice, some of them were drunk and could try to harass me. Not long after that a male protester started verbally harassing me.

The disorganised atmosphere in the camp could be explained by the lack of opportunity to build a permanent structure at the site. Every now and then I heard that the police cleared half of the Mong Kok site overnight. When this happened, the organisational level at the site was suddenly very visible: the next day was always full with constructive actions and discussions on how to win back the lost territory. Everyone stepped in to organise ways to reconquer the lost ground. The solidarity for the protesters at Mong Kok was suddenly very clear as well, protesters at the other sites were thinking of ways to help out the reclamation of the territory. Sam (25), an occupier at both Admiralty and Mong Kok, expressed his solidarity to Mong Kok: "*Sometimes Mong Kok had more fighting, it is not peaceful like Admiralty, and I want to protect it* [Mong Kok]*, because I don't want this occupy movement, or protest to finish too early, I want to make more people understand what we are doing.*"

The solidarity between the different camps of the movement was also perceived during the clearances of the sites. In Mong Kok, the site that got cleared first on the 25th of November, lots of protesters from the other camps came to the site to show their support. The area eventually was cleared, although the protesters violently tried to remain here. During the clearance at Admiralty on the 11th of December, members of the Pan-Democratic party also

showed solidarity. The last site that got cleared was Causeway Bay, on the 15th of December. The night before the clearance, lots of protesters gathered at the last occupied territory. On the day of the clearance, Victoria, a woman in her 60s and one of the Mong Kok occupiers, got voluntarily arrested by the police. When I interviewed a week later, she told me that she did this to show what the movement meant to her, she did not care about this arrest, she cared about the goals of the movement.

5.2.2. Symbolism

The Umbrella Movement was also characterised by the many forms of symbolism. The name of the movement for instance: the Umbrella Movement, symbolised the first day of civil disobedience, where umbrellas were used as a shield against tear gas and pepper spray. Key chains, cookies, art works and other objects were shaped in the form of umbrellas. On the 28th of October, the protesters at Admiralty raised their umbrellas in silence for 87 seconds to mark the 87 rounds of teargas that were shot a month earlier, at the beginning of the occupation (So et al., 2014).

The movement also used the yellow ribbon as a form of symbolisation. The yellow ribbon stands for the support of universal suffrage and was also used during the women's suffrage protests in the United States in the 19th century (Daerden, 2014). During the protests, the yellow ribbon was not only worn by protesters, but also by people who supported the movement and shared universal suffrage ideals. Another symbol was the number 689, the number of Legislative Council members that voted for C.Y. Leung as the next Chief Executive. C.Y. Leung was often portrayed as a bad leader and evil. C.Y. Leung was mocked by the number 689, because it is just over half of all 1200 votes. When the number was used by the protesters, it questioned the legitimacy of Leung, because he represent just over half of Hong Kong's seven million inhabitants.

Image 3 - Warning: 689 C.Y. Leung

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Music played another major role in the movement. The movement had several soundtracks, especially the 90s Cantopop song *Under a Vast Sky* by Beyond was popular (Meigs & Fan, 2014). The lyrics of the song are critically political and are about freedom. The protesters at Admiralty often sang together, holding the lit screens of their mobile phones in the air. This was not only beautiful to look at, it also gave a strong feeling of unity, strength and quantity. The song *Imagine* by John Lennon was also often sung by protesters, displayed on banners and a wall

Image 4 - Sticky notes on John Lennon Wall

of sticky notes is renamed the 'Lennon Wall'. The sticky notes had messages and drawings on them that showed support and encouraged to pursue the protests. The participants of the Umbrella Movement also changed the traffic signs around the occupied sites. Street names were changed into Democracy Road or Suffrage Street. These signs both represent the ideals of the movement, and mock the current authority. The protests also were integrated in Cantopop culture: on the 25th of October a music video was shot at the Admiralty site. The singer was filmed standing in the middle of Harcourt Road with a yellow umbrella. This showed how the movement also influenced popular culture in the city.

Image 5 – True democracy street sign

Image 6 – Recording of music video at Admiralty

When the roads in Mong Kok got occupied, not all vehicles were able to drive to the unoccupied road. This resulted in four busses in the middle of the occupied territory. These busses immediately turned out to be useful for the protesters as objects to hang posters and banners on. The area of Mong Kok was thereby clearly defined as occupied territory. Another form or symbolism was expressed verbally. Protesters shouted several slogans, especially during bigger rallies. In these slogans C.Y. Leung was urged to step down: 梁振英！下台！(Jyutping: loeng4 zan3 jing1 ! haa6 toi4 !). When confronted with the police, the protesters shouted: 香港人不怕香港人 (Jyutping: hoeng1 gong2 jan4 bat1 pa3 hoeng1 gong2 jan4; Hongkongers do not fear Hongkongers) and 聲援學生！學生無罪！(Jyutping: sing1 wun 4 hok6 saang1! hok6 saang1 mou4 zoei6 !; support the students! the students are innocent!). These slogans both expressed anger, and also the unity of the protesters. When shouting together, the big amount of dissatisfied protesters became clear.

On the 11th of December, the day before the Admiralty clearance, the

Image 7 – Small democracy umbrella in Admiralty

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protesters started to take down all of the banners, artworks and posters, to preserve them. The protesters and artists considered the protest materials as objects with important historic value (Chow, 2014). People were fighting over artwork that was left at the protest site. When I asked one of the bystanders why people were fighting, she told me that some of the protesters doubt the trustworthiness of the others and the purposes they have with the artworks.

The last occupied site that got cleared was Causeway Bay on the 15th of December. The night before this happened, many protesters of the whole movement gathered here to collect the last memories of past 78 days of occupation. The saved banners of both Mong Kok and Admiralty were displayed one last time. Besides the art, protesters got the chance to collect their last photos and crafted souvenirs of the movement. Bracelets, keychains, drawings and t-shirts were distributed. People could get a workshop on how to fold your own paper umbrella. During my last observation at Causeway Bay, I perceived how much value the people attach to small objects that symbolise and remind them of the movement.

5.2.3. Daily life at the protest sites

Daily life at the protest sites was often structured by discussions on how to proceed and on recent developments in the movement. At Admiralty and Causeway Bay speakers were often lecturing the protesters. Admiralty had a main stage with microphones located under the pedestrian bridge towards Tamar Park. Organisers, academics and other speakers addressed the protesters and media from this main stage. Besides the speakers at the main stage, the protesters were always engaged in discussions with others, this happened at all camps. These discussions nearly always were held in Cantonese, which made them impossible to follow for me, but sometimes I asked people to translate for me.

Image 8 - Occupied area of Admiralty on 10th of October

The discussions covered a broad range of topics, including China, the Hong Kong government and its Chief Executive, how to proceed the protests, the use of violence, recent developments in the movement and the conflicts within the movement. These discussions gave me information on the interests and issues of the protesters. The discussions were not only conducted face-to-face, communication through social media was also very important. There were Whatsapp-groups that discussed the movement, developments and actions that needed to be taken. During the observations technology and social media were always present. Protesters were sharing many pictures online of the events at the sites. The massive amount of online shares became apparent when the Chinese government blocked photo medium Instagram right after the protests started in the end of September (Boehler, 2014). Protesters often told me how Chinese media was negatively twisting the story of the Umbrella Movement. On Facebook, supporters of the movement changed their profile-picture into a yellow-ribbon and on Twitter #UmbrellaMovement was often used. According to CNN, #UmbrellaRevolution was even in the top 10 of trending hashtags of 2014 (CNN, 2014). Social media was not only a means to communicate with internet-friends of the protesters, it also was seen as a way to reach out internationally. Protesters often asked me where I was from, thereafter they told me to spread my experiences, so that the international political community would help Hong Kong pursue its democracy.

Other activities included studying, all three camps built libraries, made posters, checked supplies, explained the situation to bystanders and media, built barricades and constructed the camp. The protesters helped each other out, for instance towards the end of October it started raining regularly. One time, when it had been raining all night, tents and supplies got flooded. The next morning, the protesters started building pallets and other platforms under the tents, to prevent this from happening again. The different protest sites all had a sense of community, as if it were

Image 9 - Student library in Admiralty

small villages. James (40s) stressed the sense of community as well, and its differences: "*In Admiralty there was this really peaceful strong community feeling. Mong Kok had this as well, but it was a little different, but just as strong, but it was a little bit more violent.*"

5.2.4. Opposition of the movement

In all interviews the respondents talked about the violence in Mong Kok. Besides the government's attempts to repress the protests, the occupiers also were opposed by other citizens of Hong Kong, resulting in violent clashes that mostly took place in Mong Kok. The reason this happened in Mong Kok, was that this camp was seen as more problematic than the other two by the opponents. In contrary to Causeway Bay, a site that was so small that it did not have a high impact on its surroundings, and to Admiralty, which had such a high amount of protesters that it was too difficult for the opponents to attack, the Mong Kok site was of considerable size and blocked shops and businesses. This seemed to annoy many people, who were obstructed to do their shopping or commute to their jobs. When I arrived in Mong Kok on the second day of occupation, all the shops in the area closed down and cleared their windows of any valuables as a safety precaution.

I have also heard rumours during the observations that clashes often took place here due to triads; groups of Chinese organised criminals. Mong Kok is said to be one of the areas where triads practice their businesses. The triads wanted to get rid of the protesters to continue their practices, and therefore attacked the protest site. The police force got involved to stop the violence, but instead of protecting the peaceful students, the police sided with the attacking group. This raised lots of questions and anger among the protesters.

Another group that often created tension at the Mong Kok site were the so-called *blue ribbon people*. This was a group that wore blue ribbons to show their support for the police and government authorities and was in opposition to the yellow ribbon, the symbol of the protesters. During one of my observations I witnessed one of these clashes with the blue ribbons.

Bystanders told me that part of them is paid by the government to make the situation escalate, so the police would have a valid reason to clear the area. During this clash, the protesters seemed to be a minority at first, and some got arrested, but when it started to rain, many of the opponents left and the students won back the territory. James (40s) commented on the situation with these opponents of the protests: "*In Mong Kok it* [the safety situation] is *much*

Image 10 – Anti-protester placing Chinese flag in Mong Kok

worse, every night the policemen or the blue ribbon people, you know the opposition, the anti-protesters, would come and disturb you and come and stir things up."

Besides having to deal with opposition on the streets, some of the protesters also had to deal with opposition at home. During the interviews the students talked about the opinions of their parents as well. The parents of Sam (25), Katy (16), Garry (21) and Vincent (23) did not agree with the occupation on the streets. The parents felt it messed up life in Hong Kong. It was also seen as a waste of time, the students should spend time on school instead of protesting. The parents did not necessarily disagree with a democratic Hong Kong. Katy was even impressed with the way her mother was criticising C.Y. Leung. In all interviews, when asked about opposition towards the movement, it was stressed that most Hongkongers were not against a democracy, but some of them did not agree with the occupation.

The opposition of the movement was most clearly perceived in the Mong Kok district. Conflicts with both triads and anti-protesters occurred more often in this area than the others. This resulted in more chaotic and less organised atmosphere, which expressed itself in both the structure of the camp, as the hostile behaviour of the protesters. Beside conflicts at the protest sites, parents of students also opposed the movement.

5.2.5. Conflicts in the movement

Besides external conflict, the protesters also had disagreements amongst each other. One of the internal conflicts was regarding the leadership of the movement. Not all participants agreed upon the role of the three main organisations of the movement, who filled in the role as leaders too much, according to some. Occupy Central was especially criticised for this, for instance by Garry when asked about Tai's role as a leader:

"Benny Tai is a great person, he made the Occupy Central begin, but maybe he cannot fulfil that mission, this mission, because he is a teacher, he is not pretty good at holding the movement together. He started the whole Occupy Central event, but for me, Occupy Central stopped when the Umbrella Revolution started." – Garry (21), Admiralty

During observations I became aware of more conflicts about leadership. Vicky, one of the students I met at Admiralty, got into a discussion with someone of the Socialist Labour Association, a group that defends the rights of lower-class labourers, who was criticising the leaders of the movement for their approach on democracy. He proposed more action to counter the peaceful approach of the movement at that time, because in his view this was not working. According to him, the movement was supposed to be completely anarchist, but the organisations of this movement were opposing this. The organisations also would not allow everyone who wanted to speak on the stage to do so, and therefore were not acting democratically. A pro-democracy and populist party, Civic Passion, also criticised the movement for its leadership, resulting in an attempt to claim the main stage at Admiralty by an anti-Occupy Central group (Tsang, Sung & Chan, 2014).

At the end of October, I met Lisa, a graduate anthropology student of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She informed me about the upcoming referendum within the movement organised by Occupy Central. On Sunday the 26th of October the protesters of the Umbrella Movement were able to vote on whether or not to engage in a conversation with the Chinese government. All voters had to agree or disagree with two motions. But before the referendum started, it received lots of criticism from the protesters: first, it would endanger protesters because the online-voting system required the Hong Kong I.D. number of the voters and second, the referendum did not represent what the protesters wanted. Many occupiers felt as if this was organised without taking their opinions into account. The referendum turned out to be unsuccessful.

During interviews and observations the comparison between Mong Kok and Admiralty was often made. There were several opinions on the differences. Some protesters of the different camps opposed each other's strategy, in Admiralty I have often heard that the protesters at Mong Kok were too violent and therefore were strongly opposed by other citizens, which resulted in a bad image for the movement. In Mong Kok some people argued that with the peaceful approach

of Admiralty no democracy would be reached. The strategy that was dominantly practised at Admiralty was moderate. The movement's organising bodies and the students stressed peaceful sit-ins and protest. Mong Kok's protesters were often seen as more radical and violent. Instead of peacefully protecting the territory when the police involved on the protest territory, Mong Kok protesters reacted with shouting at the police, not scared of a confrontation. This resulted in fights and arrests of the protesters. Their strategy seemed to be that violent clashes had more chance to achieve the political goals. During one of the observations in Mong Kok, I talked to Charlie, a student who used to occupy at Admiralty, but moved to Mong Kok. He told me that he moved because Admiralty was too peaceful, he was looking for more action and therefore left to occupy at Mong Kok.

Yet, I observed that in Admiralty the atmosphere was not always peaceful either. The far west side of the protest site, nearly at the Central district, was occupied by a small group of radical youths. They would be drinking alcohol, smoking and shouting all night. Their camp was not nearly as well-organised as it was a couple of 100 metres down the road. There was trash everywhere and this attracted rats. The group was not interested in conversing with me, but after observing them, I found that they did have a purpose: they would protect the borders of the protest site. One time, police closed in on one of the barricades, and this group set up an alarm system of telephones and whistles. This resulted in a group of protesters being present to protect their border against the police in no time.

Internal conflicts in the Umbrella Movement mainly concerned leadership. These conflicts mainly took place at the Admiralty site, because the leaders were situated there. But there were also strong differences between the protest sites, especially Mong Kok and Admiralty. These conflicts concerned the protest strategy of the movement.

5.2.6. Political grievances
Even though the movement had a certain degree of diversity and some conflicts, there were some overarching grievances amongst the protesters. Although the profiles of the respondents differed, an overlap was perceived in the reasons to participate. The goals of the movement included the right for democracy or universal suffrage, to look after Hong Kong's interests, to protect the students against police brutality or to find a new Chief Executive. Not all interviewees presented

the same motivations, but these motivations were also mentioned during the fieldwork at the protest sites, and therefore seemed to be important for at least a part of the movement.

The following two sections focus on the grievances for the protesters to participate in the protests. The two main grievances found are political grievances and cultural grievances. A general sense of these grievances was explored during the observations at the three protest sites. These findings were further deepened during the interviews that were conducted with all the respondents. There was not one singular reason found during the fieldwork. The movement had a diverse set of grievances to occupy the streets for over two months and these are illustrated below. This section contains the political grievances, followed by cultural grievances in the next section.
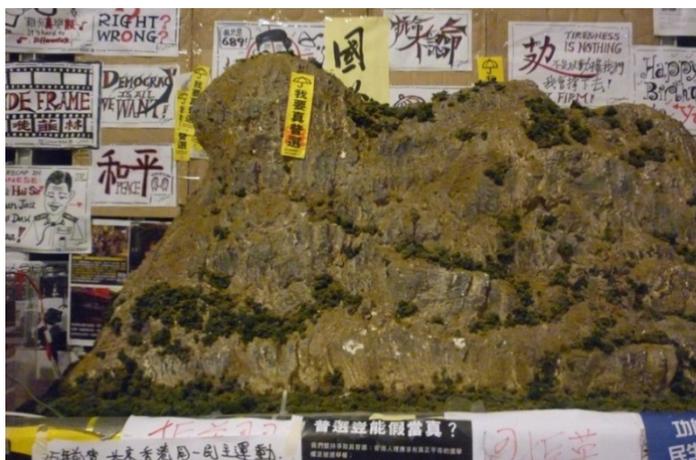
Image 11 - Small version of Lion Rock with banner at Admiralty after removing the real banner

By far the main motivation to join the Umbrella Movement, was to achieve universal suffrage for the people of Hong Kong. At the protest sites lots of banners and posters represented the democratic goals of the movement. On the 23rd of October, pro-democracy protesters hung a giant banner saying 'I want real universal suffrage' on Hong Kong's Lion Rock. This huge rock symbolises the historical work ethics[1] of Hong Kong, and therefore the banner was very provocative. It was taken down the same day.

Universal suffrage is not only mentioned in every single interview, I have heard this nearly every time I would talk to someone at the protest site. Universal suffrage was expected to be part of the Hong Kong democratic system from 2017 onwards, twenty years after the handover. China was, according to the protesters, not keeping its promise on their democratic rights:

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[1] Hong Kong's work ethics, also called "The Spirit under the Lion Rock", represented the middle class of Hong Kong between the 1940s-1970s. The middle class was considered as hard-working and apolitical (Lui & Wong, 1995).

"*But especially with the universal suffrage issue, I think that is the whole outburst of the whole situation, because you know the universal suffrage, what China has promised thirty years ago with the Joint Declaration and now, they are suddenly saying no, they are eating their words, they say: no no no we give you three choices and you can select that.*" – James (40s), Mong Kok

Image 12 - Poster reminding people of serious protest

After the announcement of China's central government in August 2014, the protesters were afraid that they would lose their rights and freedom and that China would slowly incorporate the Hong Kong society. By claiming their rights to complete universal suffrage, instead of the three pre-selected candidates that Beijing was offering, the protesters were hoping to maintain their society as it is now.

There was however disagreement on how the universal suffrage would practically work. When I asked people how they would like to see the democracy in practice, this was not completely clear. According to some, Mainlanders should be prohibited to vote, while others thought that there should be criteria for this. All the people I interviewed thought that there should be universal suffrage in the election of the Chief Executive, but there was no consensus on how the Legislative Council gets to be chosen. It was also unclear who should be able to run for CE. According to Garry (21), there should be qualifications for the job: "*I want more people to can become* [sic] *a CE. They need some qualifications, like you gotta have a graduation in university, you gotta have a wife, you need to be over 40 or 45 years old.*" Lastly, Victoria (60s), Sam (25) and Tanja (29) hoped to see Hong Kong become independent of China one day, but realised this probably is not possible, due to entangled economic relations between China and their city.

The political relation between China and Hong Kong was mentioned more often in terms of freedom. In nearly all interviews the respondents stressed the importance of freedom. China is considered to be a country that has little freedom, while freedom is highly valued amongst the Hongkongers. The forms of freedom included the political system, or not being part of the repressive Chinese Central Government, education, values, speech and media. Respondents often

mentioned being afraid of losing their freedom when complying to the plan of the Chinese government and their vision of a Hong Kong democracy:

"*They* [Chinese government] *are limiting the rights and freedoms of the real Hong Kong people, I think that as a secondary school student, maybe my power and influence is very low, but I still have to participate in it because it is my responsibility and about my future as well. […] if today we don't step up about our future to defend our rights and freedom, who will defend us, who will protect our freedoms and rights?*" – Katy (16), Admiralty

The fear of losing the Hong Kong freedom is not just about political freedom. Another form of freedom the Hongkongers are afraid of losing is freedom of press. I have heard this often during the student boycott. Earlier in 2014, an editor of one of Hong Kong's pro-democracy newspapers got stabbed, and according to the students at the boycott, this was an act against press freedom. People have feared loss of their freedom of press. Sam (25), one of the interviewees, mentioned a similar fear: "*I think the HK government controls the media a lot. That means they just display the news how they want it.*"

      The main political grievance for participating in the Hong Kong Occupy Movement was the fear of losing freedom and rights they currently have. The goal the movement therefore had was to get universal suffrage of the Chief Executive, although there was not a singular idea on the practicalities of a new political system. This goal was both expressed during the observations and further explored in the interviews.

5.2.7. Cultural grievances

Another main reason mentioned by the protesters, related to the issue of universal suffrage, seems to be the problematic relationship with Mainland Chinese people coming over to Hong Kong. I have heard negative opinions of the protesters on Mainlanders during conversations while observing and during the interviews. There are either too many Mainlanders, according to James (40s), Sam (25), Victoria (60s), Vincent (23) and Tanja (29), or they are disrespectful to the Hong Kong culture, according to James and Sam, or they are exploiting the Hong Kong economy and speculating with real estate, according to Sam and Victoria. Much of this is blamed on the current government of Hong Kong and its tolerant policy towards Mainlanders. With a

growing Chinese influence in their government, this problem was only going to get bigger according to the protesters. By achieving a democracy, the protesters hoped to reclaim power to regain control over this so-called problem.

But Garry (21) and Katy (16) felt less negative towards Mainlanders. Katy thought that Mainlanders should be able to vote when a democracy was reached in Hong Kong, if they had been living in the city for a longer amount of time. Garry identified himself as Chinese from Hong Kong and expressed his hopes for a Chinese democracy one day. According to him, the Hong Kong democracy could serve as an example for China.

However, other cultural tensions between Hongkongers and the Chinese were frequently stressed in the interviews. Some of the protesters that I spoke to made a clear distinction between themselves and Chinese people. Mainlanders are depicted as rude, uncivilised and stupid. By making this distinction, the protesters positioned themselves as the opposite: civilised and well mannered. These stereotypes of Chinese people resulted in an expression of fear of their growing amounts in the city. Sam, for instance, expressed his fear for Chinese businesses taking away jobs and for the diminishing use of the Cantonese language:

"[…] *they are trying to speak Putonghua, Mandarin, in Hong Kong. Not so much people use Cantonese. And they are also trying to use Mandarin as our first language. In primary school, they wanna do it. Canton is maybe, in the future, I cannot forecast what year it is gonna be, for the next 20 years, Cantonese is the second language is Hong Kong. So that is why I wanna protect us.*" – Sam (25), Mong Kok

James (40s), a Mong Kok protester, mentioned a similar fear of the diminishing Cantonese language. He expressed a more general fear of the Chinese culture. He felt as if the Mainlanders got priorities over the local Hongkongers, whereas he thought that Mainlanders should comply with the Hong Kong customs, because the Chinese were immigrating into a city with a particular culture. Victoria (60s) expressed the most excessive anger towards Chinese culture. I met her during my observations in Mong Kok and when I asked her why she was here and why she was angry, she started screaming about "*those damn communists, I hate, hate, HATE them,*" continuing about the harm that Mainlanders were bringing upon Hong Kong. According to her, they were ruining the city. Later, in her interview, she explained what had changed in Hong

Kong since the handover: "*You know, since 1997, Chinese regime control Hong Kong, our life situation has changed. And they try to immigrate a lot of Mainlanders to Hong Kong, and then they make everything different. You know the property, they do the speculation and that makes the prices go up.*"

The tension between China and Hong Kong during the protest is also expressed on the 1st of October, China's National Day. Every year on the morning of the 1st of October, there is a flag ceremony at the harbour of Hong Kong Island in honour of this national holiday. In 2014, this flag ceremony was strongly opposed by the protesters, who had been teargased just a couple of days earlier. Their grievances against the police, the Hong Kong government and the Chinese central government were still present. When the flag ceremony starts and two helicopters ascend with both a Chinese flag and a, slightly smaller, Hong Kong flag, the protesters raise their umbrellas and start screaming loudly.

The main cultural grievance was a fear of losing a sense of the Hong Kong identity. This was expressed through intolerance towards the Mainland Chinese population coming to Hong Kong by part of the movement. This grievance was not perceived during the visual observations, but the 'fear of Mainland' was expressed during conversations at the protest sites. In the interviews, it became clear that more respondents felt this way towards China.

5.2.8. Political awareness

Although the movement did not achieve the goal of universal suffrage, the movement was, according to my respondents, not unsuccessful. During the Umbrella Movement, the participants got involved in politics, and that is unusual for Hongkongers according to James:

"*But for the past two months there has been a lot of debate, or discussion, whether you like it or not, a lot more people have been awaken to this. It was positive, because any democracy is based on the people, it is about how much they are aware of themselves as a citizen of that place.*" – James (40s), Mong Kok

The protesters developed a political awareness and involvement that was not as present before the movement. Katy told me that her sense of identity got stronger during the movement. Before

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the movement started she was not really involved in politics. The involvement in the movement resulted in an interest in politics and being a proud Hongkonger:

"*I would say that a lot of Hong Kong people did not really care about political issues, not really care about what's happening in Hong Kong, about the police authority and the decisions of the central government, they were only working and having their own life. And after this, most of them have already woken up and understand that even though you don't look for the political issues, they will come find you. […] Everyone in Hong Kong is involved in here, what we are doing. We must defend our rights and freedom.*" – Katy (16), Admiralty

The political participation was strongly influenced by emotional investment of people during the protests. I have perceived lots of different emotions during the 78 days of occupation of the Umbrella Movement. In the beginning of the protests, emotions were mainly anger and disbelief towards the actions taken by the police. This resulted in violent clashes. But I also saw happiness and relief during these days, because finally something was happening, and the protesters were widely supported. They were also hopeful for new developments in the Hong Kong political system.

One of the reasons that had driven people to occupy the streets for over two months was to support and protect the students. After the police brutality on the 28th of September, many people felt sympathy for the student protest. At the end of October, I met a group of friends sitting outside of their tents at the Admiralty protest site. They told me they had been at the same spot since the first day of the protest, because they wanted to protect the students and to show that the desire for democracy is widespread amongst the citizens of Hong

Image 13 - Sadness during clearance of Admiralty

Kong, that it is not just the students'. The support of this group of friends shows both fear and hope; fear for the current situation of the city, and hope that the next generation of Hong Kong, the students, will be possible to do better.

Besides this group, friendship played a major role in the protests overall. Occupying was an activity that protesters were doing with their friends. These groups were discussing on developments in the movement, supporting each other or participating in small activities. Garry (21) and Katy (16) comment about the new friends they made during the protests.

On the last days of the movement, when clearances were announced, anger recurred, towards the police, government and China. But some were also relieved; people were tired after sleeping in the streets for over two months. The main emotion I perceived during these days however, was hope. People were not ready to give up their goals. The occupation was seen as the beginning of change. Especially at the clearance of Admiralty, the protesters made very clear that they would be back. People expressed sadness that the occupation had ended without achievement, but remained hopeful for the future. When I was conducting my last observation at Causeway Bay, I met Katy, the sixteen-year-old Admiralty protester, who was urging everyone that could hear her not to lose hope after the occupation is over. During the interviews the same sense of hope was expressed. As James put it:

"I met so many young people, not only university students, but also secondary school students, yes and you look at them and you talk to them and you know the future has hope. Because these people, when I was their age, we were completely ignorant, politically, most of us anyway. […] Very promising I think. So I still have hope for the movement to achieve future goals."- James (40s), Mong Kok.

On the 11th of December, I went to the Admiralty site for the last time. It was the day of the clearance. When I arrived, the atmosphere was different, it was chaotic, there were many looters present at the site, they were collecting leftover objects like first-aid supplies, tents, umbrellas, helmets and other protective gear. At some point, police started to close in on the protest site from both the East and the West side. The clearance was not easy: several difficult barricades were put up by the protesters. The police closed down all possible exits, but remaining protesters were given a last opportunity to leave the site through Tim Mei Avenue, where the

identity numbers of the remaining protesters were noted. Expressions of the protesters were sad, but at the same time, people immediately started speculating on what the future was holding for the movement.

It took the police a whole day to arrest the last protesters and politicians and clear the tents, barricades and posters. At the end of the evening Harcourt road is cleaned up and during the night, cars turned the roads back to its original function. What is left over now, is the history of the movement in the hearts of the people.

Image 14 – 'We will be back!'

6. Conclusion

6.1. Conclusion

The eight analysed themes contribute in answering the question of this research: *To what extent do the different grievances of the various participants of the Umbrella Movement result in a collective identity?* In order to do this, three sub-conclusions will be given on the basis of the literature and research findings.

The first sub-question of the research is: *What are the various grievances of the Umbrella Movement?* Two main grievances were perceived during the fieldwork. First, the goals of the movement were clearly politically based. The participants of the Umbrella Movement wanted to achieve a democracy and the right to universal suffrage. Although some of the interviews pointed to a more radical political opinion, like independence from China, universal suffrage was unanimously the main goal of everyone participating. This unanimity did not concern details on how the democracy should be practiced. The reasons given for this 'right to democracy' originated during the colonial occupation of the United Kingdom. According to the protesters, the British and Chinese states signed the Joint Declaration with the promise of a Hong Kong democracy by 2017. China, however, wants to deny real universal suffrage to the Hong Kong people. The participants of the movement express fear of losing freedoms and rights that are part of their society.

Castells (1983) states that one of the three general goals of urban social movements is the claim for more local governance. This aim is a political one, just like the universal suffrage mentioned above, the only difference with the Umbrella Movement, is that Hong Kong already has a form of local authority, and the protesters fear losing it by the growing influence of China. Universal suffrage is a target that can be explained by looking at the city's institutions. Leung and Ng (2004) stated that, before handing Hong Kong back to China, the British implemented ideas of democracy into the education system. Seventeen years after the handover, the students that were educated with these ideas, rise up in this movement, because they are afraid of losing the freedom and rights that they have right now.

The second grievance that is expressed is a cultural one. The participants express a fear of Mainland Chinese taking over their city in terms of social, cultural and economic dimensions. The frustration that the protesters express are blames of speculation with the Hong Kong real estate industry, too many tourists and issues with language, norms and values. The Hong Kong

identity forms a stronger imagined community (Anderson, 1983) than the Chinese identity in the city and there is a growing friction between the two forms of identity (Chan, 2014). Castells (1983) mentions the conservation of cultural identity as one of the goals a social movement can have. The protesters find it important to maintain their historically based autonomous culture. The current government is blamed for their tolerance towards Mainlanders and with fake suffrage that the Chinese government in implementing in 2017, the protesters fear more tolerant policies. Therefore they claim to be protecting their culture from the Chinese culture that is imposed by them through the government. However, the frustration that the protesters express towards the growing Chinese influence in the city is, besides a cultural identity issue, also a form of discrimination. Hongkongers have a strong negative stereotype towards Mainlanders and by clarifying the differences in cultures, the protesters create a Chinese other. By doing this, they position themselves as more civilised.

The movement thus has a political goal that is supported by cultural grievances. Although the movement fits the criteria for a political movement, with a goal of universal suffrage and more generally democracy, my research findings suggest that the Umbrella Movement can be called a new social movement, or a movement that is not based on class-, race- or gender differences, but on identity issues. These identity issues derive from both institutional and cultural identity conflicts. The movement hoped to solve these issues by achieving a democracy, so the autonomy of their identity could be expressed.

The second sub-question of this study is as follows: *How does the protest facilitate various forms of organisation and expression of discontent?* The three protest sites and differentiated protesters and opinions, resulted in differences and similarities. Some protesters felt as if the initiators of the movement were acting as leaders, whereas not everyone agreed with their actions. Other conflicts in the movement were the opposing approaches on protest of Mong Kok and Admiralty. Although the media claimed that the movement was slowly falling apart, a sense of group identity was perceived amongst the protesters. Protesters commented on the strong influence their groups of friends. But group identity was also perceived in a bigger community. Even though conflicts occurred in the movement, the participants and respondents of the interview expressed a sense of community. The concept of group identity (Tajfel, 1982) of the movement is constructed first through an awareness of participating in the protests, which is perceived during the observations. Secondly, the protesters share value connotations, they have a

vision of what they want to achieve and why. Lastly, the protesters were emotionally invested in the movement. Emotions like anger, hope, solidarity and fear were expressed by several interviewees and during the observations through symbolism. Hunt and Benford (2004) stress the importance of feelings of solidarity for the collective identity of a movement and its cohesion. Tajfel's (1982) concept of group identity can be connected to Durkheim's (1893) collective consciousness. By forming a sense of identity in smaller communities, people find social cohesion in the Umbrella Movement.

External group identity is also perceived. The intergroup relations of the movement were conflicting with the government and anti-protesters by the expression of discontent of the movement towards both the Hong Kong and the Chinese government. The actions taken by the movement did lead to the acknowledgment by other groups.

The last sub-question of the research is: *How is the collective identity of the Umbrella Movement constructed?* According to Heyes (2012), identity politics, or the conflict between social and individual identity, can lead to a sense of collective identity by the suppressed group. The strong Hong Kong identity results in an imagined community that can be seen as a form of group identity. This form of cultural identity is very personal and distinctive for the protesters. However, the protesters express emotions of fear concerning their culture. With a threat of growing Chinese influence in their government, the protesters fear for the imposition of their own culture and social institutions. Jasper (2011) explains emerging social movements from their ideology and the role of emotions. Fear is a significant grievance that can result in a social movement. In the case of the Umbrella Movement, a dual fear is expressed.

The collective identity is closely aligned with the Hong Kong identity. Hong Kong has a longer history of critical political activism (Cheng, 2014). Due to historic, institutional and cultural reasons, the Hongkonger have their own sense of identity, which is unique to them. During the interviews, protesters would describe this identity in terms of politics and culture. The social identity that conflicts with the Hong Kong identity, is the Chinese identity and the fear of the imposing of this identity on their society. As Chan (2014) stated, the Chinese and Hong Kong identity differ significantly, and these differences only seem to grow larger. When China announced its vision for political reforms for Hong Kong, citizens experienced emotional stress and an immediate threat to their cultural identity. This resulted in the emergence of the Umbrella Movement and its collective identity.

There were also differences in the Hong Kong identity and collective identity. The movement and its participants can be described as highly political. However, there is opposition of other Hong Kong citizens on the movement. Many respondents of the interviews commented that these people were not against the goal of a democracy, they experienced political grievances as well. These people were not willing to take action and sometimes even against the protests, because the occupation was dysfunctional for the society. The difference between the Hong Kong identity and collective identity therefore is a heightened sense of political awareness and involvement. The collective identity of the movement can be seen as an escalation of the Hong Kong identity.

The collective identity of the Umbrella Movement was also perceived in the emotional investment of the protesters. As Tajfel (1982) stressed, the internal level of group identity is influenced by emotional investment of the members. During the protests, emotions like anger, hope and happiness were collectively felt amongst the protesters. Collective emotions resulted in support and hope for a better future among the participants. The Umbrella Movements had a strong sense of community. During the observations and interviews the movement as a community is perceived through symbolism, group identity, emotions and solidarity.

In conclusion the research question of this study can be answered: *To what extent do the different grievances of the various participants of the Umbrella Movement result in a collective identity?* Although the movement and its participants have their differences, it can be argued that the protesters have a similar sense of collective identity. The grievances of the protesters seem to be both political and cultural, and they are experienced collectively. These grievances have been a part of the Hong Kong society for a longer time, they date back to conflicts regarding the handover in 1997. The collective identity is the result of identity politics between the Chinese and Hong Kong identity. The Umbrella Movement can be seen as a new social movement, but the protesters do not seek for recognition of a new identity as Polletta and Jasper (2001) argue, they seek for the maintenance of their Hong Kong identity as it is.

Although the goals of the movement were not achieved and the occupation has stopped, the protesters remain hopeful. The strength of political awareness and their sense of identity are promising. The students of the movement are the future of Hong Kong, as mentioned often during the protests. This increases the historical importance of the movement, and time will tell how the cultural and political identity of Hong Kong will turn out in the future. It can be argued

that the democratic ideals of Hong Kong will not diminish, or as the protesters would say: 'We will be back!'

6.2. Discussion

The goal of this research was to uncover the collective identity of the Umbrella Movement with the process of identity politics. This gives insight in the rise of the Umbrella Movement, its protesters, their grievances and identity on a micro level, but examines the findings on a macro level by relating these to the historical and societal context of Hong Kong. It takes into account historical, societal political and cultural issues and therefore gives an interdisciplinary explanation of the movement.

The iterative process resulted in a reversed research process. A better preparation of the theoretical framework would have been useful during field work. More interviews also could have contributed to a greater understanding of the grievances of the movement. These interviews are however preceded by information gathered during the observations and conversations at the protest sites. In the end sufficient data was collected for a complete research.

This study stresses the similarities between the Hong Kong identity and the collective identity of the movement. But not all Hongkongers felt the need to join the protesters, and some even opposed them. Issues regarding identity are complex. Cultural identity is a topic that cannot be generalised. This case study, however, offers opportunities for comparative research on the identity and political participation of Hongkongers that deliberately did not participate in the movement. How do they experience the grievances that are expressed by the Umbrella Movement particpants? The research also provides possibilities for cross-cultural comparisons between the Chinese and Hong Kong political participation and democratic aspirations. Lastly, the research might prove to be useful in debates on the future of Chinese politics.

6.3. Evaluation

My thesis process started out with some slight issues, the first one being that I could not pin down on a topic. When suddenly the Umbrella Movement arose in Hong Kong, I knew this was something I wanted to look in to. At first, I thought it would be very difficult to do participant observations, especially as a foreigner in a local protest. When I started doing this, however, it was easier than expected. The protesters were very open in their experiences and opinions and no

one minded to explain the issues to me. During the fieldwork I did not only collect very useful data for my thesis, I also met so many motivated and interesting people. Besides learning how to be a better and more confident researcher, it also taught me better social skills.

What I would do different next time is: take field notes after every observation. The pictures I took during observing really helped me out, but otherwise I would have forgotten half of what I have seen. I did take some notes, but they were very brief and left out details. I would also spent more time looking into the history and society of the research topic.

What I found most difficult in doing this research, was the lack of theoretical background. The theoretical framework of this study is largely constructed when I returned to Amsterdam and this caused stress. I was afraid that I did not have enough data to construct a sufficient thesis, or that data was partially missing, resulting in an incomplete thesis. In the end, I am satisfied with my work and efforts. The lack of theoretical background taught me the importance of grounded theory and therefore the research process was an informative experience.

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8. Appendix

8.1. Interview questions

How old are you?

What do you do for a living?

Are you born in Hong Kong? Are your parents born in Hong Kong?

Have you been participating in the protests since it started? Did you sleep at the protest site?

Why are you participating in the Occupy Central movement? Do you have any reasons for dissatisfaction with the current situation?

What goals do you hope the movement is going to achieve?

How would you like to see a Hong Kong democracy into practice?

Do you feel like everyone is protesting for the same reasons? How do you feel about differences within the movement?

There is also opposition of the Occupy Movement, how come these people do not agree with the idea of a democracy? How would you approach these different opinions? Is this causing problems for the movement?

How do you feel about the ending of Occupy? Do you think it had a big impact? Or how will it affect the future?

8.2. Coding schemes

Coding scheme interviews

	James	Victoria	Sam	Victor	Tanya	Garry	Katy	Mavis	Adam
Age	40s	60s	25	23	29	21	16	23	29
Solidarity									
Hope	X					X	X		
Conflict in movement				X		X		X	X
MK violent	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Community	X							X	X
Politcal awareness	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Blue Ribbon				X		X	X		
Emotions	X					X	X		
Conflict boundaries			X			X			X
CE				X	X				
Universal suffrage	X		X			X	X		
Independence		X	X		X				
Safety									
Mainlanders positive						X	X		
Mainlanders negative	X	X	X	X	X				X
China gov									
Parents			X			X	X		
Criteria for voting							X		
Gay rights						X			
Housing		X				X			
Support						X			
Media			X						

Coding scheme observations

	Mong Kok	Admiralty	CWB
Library	X	X	X
Lectures		X	X
Discussions	X	X	X
Conflict	X	X	
Peaceful		X	X