

# Masterarbeit

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“Reforming The Electoral System In Hong Kong: An Analysis Of The  
Recent Discourse In The Hong Kong Press”

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. The Hong Kong electoral reform for the year 2012

This work takes as its principle that a democratic legislature should be representative of all the interests and viewpoints of the electorate<sup>1</sup>. The electorate is intended as all the people being considered able to fulfil the basic requirements in order to be listed in a voting system, such as age and proper mental faculties. Gender, social position, or specific political views are not considered as deterrents. The population should be granted a satisfying system of representation, which should consider the needs and the requests of the public and should respect the laws and the Constitution of the nation taken into consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> A. Lijphart and B. Grofman, *Choosing an Electoral System: Issues and Alternatives*, Preager, 1984, New York, p. 3

The subject of this work is Hong Kong and its electoral system. Recently the HKSAR (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) Government has undergone an electoral reform (that might be retained successful to a major or lesser extent by personal opinions), which should prepare the path to the Universal Suffrage and to a system of elections, which can be defined as fair and democratic, for the year 2020, thus allowing, as mentioned above, a fully-representative system which can fulfil people's wills and political requests. This is a big challenge for the Democrats in Hong Kong. Hereunder follows the list with the requests made by each Party with democratic features in Hong Kong:

- Alliance for Universal Suffrage:
  1. The number of LegCo<sup>2</sup> seats raised to 80 in 2012, with half returned by geographical constituencies, half by functional ones. In 2016, the number of LegCo seats increased to 100, with 29 functional constituencies seats.
  2. All functional constituencies scrapped by 2020. For 2017, a 1,200-strong nominating committee for chief executive, with any candidates who obtain 100 nominations eligible to run.
- Democratic Party:
  1. The number of LegCo seats increased to 70 in 2012, with half from geographical constituencies and half from functional constituencies.
  2. The number of directly elected seats increased in 2016.
  3. All functional constituencies scrapped by 2020.
- Civic Party:
  1. Functional constituencies with similar natures merged in 2012.
  2. LegCo votes by functional constituencies and directly elected lawmakers counted together.
  3. All elected district councillors included in the Election Committee.
  4. In 2017, chief executive elected by universal suffrage.
  5. All functional constituencies scrapped by 2020.
- League of Social Democrats:
  1. Universal suffrage in 2012.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *The Legislative Council of Hong Kong is the unicameral legislature of the HKSAR.*



The reform approved this last June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010, during the session of the Hong Kong LegCo, by both the LegCo and the Chinese Central Government sets up, 46 votes in favour and 12 opposed<sup>4</sup>, that the Fcs will get ten more seats.

Hong Kong legislature nowadays provides a total of 60 seats, thirty of these are directly elected by the SAR's electorate in the geographical constituencies, while the other 30 seats are elected by the so-called functional constituencies (FCs). As the new reform sets out, a total of 10 new seats, directly eligible, will be added<sup>5</sup>. More precisely 5 more seats will be added to each college, that it is to say five more seats to the geographical constituencies and another five to the functional ones. Thus, Hong Kong voters will be granted the right to directly elect five of the 35 seats representing a functional constituency. That is to say that in 2012, forty out of a total of 70 seats in the LegCo will be chosen by popular consensus.

## **2. The Functional Constituencies**

All the attention paid to this electoral reform is mainly due to the problem of the functional constituencies and the fact that the Democratic Party once again failed in its aim to put them to an end. How can Hong Kong have a really democratic system as long as these seats will represent tycoons and traders' interests more than what Hong Kong people really need? Speculation and business still typify Hong Kong policy or is a really democratic process finally going to begin? Is China eventually going to allow a fully comprehensive reform, which will be representative of people and not of business interests?

The main feature of these kind of constituencies is that, as just mentioned above, they represent the specific groups of traders and business, who produce the majority of the wellbeing, which characterise the Hong Kong system. For sure, this is a really important point, which makes it quite difficult for the Hongkongers to get rid of such a

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<sup>3</sup> Cheung, G., *Alliance Ready to Leave Stage Clear for Democrats*, The SCMP, 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://archive.scmp.com/showarticles.php>>

<sup>4</sup> Annie Lam, *Pan-democratic Split gets Reform Package through*, AsiaNews.it, 25 June 2010, retrieved 30 August 2010, <<http://www.asianews.it/view4print.php?l=en&art=18783>>

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

system. The functional constituencies produce such an amount of wealth that makes them Beijing's protégées, as well as protecting Beijing's interests in Hong Kong. It is actually a big step forward that the Central Authorities eventually made a real effort to push things on, but are they really ready to give up the profits they make and the advantages they take from such FCs?

### **2.1. The origins of the FCs**

To have a better understanding of the peculiarity of Hong Kong we should first of all ask ourselves what these FCs actually are. We should first of all specify that they were specially designed during the middle 80's for the British colony of Hong Kong, even though this concept is as old as the Colony itself. In fact, colonial legislatures used to be composed by the people appointed by the government officials to represent the economic interests (of traders) in Hong Kong. Nine FCs were created in 1985 for the first LegCo, and they were based on occupational interests. The first one-person-one-vote direct elections, just for a few seats, were not held until 1991<sup>6</sup>. Though, the reform process towards a more democratic system under British Colonial rule begun so late, and more precisely after the two Countries had already signed the famous Treaty called The Sino-British Joint Declaration (under the Governorship of Chris Patten), that Beijing read this as a challenge to the future Chinese rule<sup>7</sup>. Hong Kong, in the British eyes, should be given enough opportunities to build democratic rule, and the British Government, or better Governor Christopher Patten, tried to assure this to Hong Kong before 1997. On the Chinese side, however, they saw an attempt from their English counterparts to extend their influence on the ex-colony to be beyond 1997<sup>8</sup>.

### **2.2. The Development of the system of the FCs**

We can easily now understand how deeply these FCs are connected to the history of Hong Kong, being as old as British Hong Kong itself. The only difference between the Colony of Hong Kong and all the other British colonies is that for over a century the

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<sup>6</sup>Suzanne Pepper, *The "New" Functional Constituencies and their political Implications*, retrieved 12 September 2010, <<http://chinaelectionsblog.net/hkfocus/?p=104OpenDocument>>

<sup>7</sup>D.W.W Chang, R.Y. Chuang, *The Politics of Hong Kong's Reversion to China*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1999, p. 134

<sup>8</sup>C. Patten, *East and West: China, Power, and the Future of Asia*, Times Books, New York, 1998, p. 10-26

system did not change at all, while other colonies all fought for their independence from the beginning of the XX century. The practice of the FCs did not start to improve until the 70's of the last century when a few people from different social backgrounds were included in the system<sup>9</sup>. As we said, 9 FCs based on occupational interests, were designed for and included in the first LegCo elections on 1985. Twelve FCs legislators took their place, representing chambers-of-commerce, manufacturing associations, the bank sectors, trade unions and social services, professional bodies (educational, legal, medical and engineering bodies)<sup>10</sup>. Thus, in 1985 12 out of 56 members of the Council came from the system of FCs. Nowadays (and before the reform) 30 out of 60 seats belong to the FCs.

### **2.3. The FCs today**

Today functional constituencies represent the interests of various sectors of commerce, such as the Federation of Hong Kong Industries, The HK General Chamber of Commerce, finance, banking and so on. The majority of these seats is held by pro-Beijing loyalists. Pan-Democrats only hold four FCs seats: education, legal, health care providers and social workers<sup>11</sup>.

The 30 member representatives of the FCs are elected by a total of 229,861 voters (213,777 individuals and 16,084 corporate bodies), the other 30 directly elected seats are elected by an electorate of 3.4 million registered voters<sup>12</sup>.

Hong Kong FCs' main features comprehend uncontested FCs elections, whereby the leading figures of the constituency decide among themselves beforehand who should represent them. In 2008 LegCo election, 14 seats from the functional constituencies were elected as uncontested ones including the three labour seats, industry, banking, financial services, real estates, culture, and catering<sup>13</sup>. This can consequently mean that a tycoon who has different interests in more than one company

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<sup>9</sup> Suzanne Pepper, *The "Old" Functional Constituencies: Chief Obstacles on the Road of Reform*, retrieved 12 September 2010, <<http://chinaelectionsblog.net/hkfocus/?p=111>>

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

can have a huge influence in more than one FC and concretely control more than one of them in the process of Hong Kong policy making.

### 3. The origins of the last proposal of reform

According to the last political reform' scheme the balance of half directly elected seats and half indirectly has to be maintained. The origins of this last proposal date back to July 2007, and more precisely they refer to the contents of a document called *Green Paper on Constitutional Development*<sup>14</sup>. Three options are presented here in order to achieve the final aim of Universal Suffrage (and a consequently democratic system of representation). The options are:

- Direct election of all LegCo members by one-person-one-vote universal suffrage;
- Retaining the half-half balance between 30 GC and 30 FC, or
- Allowing all 30 FC seats to be filled through indirect election by the members of the 18 District Councils<sup>15</sup>.

According to the Green Paper<sup>16</sup> “...all LegCo seats will then be district-based seats returned through direct or indirect elections”. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of December 2007, the NPCSC (Standing Committee of the National People's Congress) declared that “ [T]he election of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the Year 2017 may be implemented by the method of universal suffrage; that after the Chief Executive is selected by universal suffrage, the election of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region may be implemented by the method of electing all its members by universal suffrage...Appropriate amendments conforming to the principle of gradual and orderly progress may be made to the specific method for selecting the fourth Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the year 2012 and the specific method for forming the fifth term Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the year 2012 in accordance with the

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<sup>14</sup> Hong Kong Government, *Public Consultation on the Green Paper on Constitutional Development*, retrieved 07 January 2011, <http://www.cmab-gpcd.gov.hk/en/home/index.htm>

<sup>15</sup> *Public Cons.*

<sup>16</sup> *Green Paper*, paragraph 4.14

*provisions of Articles 45 and 68, and those of Articles 7 of Annex I and Article III of Annex II to the Basic Law”<sup>17</sup>.*

Thus, the new 5 Functional Constituencies were added thanks to this last reform to the Districts Council Plan mentioned above. This plan had already been proposed and vetoed by the Pan-democrats in 2005. This time the reaction was quite different, though. The Pan-democratic camp, in fact, split after the decision from the Democratic Party to support the package promoted by the Hong Kong leadership. The package was ratified by the Chinese Parliament on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August.

#### **4. Critical discourse analysis**

This work is thought as a Critical Discourse Analysis, whose methodology is based on the book *Language and Power* written by Norman Fairclough. It aims to analyse about 100 articles chosen by three different Hong Kong newspapers: 明報 (Ming Pao), 蘋果 (Apple Daily), SCMP (South China Morning Post).

##### **4.1. The Ming Pao**

The Ming Pao is published by the Ming Pao Group. It was first published in 1959 and since the 1990s has established four overseas branches in North America. Today only the two Canadian branches are still active. It was founded by a famous Chinese *wuxia* novelist called Louis Cha, and it was taken over in 1995 by Tan Sri Datuk Tiong Hiew King, a Malaysian Chinese with quite good and friendly connections with Beijing. This newspaper is well known for its accuracy in reports of economic and political issues from both Mainland China and Hong Kong and for the high level of its use of the Chinese language, being well recommended to all students for this reason. In recent

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<sup>17</sup> Hong Kong Legal Information Institute, *Decision of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on Issues Relating to the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the Year 2012 and on the Issue Relating to Universal Suffrage (Adopted by the Standing Committee of the Tenth National People's Congress at Its Thirty-first Session on 29 December 2007)*, <<http://www.hkllii.org/cgi-hkllii disp.pl/hk/legis/en/ord/2211/longtitle.html?query=~+decision+of+the+standing+c ommittee+2007>>

years it has been rewarded with important titles such as in 2001-2006 “the most credible Chinese newspaper”, and “excellence in opinion writing”<sup>18</sup>. This newspaper has been considered lately (since the middle 90s, to be more precise) more conservative and in accordance with the main ways of thinking of the Mainland China than others, even though it is generally considered neutral and fair in its opinions<sup>19</sup>.

#### **4.2. The Apple Daily**

The Apple Daily was founded in 1995, a relatively young newspaper, by Jimmy Lai Chee Ying and his group, Next Media<sup>20</sup>. It expresses a quite strong voice for democracy and economic and political freedom and this is why it is banned in Mainland China. It is the second best selling newspaper in Hong Kong due to its concentration on celebrities and its well-known anti-Beijing position. The name “Apple” is derived from a personal re-interpretation of Adam and Eve misfortune with the Original Sin: “if Adam and Eve hadn’t eaten the apple, there would not be evil or wrongdoings in this world, which made news a non-existing term”<sup>21</sup>.

#### **4.3. The South China Morning Post**

The South China Morning Post<sup>22</sup> was founded in 1903. It used to belong to Rupert Murdoch’s group and in 1993 the Malaysian tycoon Robert Kuok bought the controlling interest, allowing his son Kuok Khoon Ean to take over as Chairman in 1997. The Kuok family is well known for being pro-Beijing and questions have been raised quite often about how much this might influence the newspaper itself<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Wikipedia, *Ming Pao*, retrieved 20 September 2010, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ming\\_Pao](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ming_Pao)>

<sup>19</sup> The Ming Pao, <[www.mingpao.com](http://www.mingpao.com)>

<sup>20</sup> The Apple Daily, <<http://hk.apple.nextmedia.com/>>

<sup>21</sup> Wikipedia, *Apple daily*, retrieved 20 September 2010, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple\\_Daily](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple_Daily)>

<sup>22</sup> SCMP, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

<sup>23</sup> Wikipedia, *South China Morning Post*, retrieved 20 September 2010, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South\\_China\\_Morning\\_Post](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_China_Morning_Post)>

## **5. The Alliance for Universal Suffrage and the issue of real democracy**

The main topic of this selection of articles is the issue of Functional Constituencies and the electoral reform. The first thought and first question that characterised this work was meant to be why China finally accepted to improve the reform in the Hong Kong administration and if the Central Government might have some other plans that may be able to explain such a step forward. While reading and analysing those articles, however, we can easily realize that the point is not what and why China allowed the reform, but what she refused to change: Functional Constituencies.

China still is refusing to start this process and the Democratic Party accepted this, as we might call it, half-reform which, according to some people's opinion, does not even start the process of democratisation.

A website has been recently set up to push for reform by the DP, [www.universalsuffrage.hk](http://www.universalsuffrage.hk)<sup>24</sup>. It represents a coalition of eleven pro-Democracy parties and groups. They state that they believe in democracy as a fundamental right and that Hong Kong is ready for the spread of real democracy. Members of this Alliance are the Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood, Democracy Depot, Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Union, Hong Kong Democracy Development Network, Hong Kong Federation of Civil Service Union, Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union, Hong Kong Social Workers' General Union, Power for Democracy, SynergyNet, the Democratic Party, and the Professional Commons. On their online website they suggest that Chief Executive Donald Tsang should, with the Central Government, give out a clear plan and deadline for the actualization of a real and fair reform. Two main specific requests, published March, 29, 2010 are:

- Chief Executive election in 2017 to be reconfirmed as election by universal suffrage;
- Legislative Council to be wholly elected by universal suffrage not later than 2020, with all FCs abolished.

The reform finally approved states as follows:

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<sup>24</sup> Campaign for Universal Suffrage, retrieved 12 September 2010, [www.universalsuffrage.hk](http://www.universalsuffrage.hk) >

- 800 members of the Election Committee increases to 1,200
- 300 from professional sectors
- 300 from industrial, commercial, and financial sectors
- 300 split between lawmakers, district councillors, Heung Yee Kuk (statutory advisory body representing the indigenous inhabitants of the New Territories), National People's Congress deputies and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference delegates<sup>25</sup>.

Thus, Functional constituencies are still part of the HKSAR system. In the *Official Record of Proceedings*, held in Hong Kong, 23 June 2010, we read that “ *Some members consider that the FC system does not comply with the principles of universality and equality, and that it should be abolished ultimately for implementing universal suffrage for the Legislative Council election*”.<sup>26</sup> During this Council, a question considering FCs, and the definition of universal suffrage was asked by Alan Leong, member of the Council and representing the Geographical Constituency of Kowloon Est. The question states as follows:<sup>27</sup>

“...according to the article 25/b of the *International Covenant on Civic and Political Rights* “every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity ...without unreasonable restrictions...to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage...” but the *Deputy Secretary General of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress*,..., said on June 7 that “the core details of universal suffrage is the protection of universal and equal election rights”, but he did not mention the right to stand for election and the right to make nominations”.

Later on<sup>28</sup>, Dr. Priscilla Leung, representing the Kowloon West constituency, underlined the fact that the definition given by the Central Government and their attitude towards the so-called Functional Constituencies would, however, affect the Hong Kong future model of constitutional development.

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<sup>25</sup> CNN World, *Hong Kong passes Electoral Reform*, retrieved 20 September 2010, <[http://articles.cnn.com/2010-06-25/world/hongkong.politics\\_1\\_functional-constituencies-universal-suffrage-reform-package?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2010-06-25/world/hongkong.politics_1_functional-constituencies-universal-suffrage-reform-package?_s=PM:WORLD)>

<sup>26</sup> Legislative Council of Hong Kong, *Official Record of Proceedings*, Hong Kong, 23 June 2010, retrieved 30 June 2010, <[www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/counmtg/.../cm0623-translate-e.pdf](http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/counmtg/.../cm0623-translate-e.pdf)>, p. 10

<sup>27</sup> *Official Record of Proceedings*, p. 11-12

<sup>28</sup> *Official Record of Proceedings*, p. 14



Hong Kong's biggest fear happens to be the future (non)-suppression of this system. But, if Hong Kong is fighting for a democratic future, and universal suffrage, can these (new) FCs be accepted as part of a definition of Universal Suffrage? Can the HKSAR system really be defined as universal and equal?

The following analysis will try to help us give an answer to this question, as well as to try to position the role of the Pan-democrats, basing the point of view of this research on newspapers and the different visions and approaches that emerge from the pages of this illustrious press. Why is China not willing to allow a complete reform? But most and foremost why is the Democratic Party not ready, yet, to fight for the right of Universal Suffrage, thus opening the way to a real democracy in Hong Kong? What is the opinion emerging from those articles concerning the DP, are they still fighting for democracy?

## **6. The organisation of this work**

### **6.1. Hong Kong cultural identity and its recent history**

The organisation of this work is meant to give a general overview of the Hong Kong People as Hong Kong citizens along with the explanation and contextualization of the three before-mentioned newspapers and their general opinion concerning the reform. The first question to be raised should be how Hong Kong people think of themselves. The second chapter of this work focuses on the attempt to outline a cultural identity for these people. It is important to understand how these people see themselves from inside to understand if they can or would go on accepting a certain Beijing tendency towards their future political development. This is why in this second chapter there will be an attempt to identify the main cultural influence that helped to build modern society, and attention will also be paid to the historical process that, especially in the last two decades, participated in building the Hong Kong Government as it was in 1997. Since the signing of the so-called Joint Declaration in 1984 and the last thirteen years of British colonial rule, how they decided and why they finally came with last Governor Chris Patten to develop a first round of electoral reform.

The identification of the main group is the basic concept that is used here to define what being a “Hongkonger” could mean. Along with the identification of these people, the concept of “other” will be identified in the figure of the older sister, China. From the foundation of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 and the impact that this had on the Hong Kong people’s opinion and the evolution this concept lived from 1984 up to 1997 and the Handover. Identity and its cultural features will be here intended as a never-ending production, which takes its origins from the differentiation of the group from what is collectively seen as “other”. Hong Kong is, in this perspective, something that is still in progress and is nowadays facing a greater challenge and an epochal evolution. The following section of the second chapter will thus be aimed at depicting the historical context, which created what HKSAR is today, focusing on the role of the British Crown and its relationship with China.

## **6.2. Methodology, analysis and conclusion**

In the first chapter, methodology will be exhaustively explained, as already mentioned, introducing the concept of Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) and the process that led to the selection of three key-words: Democracy, Functional Constituencies, and Universal Suffrage. A third chapter of analysis will follow, as an effort to give an answer to our research question. This eventually will be followed by a conclusive chapter, summarising all the concepts mentioned throughout this work along with some possible implications that might follow this electoral reform. The fourth chapter will also consider some videos from *youtube*<sup>29</sup>. This election, in fact, saw for the first time a huge television campaign and a Tv debate held between Chief Executive Donald Tsang and Audrey Eu, leader of the Civic Party. A short review of these debates has been considered really important for the aim of this work, in order to underline even more the importance of this last round of elections. These debates represent an unprecedented insight of the Hong Kong Television’s environment and were for all the participants (Chief Executive Donald Tsang, and the leader of the Civic Party Audrey Eu, as well as other politicians) a perfect exam site, during which they could (or could not) prove their points of view. Three videos will be taken into consideration. The debate between Chief Executive Donald Tsang and Audrey Eu, a video concerning a

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<sup>29</sup> Youtube, <[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)>

conference held the day after the debate by Mrs. Eu and a Tv-debate of the other representatives (Democrats and non-) for the Tv-program, The Pulse, will be analysed<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> see *Conclusion*

## **CHAPTER 1:**

### **Methodology**

#### **1. Introduction**

##### **1.1. The selection of the articles**

The main source for this work is a selection of articles chosen from three different newspapers in Hong Kong. The guiding thought, which will lead us towards such an analysis is the premise that language has power over people and people have power over language<sup>31</sup>. The process of selecting articles showed that the people of Hong Kong are really concerned about the issue of elections, and fear the presence of the FCs as a threat to the development of democracy. The problem of FCs is more urgent and more difficult every year. Such an issue is deeply connected to the definition we give to the

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<sup>31</sup> N. Fairclough, *Language and Power*, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, 2001, p. 1-5

concept of democracy and what we think the main features of this concept are or, at least, should be. The analysis of the third chapter will try to give us some answers.

Is it really possible to develop a healthy system of democracy if the so-called functional constituencies will go on representing the interests of small groups and tycoons? And if they, at least, will not enlarge the range of people they want to protect the interest of? Can we really call it a democratic system under development? What are the main opinions emerging from the articles? How is the Democratic Party behaving in this situation?

Opinions emerging from the articles are the written expression of the main ideas, which had been floating in the air already for a decade and more, from the ones regarding the DP and its role in developing a democratic future for Hong Kong to the inappropriateness of the FCs under a system, which wishes to call itself democratic.

## **1.2. The role of language**

As said above, language in this case is playing a main role, guiding the reader towards logic and ideologies (what is meant by this term will be explained in the following sub-chapter). What emerges from those articles? Which are the main views expressed? Starting with this first chapter and continuing with the third one, analysis will lead us to the contextualisation of the newspapers, referring also to the context in which they are produced, their owners' and political views beyond the papers.

As we will explain in more detail later, language can express an ideology and ideology always represents a struggle for power<sup>32</sup>. Who has the power to control and expand his ideology, has also the power to make it universally accepted and accepted as common sense. This means that the readers, speakers or anyone in any way connected to the discourse, accepts such concepts as naturalized to his/her personal *forma mentis*.

All the concepts just mentioned refer to the theory of CDA (critical discourse analysis) formulated by Norman Fairclough and will be wholly explained, together with the meaning of ideology in the following sub-chapter. The Hong Kong election system has undergone a long period of formation and transformation, as we will see in chapter

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<sup>32</sup> see p. 6-10

2, and together with the system itself concepts and language are changing together with the people and their (political) expectations.

### **1.3. Norman Fairclough**

We will first of all start with the methodology. Norman Fairclough represents the main source for the method used in this work. He is one of the founders of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and is Professor emeritus of Linguistics at Lancaster University. The so-called Critical Discourse Analysis is a method of analysing discourse, which focuses on the power hidden inside the language and the power hidden inside the process of interpretation of what we read. He refers in his work to great theorists and scholars such as Gramsci and Foucault, who are believed to be the main founders of the study of language as a social practice. His work has been considered as the more proper to be selected as the methodology of this paper, mainly due to his definition of *ideology* and *common sense*.

## **2. Language and Power**

The methodology chosen for this work, as mentioned above, is based on the book by Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*, edited by Pearson Education Limited in 2001<sup>33</sup>.

### **2.1. The social level and the influence of discourse**

The way of analysing discourse elaborated by Professor Fairclough focuses on the belief that discourse is influenced by social level, and social level is also influenced by discourse<sup>34</sup>. Regarding the different social levels, discourse can be interpreted in a different manner, as discourses apply to different social levels in different ways and with possible different meanings and interpretations. He states that discourse is based on conventions, that is to say general meanings related to general concepts<sup>35</sup>. He first of all explains that conventions are the product of relations of power and struggles for power. Conventions incorporate difference of power and give rise to particular relations

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<sup>33</sup> Fairclough

<sup>34</sup> Fairclough, p.1-10

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*

of power. Conventions can be different depending on the context they refer to and who is reading and interpreting them.

## **2.2. Common sense and ideology**

The second base-concept of his theory is that of *common sense*<sup>36</sup>. Common sense is what is universally recognised as correct and unchangeable. This concept is strictly bound to the concept of ideology, in the sense that what can be recognised as common sense derives this status from a leading ideology, which is ruling who is writing a text and who is reading it. For example the word “Communism” can refer to two different ideologies: in a Western context it might be seen as a “Communist threat”, something to be worried about and that could bring negative events to the lives of common people. While, if we read it from a, e.g., Chinese context, it represents the leading ideology of the Central Government, and an everyday reality in a Chinese or Nord Korean dimension. He strongly believes that language has the power to change the social relations of power and that it helps, thanks to the normalization of some concepts to rule over people, who have only one way out of this dominance, that is to say the consciousness of the power of language itself<sup>37</sup>. Thus, language derives its power through what he calls *ideology*, being ideologies “...assumptions which are implicit in the conventions according to which people interact linguistically, and of which people are generally not consciously aware”<sup>38</sup>. Ideology is a way to exercise power within society and the first way to produce consent. The capability of manoeuvring language and linguistic ideologies is becoming more and more one of the main means of exercising social power. Fairclough’s main thought is that “...language connects with the social through being the primary domain of ideology, and through being both a site of, and a stake in, struggles for power”<sup>39</sup>.

## **2.3. Language as a social practice**

Thus, what we stated up to this point is that language and society are mutually influenced and as society is linguistically determined, thus, language is a social practice.

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<sup>36</sup> Fairclough, p. 88

<sup>37</sup> Fairclough, p. 1

<sup>38</sup> Fairclough, p. 2

<sup>39</sup> Fairclough, p. 12

Meanings are given within society and are socially developed and assigned<sup>40</sup>. Consequently, the various concepts that form our social behaviour are created and transformed by society and *vice versa*. Consequently, the concepts we have refer to the social background we came from. And in case of political views they derive from the political orientation we recognize ourselves in. So, we can say that discourse, as a social practice, involves a process of production and a process of interpretation. These two levels are closely connected to the social level discourse comes from. Whoever has more influence on the different levels of society has more possibilities and occasions to determine discourse and give meanings to concepts. The discourse, which these *dominant blocs*<sup>41</sup> lead, will include the ideology of these peoples, making it one of the most influential within society, together with their views and interpretations of concepts. This mechanism will create their power inside the society, elevating this group to a leading position. It is in such a case that their personal ideology, being more and more influential within all the social strata will be naturalized and accepted as common sense<sup>42</sup>. The people will then accept it as natural, and will forget that this was a concept imposed by the dominant bloc.

#### **2.4. The dominant bloc and its ways of keeping power**

Relating this to our analysis, we can state that the dominant bloc is formed by the people closest to Mainland China, represented in its authority by the Central Government. The power of the CCP depends on its ability to maintain homogeneity and loyalty to the Communist Party and the Chinese system of belief. The power of the Chinese Central Government, as everywhere in the world, is based upon the consent of the people to its leadership. We might now agree that what is accepted as common sense under the rule of the CCP in China, might be interpreted otherwise in the Western world. Thus, what in our countries and communities is seen as the leading ideology of democracy, in China is seen as a threat to its ideology. Consequently democracy becomes a negative concept that should be kept under the control of the central power and that should not cross forbidden borders<sup>43</sup>. The definition of *democracy*, as given in

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<sup>40</sup> Fairclough, p. 20-31

<sup>41</sup> Fairclough, p. 27

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *We mean here a healthy and fast development of a kind of democracy, which derives from a common agreement between the whole population of Hong Kong and the*



the dictionary states that democracy is “*a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives*”<sup>44</sup>.

The study and the concepts developed by Professor Fairclough help us to study and identify the connections between language, power and ideology in the discourse and, more specifically, what is hidden in these articles. Thus, what is behind the concept of universal suffrage? Is it not closely connected to the definition quoted above? It is for sure a premise for a democratic system.

Democracy is the idea at the base of it and it is also the result of its coming into being, such as the idea of nation and nationalism come along as the place for democracy, and the place in which the democratic rule should rule as a unifying concept. These concepts, thus, are politics.

Such an interpretation cannot be accepted by the CCP, that might lose its power to keep the homogeneity of the system, if such a concept would be naturalized inside its system. Language and concepts become a way to create politics and a way to define what should be part of the political dimension and how we should read those concepts and ideologies. Thus, now China should try to adapt and create a suitable version of the concept of democracy, which has to enclose the ideology of the dominant bloc. It is a struggle to define the concept of democracy and universal suffrage in order to make such concepts acceptable in the system, keeping it as it is.

## **2.5. The case of Hong Kong and the adaptation of the concept of democracy**

The case in Hong Kong, though, is more one of a kind than a common one. They still did not completely embrace the Chineseness inside them and still did not entirely fix the continental society (we have here to remember that the Basic Law does not allow any political nor social change for the 50 years to come). The power of the Government and its main resource for power and accountability is now the opportunity to create cohesion within Chinese society, including the Hong Kong SAR, in a way which will

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*Chinese authorities and not a Chinese interpretation of the concept imposed by the central authorities.*

<sup>44</sup> Oxford Online Dictionaries, *Democracy*, retrieved 7 January 2011, [http://oxforddictionaries.com/view/entry/m\\_en\\_gb0215380#m\\_en\\_gb0215380](http://oxforddictionaries.com/view/entry/m_en_gb0215380#m_en_gb0215380)

leave Hong Kong to develop its freedom without threatening the homogeneity of the Mainland. Language is one of the weapons China can use now.

Thus, the concept of democracy must undergo a transformation of sense and an adaptation to the Chinese reality, a reality in which FCs might find their place as part of the Chinese version of a democratic system, as a common sense.

In all this, discourse represents a process of social interaction, a process of production of texts, and the process of their interpretation, an interpretation of the reality, for which texts represent a resource<sup>45</sup>. Texts help in building a new macrosphere, which will be able to include the Hong Kong society, binding people to the same values and concepts. Language is a social practice, which leads the practice, which has a huge influence on society and leads it in a more or less evident way<sup>46</sup>. Thus, this leader determines the use of language on a societal level, the common ways of interpretation of concepts and ideologies. Now China leads over Hong Kong. And the interpretations given by her to some concepts might be different from the interpretations we might give. The ideology of democracy states as a fundamental concept that people govern people, and that people must be equally and democratically represented by whom they choose, as equals. Plato says:

*"But when the question is an affair of state, then everybody is free to have a say -- carpenter, tinker, cobbler, sailor, passenger; rich and poor, high and low -- anyone who likes gets up, and no one reproaches him, as in the former case, with not having learned, and having no teacher, and yet giving advice; evidently because they are under the impression that this sort of knowledge cannot be taught. And not only is this true of the state, but of individuals; the best and wisest of our citizens are unable to impart their political wisdom to others: as for example, Pericles, the father of these young men, who gave them excellent instruction in all that could be learned from masters, in his own department of politics neither taught them, nor gave them teachers; but they were*

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<sup>45</sup> Fairclough, p. 75-80

<sup>46</sup> Fairclough, p. 28

*allowed to wander at their own free will in a sort of hope that they would light upon virtue of their own accord."*<sup>47</sup>

"...*That they would light upon virtue of their own accord*", this means that they have to have an accord about how they want to be governed, acknowledging some fundamental principles to guide them all as one united macro-sphere. The social conditions in which a language and a concept are developed refer to the productions and interpretations made by the people. This process of creating in turn shapes the way in which those languages and concepts are interpreted. We all read that Plato states in his Dialogue that democracy is assumed to be an equal and universal representation of all the people, but the way we might interpret this in practice may be different, regarding the concepts we refer to, and regarding the social orders we belong to.

## **2.6. The process of creating society and the hidden relations of power**

Different nations develop different orders of society, in which the representation in politics can be lived and understood differently. A social order is made of different structures, which give birth to different spheres of actions, thus creating different types of practice. The structure of the society derives from the combination of practice and action of the social order. Actions and practice are expressed, as already said, by language. The process of creating language is the process of creating society<sup>48</sup>. Newspapers express the content of the social production and participate in making the society as a whole, which structures the orders of discourse of the various social institutions in a particular way. The discourse of mass-media represents an interesting aspect of the social values of discourse, because it contains what we can call *hidden relations of power*<sup>49</sup>. First of all it is not a means of direct communication and it involves different levels of interactions. The journalists should express their opinions, but the opinions they have are deeply connected to the orientation of the newspapers itself, which is mostly decided by the owners and the chief editors. And to this it should be added that there is not a reader, but the idea of a possible reader, who is going to read

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<sup>47</sup> Plato, *Protagoras and Meno*, translation by Benjamin Jowett, Digiread.com Publishing, Stilwell, KS, 2005

<sup>48</sup> see p. 4

<sup>49</sup> Fairclough, p. 41

such an article or newspaper. It is in this case an *ideal subject*<sup>50</sup> the one we are referring to. The exercise of power is in this case really elaborated and might bring along with it different levels of influence and power over the people, who are supposedly reading it<sup>51</sup>. The changing relationships of power at the level of the social institutions of the society bring along with themselves changes in the structure of discourse. Thus, the ideology expressed through the press under British rule, at the times of the Colony of Hong Kong, is different from the one that is developing now. China naturalised the ideology of democracy, adapting it to its view. An ideology is, as we said, an institutional practice, which often legitimizes existing power relations<sup>52</sup>; it is adopted as a common sense without thinking, but it most likely is originated in the dominant class and have become naturalised (universally accepted).

## **2.7. The Chinese and their interpretation of democracy**

China is still trying to draw a concept for Hong Kong democracy, and the process of neutralization is still not completed. To fulfil this aim, the will of the people of Hong Kong should be considered quite profusely, and parts should be able to meet halfway. But, when an ancient concept such as the concept of democracy, already is universally accepted and naturalised with its own contents of equality and universal representation, how could somebody try to give another interpretation? Can FCs really be a different interpretation of the concept of democratic election system? Not really. Ideological power, the power to project one's practice as universal and common sense, is a significant complement to economic and political power. To maintain and control power the central leaders must not lose the power to create ideologies, and people have to accept the ideologies they are given. The central authorities have two ways to keep power, coercion, and public consent<sup>53</sup>. The power to “...*determine things like which word meanings or which linguistic and communicative norms are legitimate or correct or appropriate is an important aspect of social and ideological power, and therefore a*

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<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Fairclough, p.45-63

<sup>52</sup> Fairclough, p. 36-47

<sup>53</sup> Fairclough, p. 64-80

*focus of ideological struggle*”<sup>54</sup>. Which concept/ideology is China going to apply to the Hong Kong’s situation?

FCs could be kept, with China not allowing their annulment. Otherwise China can manage to create public consent regarding them. Public consent is quite difficult to obtain, but what if China will prove herself to achieve public approval and, thus, to keep the FCs? What is the role that can be played by the Pan-democrats? What if they eventually will declare that accountability can be granted even if FCs will remain part of the election system? What is the role of discourse and the effect it can have in such issue? Where is democracy? Discourse also has effects upon the social structures and contributes to the achievements of social continuity or social change<sup>55</sup>.

## **2.8. The subject as a social agent**

Coming back to the focus of our work, and always referring to the power of the discourse in creating an ideology and legitimizing power, the role of the subject should not be forgotten. The subject represents a social agent, which creates and is created by society<sup>56</sup>. If there is a shift in power relations, the social agent expects a transformation of the order of discourse. On the other hand, if power relations are quite stable, the quality of reproduction of discourse is unchanged<sup>57</sup>. What has changed in the discourse carried on the articles? What opinion might have changed or, still is changing? Which is the opinion that emerges about the Pan-democrats and the role they are playing in this epochal process? What is the role of the FCs? How does the general opinion about them look like? What kind of power/concepts is hidden behind the newspapers? It is important to try to give an overview about these newspapers in order to identify possible ideologies. In mass media analysis and media discourse the role of the subject as a social agent is drawn upon the figure of an ideal subject, as already specified<sup>58</sup>, an imaginary reader, who embodies all the main features and targets of the average readers of the specific newspaper. Who exercises the power to define the main features of the possible reader? Editors have in this case, we already mentioned it, a huge influence. They select the journalists, who are going to write for them. Moreover they have to

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<sup>54</sup> Fairclough, p. 73

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Fairclough, p. 14-19

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> see p. 7-8

respect and develop the view of the owner of the company itself. Taking as a premise the political and social values of the owner, the editor selects the staff, which is going to represent the company and its values, as well as creating the ideal subject-reader, who is going to read and accept as common sense the concepts and ideologies drawn in the pages. Thus, this kind of power they have over people is more hidden than explicit and people take it as normal and a habit. The power behind the discourse consists in the fact that the whole social order of discourse is put together and held together as a hidden effect of power. In this sense, one text (one article) can be a situational struggle (a change in the system), an institutional struggle (HKSAR *versus* Central Government) or a societal struggle (democratic movement). Two different approaches can be used in such terms: China could use discourse for the naturalisation of the present situation, creating the ideology of FCs as possible part of a democratic system. The second way could be that Hong Kong's politicians will use the discourse in order to provoke a movement for changing. China wants to be representative of the ideological homogeneity, keeping stable and clear-cut power relationship. In order to achieve such an aim she has to deal with the reality in Hong Kong, creating a new system and new interactions in this land, all this in order to keep and maintain the stable and clear-cut power relationships.

Later on will be explained the process, which led to the selection of three keywords and how these will be used in our analysis. The method drawn above should guide us answering the research question, individualising the hidden ideologies, the fears and threats, which can impend the whole process.

### **3. Newspapers' selection**

The first step of this process of analysis has been the selection of the newspapers from which the articles concerning the reform had been selected. As no access to the printed paper-version of Hong Kong newspapers was possible, every article eventually chosen belongs to the online version. The first thought was to select all Chinese-written newspapers printed and sold in Hong Kong as well as in Mainland China, and to search in their websites. The process designed to select the articles took as starting point the research of specific articles through the use of the same keyword in every database. The

chosen keyword was 香港的民主 (*Xianggang de minzhu*). Of course a lot of material was available, scanned and took in consideration. As already specified in the introduction to this work, the focus of analysis finds its aim on the Hong Kong different positions in this process and the opinion there shared and developed. For considering Mainland press in such matter had been considered of non-primary importance. At the end of this first phase two Hong Kong Chinese-written newspapers and one Hong Kong English-written newspaper were selected as main sources for the articles. The Chinese keyword used in the database still was 香港的民主 (*Xianggang de minzhu*) while for the English newspaper a literal translation of such terms was used: *Hong Kong Democracy*. This led us to download 189 articles, all up-loaded between the end of May 2010 and the end of August 2010. The newspapers to be selected were the South China Morning Post (SCMP), the Ming Pao Daily (明報, *Mingbao*) and the Apple Daily (蘋果日報, *Pingguo ribao*). Fifty-nine articles had been downloaded from the Ming Pao Daily, sixty from the Apple Daily, while the last 79 from the SCMP.

### 3.1. The South China Morning Post

The SCMP ([www.SCMP.com](http://www.SCMP.com)) was selected for its being the most trusted English-published newspaper in Hong Kong. It was first published in 1903, same year of its foundation. Its circulation is quite stable at 104.000 since the year 2000<sup>59</sup>. The SCMP Group owns it, and Reginald Chua is the editor-in-chief since 2009. The SCMP Group belongs to the well-known Malaysian Kuok family, while Reginald Chua used to work for the New York Wall Street Journal as well as many other important press agencies, televisions and radio journalism<sup>60</sup>. The Kuoks have a quite long and profitable history of collaboration and cooperation with Mainland China and its Central Government. Their publishing societies are often considered pro-Beijing and views expressed in their pages are considered pretty reflecting the opinions and the ideas promoted by the central authorities in Beijing. Member of this family now leading the business group is Kuoc Hui Kwong, sister of Kuok Khoon Ean, who was before in

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<sup>59</sup> Academic, *South China Morning Post*, retrieved 28 August 2010, <<http://en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/118337>>

<sup>60</sup> Bloomberg Businessweek, *SCMP Group Ltd*, retrieved 28 August 2010, <<http://investing.businessweek.com/research/stocks/people/person.asp?personId=25263912&ticker=583:HK&previousCapId=876041&previousTitle=SCMP%20Group%20Ltd>>

charge of the administration. Even if, as mentioned above, this newspaper is known to have really close ties with the Chinese Government, nevertheless, it has been selected for this thesis as representative of what everybody who can read English can understand from its contents. It is really easy to understand that this means that almost all the people of the world could read this journal with almost any effort, if they would wish to.

### **3.2. The Apple Daily**

Second newspaper is the Apple Daily ([www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com)). It was founded in Hong Kong in 1995 by Jimmy Lai Chee Ying and belongs to his company, the Next Media. Jimmy Lai Chee Ying also launched a Taiwanese version of the Apple Daily in 2003. The newspaper nowadays is the second-best seller in Hong Kong<sup>61</sup>. Jimmy Lai during his career as a businessman always faced quite big problems and had quite bad relations with Mainland China, and the feeling is mutual. He is a self-made businessman and proved himself capable of surviving many crises. His newspaper is always expressing strong opinions and points of view concerning the Hong Kong-China situation and Mainland China issues in general, always fighting for political and business freedom as well as transparency and accountability<sup>62</sup>. As mentioned in the introduction<sup>63</sup>, this newspaper derives its name from a personal re-interpretation by Jimmy Lai of the story of the Original Sin. It was specifically chosen for the strong opinions expressed through the pencils of its journalists and can be said to be representative of the movement pressing the Beijing supporters and generally asking for more developments and freedoms. It is for its strong voice in such critical matters banned in the PRC<sup>64</sup>.

### **3.3. The Ming Pao**

The last newspaper to be chosen was the Ming Pao ([www.mingpao.com](http://www.mingpao.com)). It was founded in 1959, as already specified, by the famous *wuxia* novelist Louis Cha. It

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<sup>61</sup> Reference for Business, *Next Media Ltd.-Company Profile, Information, Business Descriptions, Background Information on Next Media Ltd.*, retrieved 28 August 2010 <<http://www.referenceforbusiness.com/history2/91/Next-Media-Ltd.html>>

<sup>62</sup> Academic, *Apple Daily*, retrieved 28 August 2010

<sup>63</sup> see p. 5

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*



belongs to the Ming Pao Group, and the Media Chinese Limited International<sup>65</sup> owns it. It has been rewarded as the most trustful Chinese-written newspaper in 2001 and 2006. It has often been recommended by teachers and professors to students due to the pure and high level of language as well as the reliability of its contents. It was chosen as third source of our articles thanks to its reputation and the soft way of expressing opinion as well as discord.

### **3.4. The final selection of the articles**

Once the newspapers had been all selected and the articles downloaded as already explained above, the material collected finally corresponded to 189 articles. The number of almost two hundred was too high, though, and not all the material selected was considered to be vital in our analysis. The articles were all read and reduced to the number of ninety-three. Twenty-seven were selected from the Ming Pao Daily, thirty-one from the Apple Daily, and the remaining thirty-five from the SCMP. These articles are the most representative of the general opinions and ways of expressing people's feelings and expectations about this process of reform.

Once the material was selected, the method of the specific analysis had to be chosen. As for the selection of the articles themselves, a series of keywords had been considered and three of them were used to start the work. The following sub-chapter will explain the process, which led to the selection of these keywords and what they might mean for the continuance of this analysis.

## **4. Keywords' selection**

The process, which led to the selection of three final keywords, has been thought as a way to stress what is of a main importance in the reform that has been going on lately in Hong Kong.

As already said, the process of reform of the system of elections has been going on since a quite long time already. It actually began when Hong Kong was not yet under the Chinese flag. The date of the Handover was already settled and the Sino-British

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<sup>65</sup>Academic, *Ming Pao*, retrieved 28 August 2010,  
<<http://en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/165119>>

Joint Declaration already signed and accepted by both sides. Though, Governor Christopher Patten entered the difficult way of opening the Hong Kong system. Starting from the concept of democracy, what were considered the main factors for a democratic improvement for Hong Kong were selected as possible keywords.

#### **4.1. The keyword “Functional Constituencies”**

First of all, and quite naturally, *Functional Constituencies*, in Chinese 功能組別 (gongnengzubie) and 功能界別 (gongnengjiebie) was selected as first keyword. It represents the subject of our main research question as well as central node of the whole reform. The abolition of such method of representation in the LegCo is considered the central point of the reform.

#### **4.2. The keyword “democracy”**

The second quite naturally selected keyword was, of course, *democracy* (民主 minzhu). This is the aim leading all the process. And what the DP is fighting for since its foundation. The concept of democracy in this critical discourse analysis has multiple faces, though. As well as democracy itself, the party fighting for its development is considered part of this first keyword, as the hand acting in favour of a correct and satisfying interpretation of such concept. Thus, *Democratic Party* and *Pan-democrats* are considered part of the keyword democracy, as well as the adjective *Democratic* alone and the adverb *Democratically*.

#### **4.3. Donald Tsang**

As a third possible keyword, *Donald Tsang* (曾蔭權, Ceng Yinquan) was considered to be of a major importance. He is ruling over Hong Kong right now and is the political agent of the citizenship. Thus, he should be representing the will of the common people. Even if this might be the case, it has been eventually decided that this keyword might mislead our focus. Donald Tsang for sure is one of the main checkers in this game, still he does not fix in the scene we would like to draw in this work. This is why he was finally put apart in our process of selection of keywords.

#### **4.4. Communism**

Fourth keyword to be selected was *Communism* (共產主義, gongchanzhuyi), this one as well left eventually apart. It represents a too strong ideology and could also mislead us in our research. What we want to stress and underline is *democracy* and the possible development it can undergo in the Hong Kong contest.

#### **4.5. The keyword “universal suffrage”**

What is left, might be what actually is one of the main features and at the same time target of a satisfying democratic system. This is to say *Universal Suffrage* (普選, puxuan). This was the last keyword to be selected.

### **5. Conclusions**

Thus, what we basically have now is a selection of three main keywords all of them with a background and a specific role in our analysis. What do these keywords mean for us and what exactly is the context in and the way in which we are going to use them in order to answer the questions of this work? The first part of the third chapter will focus on a quantitative analysis comparing on a linguistic level how many times these keywords appear and in which of the newspapers they have the highest rate of occurrence. As already underlined two newspapers are using non-simplified Chinese while the third one is an English written one. To avoid this problem in the quantitative analysis the characters will be distinguished from the Latin alphabet and words will first be considered separately, and then added to make one group from the three different sub-groups, to finally count how many times our three words appear in the articles. The analysis will continue focusing now on the critical aspects hidden in the discourse.

First of all, the general opinions expressed in each newspaper will be outlined, pointing out the main ideologies and what are believed to be the common senses of each newspaper. After this first step of analysis, the process will be led further, concentrating on each keyword and the use of it in its respective context. A part from *Functional Constituencies* itself, also the other two are closely related to our main question and the analysis will focus on how the newspapers are delineating the role of the Pan-democrats

as well as the looming problem of the system of the Constituencies. This work will now proceed with the background chapter, focusing on the history of Hong Kong first as a Colony, and then a re-united part of the People's Republic of China.

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **Historical background**

#### **1. Introduction**

As mentioned in the first chapter, a background introduction to the world of Hong Kong has been considered necessary in order to have an overview of what reality in Hong Kong means.

##### **1.1. The epochal changes of the last century in Hong Kong and China**

Hong Kong has lately experienced an epochal change, which brought it back to the origin. The process has been long and difficult and is it not over, yet. Mainland China, too, underwent not one but two big epochal changes. First of all the struggles that led, eventually, in 1949 to the foundation of the People's Republic of China, and from the end of the 70's on, after the death of Mao Zedong, with the reform and the opening to the outside world. This caused deep and difficult problems to the identity issue. Even if this is a too wide topic to be discussed here, a short and fast mention has

been considered useful in order to give us a base on which we can imagine our ideal subject-reader.

Even if the Handover was more than 10 years ago, 1997, the process of unification is still developing, and lot of reforms still have to be implemented, before such process will be able to be considered concluded. The following chapter will focus on the main aspect of Hong Kong's recent history, discussing turning points such as the Sino-British negotiations and the Joint Declaration during the 1980's; the period of the last Governor and the Government in transition. A general description of the electoral system will be also discussed, showing the improvement and changes added to the number eligible of seats in the LegCo, specifying the number of FCs as well as the number of the GC. The concept of Hong Kong people as Hongkongers is here stressed because it represents a first step in order to identify the Chinese macro-sphere and the role of Hong Kong as a newcomer into this world. The fact that these people are still in search of an identity can be really significant in their capacity of recognizing and accepting ideologies from the Mainland and neutralize them as common sense.

### **1.2. The question of human rights in Hong Kong as a way to define the Hong Kong identity**

Professor Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, in her essay "*Reflections on the Hong Kong Discourse on Human Rights*"<sup>66</sup> states that the issue of human rights can be connected to the question of Hong Kong identity. More precisely she states that democrats in Hong Kong "... use the public discourse on human rights to define the so-called missing identity of the people of Hong Kong"<sup>67</sup>. In her essay she explains that there can be three different interpretations of the cultural identity of the Hongkongers. The first one sees a deep interdependency with the PRC. The authors defending such statement see no difference between Hong Kong and the Mainland, considering Hong Kong as any other city of China.

The second point of view is the one of the democrats: "... (*Hong Kong democrats*) want Hong Kong to be a modern, cosmopolitan city with a democratic

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<sup>66</sup> S. Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, *Reflections on the Hong Kong Discourse on Human Rights*, in R.Ash & P.Ferdinand & B.Hook & R.Porter (eds), *Hong Kong in Transition: The Handover Years*, MacMillan Press Ltd, London, 2000, pp. 218-220

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*

*system based on the implementation of human rights; and they want this to be the identity of the people of Hong Kong as a whole”<sup>68</sup>.*

Last point of view is the one of a small group of authors that, as the democrats, recognise the special situation of Hong Kong but conclude otherwise. They in fact believe that Hong Kong is still not ready for a full implementation of human rights. *“In their eyes, the special situation of Hong Kong is its colonial legacy, which itself makes the implementation of human rights impossible. With the handover, the special situation of Hong Kong consists in it being part of a country with a political system so different that it will be as far away from Hong Kong...as the former colonial motherland”<sup>69</sup>.*

The concept of human rights is, quite obviously, deeply interconnected to the perception of the concept of democracy and the values and meanings that are given to such concept. The process of elections is one of the pillars of the society because it participates in building the society itself, and in developing it according to the will of the people. The meaning we give to elections and the connotation we want to characterise them with, such as “democratically” or “fully representative” shapes and is shaped by society. Society should, thus, be a whole that encloses the same views and the same concepts. Let’s now proceed with an attempt to define the problem of cultural identity in Hong Kong.

## **2. Cultural identity**

The first effort that somebody is willing to deal with Hong Kong might do is to try to understand what being “Hong Konger” might mean. To try to define this concept first of all we should give a definition of cultural identity, and what this concept implies.

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<sup>68</sup> W. McNeil, *Righting and difference*, in R. Wacks (ed), *Human Rights in Hong Kong*, in Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, p. 219

<sup>69</sup> L.Y. Zha (Louis Cha), *Xianggang He Zhongguo-1997 Ji Qihou Wunian* (Hong Kong and China -1997 and the First Five Years), Mingbao, 4:4-9,1992 , cited in Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, and L.Y. Zha (Louis Cha), *Baochi Xianzhuang Chongfen Liyong* (Stick to the Satus Quo and Use It As Well As Possible), Mingbao, 11: 51-53, 1992, cited in Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, p. 219

## **2.1. Cultural identity as a never-ending production**

Identity is, as most academic researchers nowadays claim, a production. This production is never complete. It belongs to a historical process, but, as history it-self, it is the subject of a never-ending process of change, improvement and development. Cultural identity derives from the representation people give to their common traditions and general backgrounds. Recognize to have something in common allowed the group to call for a shared culture, which unifies all the different ones in something bigger and unique, a “oneness” that clarifies what these people are, what they believe in, and what they recognize as sacred and inalienable.<sup>70</sup> As mentioned above, though, this “one being” that embodies all the members of the community in all his belief and behaviours is always changing. Thus, identity, and more specifically, cultural identity becomes more a dichotomy of being and becoming. It is the tradition that ties us to the past and the innovation that brings us into the future. It is a constant transforming, which is actually not fixed.

The members of the group decide themselves, more or less consciously, where they want to lead. As common rules of civil society teach us, somebody is always leading and, even inside this “oneness”, there is always somebody representing the leading power and embodying the common sense and thoughts. These leading figures help the “oneness” putting into clear concepts what the shared identity consists of. They settle down the concepts that are universally recognized and understood as characterising their beings, thus constituting a series of politics of identity. This politics of identity occur to be the bases of the legitimization of the leading power as it specifies and settle the reasons why the community represent one-big-self.

## **2.2. The community of Hong Kong and the “other”**

How can this politics be realized? We can say that two main vectors that identify a group as a community are the similarity and continuity inside this community, and the difference and the rupture from other groups identified as “other”. Thus, the dichotomy us/them, is the first step to identify what we actually are and what we belong to.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> S. Hall, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, first published in the journal *Framework*, no.36, p.222

<sup>71</sup> Hall, pp. 223-226



Though, main feature of Hong Kong is the fact that two totally different communities played a role in the formation of a Hong Kong identity, creating something third that had to identify it-self out of the confrontation with two totally different entities.

When somebody looks at Hong Kong, the main feature that he or she notices is the diversification of this land: diversification of manner, of people, and of traditions. Where does this land belong to? It used to be China, England ruled over it for more than a century and now it is back to her big sister-China. But how Hong Kong people feel about that? Can we say they are Chinese? Are they still under British influence? Even if to affirm that, we postulate that they actually belonged to the English culture and were consequently accepted as English citizens during the period in which they were considered a colony of the United Kingdom. Is it not more correct to affirm that they created their own culture and that they refer to themselves as Hongkongers? And what does this mean? What group or community are they, and what common identity do they share? Hongkongers are a population of refugees, people who escape from a revolutionised China. They moved to the only free city that they could somehow feel as homeland, a place that combines East and West, modern and ancient in a whole that is still being redefined as people's own perspectives suggest. It is a community that created it-self and cooperated to build its own luck. We saw in the introduction of this chapter that these are the three possible visions concerning the Honk Kong identity issue. But here we also stated that the whole of a society is defined also by the recognition of what is other.

So, who actually represents the "other"? Can we say that the difference between the continental Chinese population and the Hong Kong Chinese population is the confidence in a different political view and that this makes clear who the "other" is? Hong Kong, though, now belongs once again to China, and Hongkongers are the only Chinese people now living under the Chinese flag<sup>72</sup> who actually experimented something different. But they also are Chinese refugees escaped from The Great Leap Forward, from starvation, and run away from The Cultural Revolution and death. They landed in Honk Kong, the China that is not China, a liberal free market economy that

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<sup>72</sup> *Taiwan, even if as it is clear it experienced since 1949 a different political history than China properly, is here not included because it is not under Chinese direct administration.*

can offer them the opportunity to build a fortune and a new life. Now, how to build a new identity?

Identity is, as mentioned, asserted to be a “production” which is never complete always developing and improving. We can define, as already said, identity, and more specifically cultural identity, on two levels: the definition of a group from inside and the definition of a group from outside.<sup>73</sup> To identify something other from what we are can help us identifying what we are and whom we belong to. So was it in Hong Kong, first of all identifying the Chinese immigrants as what Hongkongers were not, that is to say Chinese mainlanders. The fact that Mainland did represented their own origins seemed to be forgotten for a while and the so called People’s Republic of China was left behind in Hongkongers’ hearts. A process of de-sinicisation started from 1949 and lasted for the post-War decades, gradually separating Hong Kong politically, socially and culturally from the Mainland.<sup>74</sup> Hong Kong identity was being built on the statement that they were something different from their PRC neighbours. More specifically we could state that Hong Kong identity was being created by the contingency of three communities and their individual reaction to the so-called “other”.

### **2.3. The role of the media in defining the “other”**

Media indeed played a primary role in the whole process. This might be due to the fact that Hong Kong used to lack, and is still lacking, a representative structure in its polity and television somehow supplied to this role, creating a “sense of identity”<sup>75</sup>. Actually Hong Kong experimented the development of distinctive local culture since late 70’s, when a sense of separation and a specific identification of China as “other” took place. A common opinion of what being mainlander meant started to grow and a bad common opinion of them along with it. Even though Hong Kong people felt and identified with Chinese traditional culture, still in an abstract and detached sense, they discriminated against what was going on in China since 1949, they distanced themselves from the Communist ideology and from what it was causing in the Mainland. As Hong Kong was more and more culturally and politically separated from

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<sup>73</sup> Hall, pp. 227-229

<sup>74</sup> E. K. Ma, *Culture Politics, and Television in Hong Kong*, Routledge, London, 1999, pp. 2-5

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*

China, a strong feeling for self-determination and identity began to emerge<sup>76</sup>. Especially the new generation of people born in the post-war decades were barely aware of their origins and cultural ties with their neighbour China. Resentment grew as a common feeling towards Chinese illegal immigrants, who became an inferior “other”. Hong Kong identity was now their identity and Hongkongers represented the group of reference<sup>77</sup>. However, a new challenge was about to come: Hong Kong would soon not be under colonial rule anymore, but it would not have independence, either. Hong Kong was about to be under Chinese flag once again, after more than a century.

#### **2.4. Hong Kong people and the cultural re-unification with the Chinese siblings**

Thus, the so called “oneness” that made them different from the “other” now had to face the fact that this “other” was going to be part of their everyday life, challenging Hong Kong’s identity once more. The process of de-sinicisation mentioned above was gradually evolving in to a process of re-sinicisation as well as a process of nationalisation.<sup>78</sup> What was considered to be other from Hong Kong was becoming Hong Kong it-self. A new approach to cultural identity emerged from the awareness of the Handover. Of course, media played a quite important role in this process. Media always occur to be of prime importance in forging what Anderson calls imagined communities<sup>79</sup>. This process had, yet, to face a terrible drawback such as Tiananmen Accident was.

Even if, paradoxically, this helped Hongkongers in indentifying and recollect their cultural ties with students and citizens and Beijing.<sup>80</sup> In that time, for sure, being Chinese was seen as something that would have denigrated Hong Kong, people from Beijing, Chinese People, though where fighting against the responsible of this unjustifiable event. This somehow allowed Hongkongers to feel the pain of these events together with their mainlander siblings. A process of cultural identification took place, a process that developed even stronger ties during the 1990s along with the economic connections, which boomed between locals and mainlanders. What was going on could

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<sup>76</sup> Ma, pp. 40-42

<sup>77</sup> *ibid*,

<sup>78</sup> Ma, pp. 65-68

<sup>79</sup> Ma, pp. 10-12

<sup>80</sup> Ma, pp. 140-145

be named as a collective action to create a cultural identity and recognize ethnic ties, or a third phase of nationalism. Cultural identification, though, does not necessarily mean political identification as well. So, they felt sorrow for their brothers and sisters in China, and they felt resentment against the Central Government.

## **2.5. The role of China in shaping the cultural identity of Hong Kong**

Someone could suggest that even if past generations abandoned China, culturally and politically, Hongkongers still feel like Chinese, Chinese people who do not accept the communist ideology. But, as now this people have to relate once again themselves to the Great Motherland China that has experienced a different history, how can they put themselves into this new world which sees the New China, no more Communist but still not Capitalist or democratized?

How is China going to keep her promise of allowing democracy in Hong Kong and guaranteeing a free democratic election system of universal suffrage? Is it China really going to keep this promise? Great Britain never allowed Hong Kong people to become fully British, always denied them the state of full British citizenship, adopting a politic more of *laissez faire*, than a concrete help for the search of an identity<sup>81</sup>. Nevertheless, once that the Handover became inescapable Britain finally decided to provide a secure base to develop a democratic system and improving a democratic sense. Hong Kong developed and still is nowadays improving an urban culture with its own characteristics, a land of mixtures where common knowledge is much more diversified as it takes inspirations from different sources: Chinese traditional culture, Guangdong, Great Britain and western culture in general. It is the land of free development and occasion of self-realization. Moviemaking and story-telling all reflect a sense of loss and research of identity. What they found up to now is a personal interpretation of their being. Even if China might have convinced the most people that a Socialism system of market economy with Chinese characteristics is able to be competitive in the international system of trade, the new future that Great Britain and China decided for this land now has to be fulfilled with the own desires of its people and the best hope for a future of freedom and prosperity.

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<sup>81</sup> D.W. Chang and R.Y. Chuang, *The Politics of Hong Kong's reversion to China*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999, pp. 130-133

## **2.6. The unique case of Hong Kong**

When we have to analyse a kind of situation like the one Hong Kong is experiencing, we have first of all to understand that this kind of situation is almost unique. Hong Kong people dealt with a turnover that changed their lives forever. Before the Handover in 1997, July 1<sup>st</sup>, the system of governance and the rule of law were embedded in a system of market economics under a legal and internationally recognized system. Hong Kong was enjoying a high rate of autonomy in domestic matters that assured to this area a conspicuous success.<sup>82</sup> Still, China was going to take control over Hong Kong, and no one knew what that could mean. How could a system of free market economy be under China's rule? How could someone who escaped a miserable China accept to be under its rule once again? Crisis of identity, change of identity and lack of identity were all phenomena that every Hong Kong citizen might have had to face recently. All this added to a sense of expectation and uncertainty of what the future might be.

## **3. Hong Kong under British rule**

### **3.1. Hong Kong's opinion of Great Britain**

The history of Hong Kong goes back in centuries but has its focus and apogee especially at the very end of the eighteen hundreds when it officially became a Colony of her Majesty the Queen of England. After the Second World War Hong Kong started to experience a great and fast development that took this land to a very high grade of economical power ensuring an important international position as a center for business and moneymaking. Great Britain was never able to make itself wholly appreciated and trusted by Hongkongers. However, this land represented a new hope for the Chinese Diaspora as a harbour open to the world. So this might be why, Chinese Hongkongers accepted British domain in their own lives. The fact that the attentions that Great Britain always paid to this colony and the politics here developed were always focused on its amazing economic potential never played an effective role in building Hongkongers'

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<sup>82</sup> C. Patten, *East and West: China, Power and the Future of Asia*, McClelland & Stewart, 1998, pp. x-xiii

political consciousness.<sup>83</sup> They were actually never given the opportunity of a self-development, but were stuck under the art of good government implemented by Great Britain. Aim of the British was a social and economic wealth rather than to teach Hongkongers how to self-governing and to participate to the political life. What actually characterized British imperialists' ruling was a sense of racial superiority, especially in the early period of the colony, consequently causing the fact the Chinese Hongkongers, although never wanted to forget their origin, had to face a really complicated struggle for building their own identity. This lack of confidence from both sides and the fact that Hongkongers themselves never showed the wish to develop skills for self-governing as well as the lack of political participation helped Great Britain never to consider Hong Kong democracy as a looming problem<sup>84</sup>. Social and economic development rather than a concrete plan for democracy has always been the key word in British politics towards Hong Kong. Everybody has to recognise the fact that this land represented the best choice for business, and international investors who are keen to do business with China are well aware of this fact. Up until the 70's there was actually not pressure about the democracy issue. In 150 years of colonial power and with the awareness that sooner or later the Hong Kong issue would have raised in the political agenda of the United Kingdom, Great Britain never gave those people the opportunity to develop an autonomous sense of political participation and self-government. The British Parliament might have feared a polarization of the voting community. In fact, main source of worries from the British-side was the possibility that the voting community would consist only of sympathizers of the two principal and only political identities Chinese people ever know: the Communists and the Kuomintang.<sup>85</sup> However, at the end of this decade of the 70's, a new era was about to come: Mao Zedong died in 1976 and the struggle for power in continental China finally had its winner.

### **3.2. The end of the 70's and the beginning of the official talks**

Deng Xiaoping emerged as new leader of the CCP and ruled over China. He was promoter of new and revolutionary ideas, a new kind of Chinese revolution which Western Powers were willing and at the same time afraid to see properly developed;

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<sup>83</sup> Chang&Chuang, pp. 92-99

<sup>84</sup> Patten, pp. 10-15

<sup>85</sup> R. Cottrell, *The End of Hong Kong: the Secret Diplomacy of Imperial Retreat*, John Murray Publisher Ltd. London, 1993, pp. 182-193

properly in a sense of new occasion for the West to become closer to China and for China to open in a proper manner to the proper world. Deng Xiaoping was a creator of new concepts and a dreamer who saw the possibility to have a One China once again united and strong, ready to fight for her right place in the new era. He also was aware of the fact that China could not get what in his opinion it deserved if his core-leader was not ready to accept compromises. But as often China's (especially) modern history taught us, she has her peculiar way to adapt to new situations and to get what it is the best and the right thing for that moment. At the end of the 70's and the beginning of the 80's Great Britain was ready, and China as well, to start negotiations in order to realize the Hong Kong Handover. Of course when politicians from two different political systems have to find a way through a long path of respective distrust and suspect, the way to be is still long and parlous. Great Britain at that time was itself experiencing a new era of politics, characterised by the leading of Margaret Thatcher.<sup>86</sup> She was and still is the only woman who served as Prime Minister in England.

In 1979 the governor of Hong Kong, Murray MacLehose, started a series of talks with Deng Xiaoping in Beijing, where he together with Deng himself asserted the necessity for Hong Kong to return to the Motherland China. The territories under English rule were Hong Kong Island, Kowloon (area south of Boundary Street), and the New Territories (area north of Boundary Street and south of Shenzhen River, and outlying islands). Hong Kong Island and Kowloon had been ceded in perpetuity, while the New Territories were leased for a period of 99 years, after which they should have been given back to the Motherland. It was for sure unwise and awkward to keep the Island and Kowloon, so this is why, after a quite long and difficult period of negotiations, a bilateral agreement, known as the Sino-British Joint Declaration on the Question of Hong Kong, or simply Joint Declaration, was finally signed in 1984. This treaty stated *inter alia* that Hong Kong's social and political landscape would have been kept unchanged for 50 years after the Handover.<sup>87</sup> China promised to keep untouched

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<sup>86</sup> Chang&Chuang, pp. 92-99

<sup>87</sup> Hong Kong Government, *Joint Declaration Of The Government Of The United Kingdom Of Great Britain And Northern Ireland And The Government Of The People's Republic Of China On The Question Of Hong Kong*, 1996, retrieved 10 October 2010, <http://www.hkbu.edu.hk/~pchksar/JD/jd-full2.htm>

Hong Kong's capitalist system as well as its fundamental freedoms such as freedom of speech, assembly, religious practice, and belief<sup>88</sup>.

### **3.3. The evolution of the Government of Hong Kong**

The Hong Kong Government was an executive-led one in which the Chief Executive is not popularly elected. The Joint Declaration contains a clause that this executive-led government was to be made accountable by elections<sup>89</sup>. Thus, after 1984's signature, Hong Kong eventually entered the path for democracy. Or at least, this was the biggest hope of the Hong Kongers for the future. Thus, Great Britain was finally trying to pursue what it had always denied to the Hong Kong people. Democracy was, previous to 1984, a second-hand matter while now was developing into one of the biggest challenges of those last few years of British rule. China and Great Britain were now about to collaborate in building a proper bridge to connect Hong Kong to its new future and to welcome it back to his origins.

## **4. "One country, two systems" and The Joint Declaration**

### **4.1. The priority of Taiwan**

Mao Zedong, firstly, and Deng Xiaoping stated that the Hong Kong question was as a matter of fact a problem that should be solved after the more urgent and more important question of Taiwan.<sup>90</sup> Taiwan was the land where the beaten Kuomintang fled after 1949's Communist takeover. Mao could not solve this problem and now it became one of the most important issues for Deng. He wanted to succeed where Mao couldn't and he wanted to prove to the whole world that he was actually doing good and that his program of reforms represented the best choice for the New China he wished to build.

Of course, the re-unification of Taiwan with the Motherland was not a merely political issue. It transcended those boundaries, becoming more and more an ideological case and a prerequisite to a united and modern Pan-China. Deng was, though, well aware of the fact that Taiwan would have never accepted a communist rule on its territories.

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<sup>88</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Chang&Chuang, pp. 130-146



Thus, if he really wanted a handover, he should have thought of a solution, which could allow both sides to gain satisfaction. In this overwhelming plan, Hong Kong only represented an overlap. Moreover, it was considered an easier question with a faster solution, most of all due to the leasing-factor that was suppose to expire in 1997.<sup>91</sup> That date seemed still really far away and time to settle this question down was considered more than enough. Finally, as already mentioned above, Taiwan had priority, not Hong Kong.

#### **4.2. The first round of negotiations**

So, when Governor MacLehose met Deng Xiaoping in Beijing in March 1979, the policy of “one country, two systems” was being specially designed for Taiwan, even though it still was on its initial stages of development. This does not mean that the question of Hong Kong itself was not on Deng’s political agenda. Actually he designated Liao Chengzhi<sup>92</sup> to be head of a Hong Kong Affairs Office (Liao was also considered chief strategist concerning Taiwan). Thus, although Hong Kong did not represent the first topic on Deng ‘s agenda, it was still taking its place on the to be-list of the Communist Party. In 1978 the normalization of the Sino-US relations was every day closer and this was indeed giving hopes to a peaceful and quite fast solution to the Question of Taiwan. Deng was not talking about “liberation” anymore but more about a “peaceful reunification to the Motherland”. He was developing a new concept, which could ensure peace and collaboration within the two sides. He was ensuring Taipei administration power, as well as internal autonomy and preservation of the existing economic and social systems. The price to pay for these “freedoms” would have been sovereignty. Capitalism in Taiwan and Communism in Mainland, the famous “two systems”, could, thus, co-exist under one flag. Even if at an embryonic stage, this politic could for sure bring new opportunities for the Sino-British relations.<sup>93</sup> The policy of “one country, two system” cannot find a place for Britain in its plan.

Thus, when Deng met Governor MacLehose, and proposed him this policy he was implying that Great Britain should go home. Britain on its side was planning something

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<sup>91</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Liao Chenzhi was born in Japan in 1908 and died in Beijing in 1983. He joined the CCP in 1928 and was general director of the Xinhua News Agency. He became the leader of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office in 1978.*

<sup>93</sup> Chang&Chuang, pp. 130-146

different. Governor MacLehose was there to propose a “Crown administration”. The United Kingdom was for sure worried about investment and generally about what and how much Hong Kong would have to suffer under hypothetical Chinese governance. China was on her side offering Great Britain a “perfect” solution to all its fears: Hong Kong would be granted a capitalistic system of economy (better: a system of market economy), even under the Chinese red flag. Besides that, Deng was too concerned about Taiwan that he did not want to go into details concerning Hong Kong Handover. Britain as well, or more specifically Great Britain’s Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was too preoccupied by other more pressing issues and was not particularly involved in the process.<sup>94</sup>

#### 4.3. Hong Kong wins priority

Unfortunately, the Chinese side was not able to go on following the path it chose. In April 1979 Taiwan and the USA signed the Taiwan Relations Act and 1980 Ronald Reagan entered the White House as new President. He proved himself being a quite good and reliable friend of Taipei, thus helping to improve Taipei’s antipathy towards a possible future re-union with continental China. Chiang Ching-Kuo, Taipei’s leader, showed no desire to negotiate, however China did not give up. In 1981 a new phase of his policies of reform begun, and the Party was now led by Deng’s allies. China was opening everyday more and new concepts such as special economic zones, openness to foreign trade and investments were being developed in an everyday bigger scale. On 30 September 1981, the final draft for Taiwan reunification was presented during the meeting of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress. This draft, also known as the Nine Points, *inter alia* stated that: “[A]fter the country is reunified, Taiwan can enjoy a high degree of autonomy as a special administrative region and it can retain its armed forces. The central government will not interfere with local affairs in Taiwan; Taiwan’s current socio-economic system will remain unchanged, so will its way of life...Private property, houses, land, enterprises or foreign investment will not encroached upon”.<sup>95</sup> This draft could clearly represent a perfect starting-point towards Hong Kong politics as well, and that is how it finally developed. As, in fact, Taiwan did not considered what has been mentioned above and Deng had eventually to abandon

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<sup>94</sup> Cottrell, pp. 58-75

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.*

this project and offset an “easier” target like Hong Kong could be. A success in the Hong Kong question might prove to Taipei and Washington that a policy such “one country, two system” was, could offer the best solution for the Nationalist China.<sup>96</sup> After this impasse, a change occurred within the Beijing-side. Now Hong Kong had priority on Deng’s politics agenda.

We can say that from 1982 on, the Communist Party concentrated all its efforts on achieving a fast and efficient solution for Hong Kong and its people. Britain also started to play its role, not as efficiently as China’s, though.

#### **4.4. The second round of negotiations and Margaret Thatcher**

Margaret Thatcher, in fact, even if she was planning an official visit in Beijing and of course planning to discuss together with Deng Hong Kong and its future, was concentrating too much on other issues that brought her apart from the focus of the Chinese meeting. When Deng and his collaborators were studying and preparing a strategy, she was too concerned about Argentina and the Falklands War to get herself prepared for the meeting in Beijing. China elaborated and probed the concept of “one country, two systems” and added a guarantee that a special status would be granted, later conceptualized in the form “no changes for fifty years after 1997” as well as a promise of non-withdrawal. They wanted substantially a total resignation from the British side, the dismissal of the three unequal treaties that bounded Hong Kong to the United Kingdom and the return of sovereignty on Chinese hands. On Mrs. Thatcher’s side, though, those three treaties were legal and internationally recognised. Thus, if China wanted to abrogate them, then the only solutions that could be legally recognised would be an amendment agreed by both sides.<sup>97</sup> The only desirable solutions would then be a compromise. China wanted sovereignty to be returned to her, Great Britain did not want to dismiss power so easily. China also began an awareness campaign in Hong Kong, stating that Chinese sovereignty in Hong Kong was inevitable, even only as a symbolic action. Aim of this campaign was to prove and convince Hong Kong people of the indispensability and rightness of the Handover. The Government assured it would have not interfered with Hong Kong affairs, anyone who wish to become Chairman and

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<sup>96</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> Cottrell, pp. 77-86

had the necessary knowledge would have had the possibility to do so. Hong Kong people would have ruled over Hong Kong.

The Chinese strategy was settled. And its most powerful gun was propaganda, a propaganda, which would be used soon against Margaret Thatcher, who came in Beijing with a vision maybe too canalized only on her point of view. When she landed in Beijing she found a stubborn Deng Xiaoping concentrating on the sovereignty issue, which absolutely had to be granted to China<sup>98</sup>. Actually, British should not be even that much involved in the Hong Kong issue. Population was Chinese, so China should take care of it. Britain was administrating the territory basing its legitimacy on three unequal treaties signed when China had no other choice. Treaties that consequently were not even accepted by the Chinese side.

Unfortunately, Lady Thatcher was not of the same opinion. Talks were difficult and bellicose. The Chinese choice to communicate its opinion before to the press, moreover, just underlined the fact that Great Britain in the Chinese eyes should not play a main role. The Chinese strategy was firstly announced to the press, specifically to the Hong Kong press<sup>99</sup>. China wished to give a sign to her counterpart that she felt free to communicate with her people when and how often she wished to. Thus, if Great Britain would not accept the premise of sovereignty no more bilateral negotiation would be held, and China would announce her strategy unilaterally. Margaret Thatcher left Beijing without any remarkable success while in Hong Kong people started to fear their future and 1997's task grew powerful and threatening inside their hearts. And we should add to that that Mrs. Thatcher did not give the best impression during her visit to Beijing.<sup>100</sup> Her stubborn attitude and the continuous reference to the legitimacy of the three treaties participated in increasing a negative reaction especially from the pro-China Hongkongers. Even if this official trip to China did not produce any immediate result, the process of negotiating continued and finally a Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 1984. Its main and most important statement was the

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<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Cottrell, p. 91

<sup>100</sup> Cottrell, 82-86

obligation accepted by both sides to keep and preserve Hong Kong's prosperity and stability.<sup>101</sup>

## **5. From British Colonial Rule to China's Governance**

### **5.1. The political development of Hong Kong and the first political parties**

Before the handover in 1997, Hong Kong was listed as a pure administrative state in which the civil service had the most of the power in its own hands<sup>102</sup>. As Max Weber states<sup>103</sup>: “...it is a kind of administration in which bureaucrats, due to their administrative experience, dominate the political system of a country”.

It was only with the beginning of the 80's, as it has been stated above, that a new collaboration between locals and their local government began to improve and helped in building up a first step to political development. The so-called “government by consultation” policy by Governor Murray MacLehose was implemented. We know that until Governor Patten and the 1990's direct election was not allowed in Hong Kong, and that Hong Kong people were denied a popular voice during the negotiations period. During the time of colonial ruling Great Britain did not allow or even thought about promoting foundations of political parties.

The first political party was organised in Hong Kong only in 1990 and competed for the LegCo in the elections of the following year, 1991. It was called United Democrats of Hong Kong (henceforth UDHK) and in 1994 it changed name into Democratic Party (DP).<sup>104</sup> Leaders of this party were Martin Lee, Yeung Sum, and Cheung Bing-leung (nowadays the party is led by Albert Ho). Martin Lee is a controversial figure of Hong Kong political scene, being considered by someone as a founder of Hong Kong battle for democratic improvements, and by China as a supporter

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<sup>101</sup> The Joint Declaration

<sup>102</sup> W. Wong, *From a British-Style Administrative State to a Chinese-Style Political State: Civil Service Reforms in Hong Kong After the Transfer of Sovereignty*, 2003, retrieved 10 October 2010, online PDF

<sup>103</sup> M. Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, Max Weber Translated by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, Collier Macmillan Publishers, London, 1947, pp.126-130.

<sup>104</sup> Chang&Chaung, pp. 146-156

of the British. In 1985 he was chosen as one of the drafter of the Basic Law. He represented the democratic hope in Hong Kong and his political manifesto claimed for direct popular elections as a way to guarantee the “high degree of autonomy” granted to Hong Kong by both China and England. In 1995 his DP won 20 seats out of 60 in the LegCo.

Yeung is a university lecturer in the University of Hong Kong. The second Vice-Chairman was Professor Cheung Bing-leung (Anthony Cheung), first Chairman of the Meeting Point (MP), which joined the DP in 1994. The MP was organised in 1983 and its manifesto also consisted in the hope of participation in the struggle for Hong Kong democracy.

The fourth leading figure of the DM is Szeto Hua. He was president of the Teachers’ Union from 1974 until 1990 and organized the Hong Kong patriotic pro-student demonstrators into the Hong Kong People in Support of Patriotic Pro-democracy Movement in China (HKPSPPM). He used to be a member of the committee for the Basic Law but he was eventually ousted in 1989 due to his support to the anti-Beijing movement. Thus, the first political grouping emerging from the scene depicted above consisted of the alliance of MP and UDHK, united later as DP.

Next to this first one, the second political grouping, which emerged in 1994 was the Liberal Party. It was, actually, the first one to be re-organised, formerly being called the Cooperative Resources Center (CRC). The political manifesto of this party was to gain a close communication with the Central Government in Beijing. In early 1993 it had the larger number of seats in the LegCo.<sup>105</sup> The Liberal Party represented a class of professionals and managers who wanted prosperity and stability for Hong Kong to be linked to their personal targets. They wanted to collaborate closely with Beijing already before 1997 in order to have the more possibilities of success after the handover. They emphasised the importance of personal freedoms as well as freedom for free enterprises. Of course the 1997 marked the beginning of a new era and the establishment of a new political order. The Hong Kong administration as it had been left behind by the British rule, though, was not fully consonant with the values of the new order and leaders coming from a Chinese-oriented background. Many disagreements and conflicts

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<sup>105</sup> *ibid.*

triggered within the leadership, the bureaucrats' and the politicians' views differed on many levels, thus, highlighting the incongruence inside the system itself.<sup>106</sup>

## **5.2. The incongruence of the system**

As mentioned above, before 1997 the Hong Kong state was a pure administrative one that it is to say that, in the absence of a democratic context, the bureaucracy represented an uncontested ruler. Even the so- called Legislative Council had a merely consultative role.<sup>107</sup> Thus, in a state in which a political agency as well as a fully, or even partially, democratically developed system is lacking, members of bureaucracy not only set the political agenda but define what public interest itself is. During the colonial period of colonial administration this was the practice. On the historical side, Britain never wished to carry out democratic reforms before the Handover was already sure and Governor Patten took his place in the administration of this land. The United Kingdom never wished to give its Colony independence, and China of course was worried about the threat that democratisation movement in Hong Kong might represent in Mainland China<sup>108</sup>. So this is why they both, China and Britain, did not put any effort in founding a democratic base in the territory. Bureaucracy derived its legitimacy by the ability to maintain political stability and to promote fast and wealth economic development, ensuring an high grade of stability and prosperity. Aims and strategies of this administration were to propose and to solve public demands in advance, thus preventing social and political mobilization. The need for democracy was indeed silenced by all the good achievements of the good administration<sup>109</sup>.

After 1997, though, the incongruity of the systems came to the surface; the anomalies between the organizational and structural level of the now ex-British colony faced the imbalance created inside the territory by the new Chinese leaders and their different points of view. Even though China, in the 1984's Joint Declaration gave its word to adopt and maintain a "one country, two systems" policy which should allow a high grade of autonomy, China anyway has constitutional power to veto and even to

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<sup>106</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> Wong

<sup>108</sup> Patten, pp. 20-22

<sup>109</sup> Wong

enjoin many important policies. Thus, much of the autonomy promised to Hong Kong lies in Chinese hands, and new politics can only be confirmed after China's approval.

### **5.3. The beginnings of the reform**

The content of the Basic Law, the Hong Kong mini-constitution approved by both the British and the Chinese, and adopted by National People's Congress in 1990, stated that the Chinese accepted to maintain the administrative state<sup>110</sup>. China planned to select the Chief Executive within the group of the civil servants, due to their already mentioned good governing skills, high achievements and political legitimacy. All this was accepted before the democratic upsurge promoted by Governor Patten, during his last British administration.<sup>111</sup> Two of the main points of his reform were to replace the appointed seats in the local councils with directly elected seats and to change the FCs in the legislature by substantially enlarging the number of voters eligible for these elections.

These reforms just represented a first step on a really long way and barely affected the executive, mainly counting on enlarging the democratic values inside the legislature. China eventually decided to shift from the civil sector to the business one in her search for the first Chief Executive of the Chinese era. Shipping tycoon Tung Chee-hwa won among his rivals and was selected as new Hong Kong leader.<sup>112</sup> He was a Beijing loyalist, outside the civil service, and considered trustworthy by China.

The period he has to face was not an easy one. Tension between new politicians and bureaucrats were on a rally high grade, moreover Asia in general had to face many dangerous crises: the financial crisis in Asia , the bird flu crisis for all the Asian continent and short piling scandal of housing. All the mistakes and inadvertences of the civil service seriously mined the public opinion and confidence in the system. Politicians played their card and ask to put an end to the incongruity of the system, thus allowing a political representation to be raised as right and better. The reform process was held on two levels: a policy-making level and a policy implementation one.<sup>113</sup> Under the political system set up by the Basic Law, the Chief Executive is s only

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<sup>110</sup> The Joint Declaration

<sup>111</sup> Wong

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> Wong



elected by an election committee of a few hundred people, dominated by business interests and pro-Beijing groups. This means that Hong Kong voters have no power to directly choose who is going to represent them. Moreover the presence on the council of the member of the FCs, which represent as already said, mainly the economic interests of business groups and tycoons, make the system hardly democratic.

#### **5.4. The reform under Chinese leadership**

China now is ruling and, as said above, fears the spread of a genuine democratic ideal. She is not willing to see a fast and healthy democratic process or, at least, she wishes to create her own, with features and aims that can be accepted by her Central Government.

Since the Handover in 1997, a part from this last term, three other LegCos were elected in Hong Kong<sup>114</sup>. The first one, 1998-2000, saw from the total of its 60 members, 30 elected by FCs, 20 elected by GC and 10 elected by an election committee. In the second term, 2000-2004, twenty-four of the 60 members were elected by GC, 30 by FCs and 6 by an election committee. In the third term, 2004-2008, the election committee has been deleted, and the 60 members were elected for one half, that is to say 30 members, by the GC, and for the second half, the remaining 30 seats, were elected by the FSc.<sup>115</sup> Now, as was mentioned in the introduction, this last reform approved in June, 2010, will allow for the next elections in 2012 ten more seats, all directly elected. Of these 10 seats, five will belong to the GC and 5 to FCs. This means that the final number of members of the LegCo will be of 70 seats, forty of which will be directly elected (the old 30 seats from the GC, plus the five new GC, plus the new five FCs directly elected).

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<sup>114</sup> The Hong Kong Government, *Constitution and Administration*, retrieved 23 October 2010, <[http://www.yearbook.gov.hk/2004/en/01\\_06.htm](http://www.yearbook.gov.hk/2004/en/01_06.htm)>

<sup>115</sup> *ibid.*

## 6. Conclusions

This was meant as a general overview in order to introduce the concept of Hong Kong democracy. First of all, when we think about the democratisation process in this ex-Colony we have to keep in mind three factors.

First, Hong Kong was not prepared to develop an own version of a democratic system. Democracy and development of the political and administrative system in such term only began to be part of the British agenda from the 1980's on. The Handover took place in 1997. Two decades only are not enough to build a culture of democracy and a system able to fulfil aims such as democracy should provide.

Secondly, independence never represented an option for Hong Kong<sup>116</sup>. Reversion always was the pre-ordinate solution. Reversion was a return to China, a country that never experienced a democratic system, and that is not willing to, yet.

Thirdly, tycoons and business always enjoyed privileges, and represented the main actors and aims in the Hong Kong society. It might be consequently obvious that the system somehow always tried to protect and develop such interests. Even after the Handover, China was well aware of the economic potential of this land, and that if China was able to keep for herself and influence somehow these interests she might have huge advantages and results from Hong Kong. The FCs, representing the interests of these small groups and the good improvement of business, can fulfil two different purposes. On the one hand, they allow the prosecution of good and prosperous business, while, on the other hand they prevent the introduction of a too open and democratic form of rule in Hong Kong.

Public opinion in Hong Kong is pressing for more reforms and more political freedom. China needs a consensus on how to pursue her rule over Hong Kong. How is China going to maintain this, sometimes already weak, consensus? What is the role of the DP in such a contest? To achieve an accordance with China often means to accept the terms proposed by China, but are we sure that China could allow the abolishment of

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<sup>116</sup> *Even if the question of independence was raised, The UN List of Trust And Non-Self-Governing Territories, 1945-1999, lists Hong Kong's status as Change in Status, to signify that independence was eventually put apart. The United Nations, Trust And Non-Self-Governing Territories, retrieved 10 January 2011, <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpi/decolonization/trust2.htm#uk>>*

the FCs? In the analysis of the next chapter we will try to understand what Hong Kong general opinion is, concentrating on the DP, its role and the general views that emerge about its action and results (non-)achieved, as well as if the FCs, can be really representative of a democratic rule, even adapted to a specific and peculiar contest such as Hong Kong is, and what the general opinion expressed in the three newspapers expressed concerning this matter is.

## CHAPTER 3:

### Analysis

#### 1. Introduction

This third chapter focuses on the analysis of the articles selected as main source in order to give an answer to our research question. Throughout the reading and the careful analysis of the content of those articles our critical review will try to identify the ideologies of each newspaper and the attitude towards the problem of Functional Constituencies as well as the role and general opinion of the Democrats in this process. How could the role played in this struggle by this Party be described? What is the common view concerning the so-called Functional Constituencies in these articles? Is it possible to embody them in a democratic system of Governance, characterised by an equal and just Universal Suffrage? Each of the newspaper selected (the South China Morning Post, the Ming Pao Daily and the Apple Daily) is trying to develop its own ideology, meant as a definition of the concept of *democracy*. What do these ideologies

claim to be? What is the role of the FCs? How do they depict the Pan-Democrats? Are the universal suffrage and the FCs suitable in such ideologies?

We suppose that the general opinion expressed inside each journal reflects the opinion of the ideal reader who decides to read such journals, thus creating a leading opinion among the Hong Kong citizenship. Can we say that there is a common and general opinion leading the Hong Kong people that can be identified as ruling ideology inside the people minds? We said in the second chapter that “cultural identity” also means to identify your own-self as part of the “oneness” which identifies in a macro-sphere which you should belong to and which concepts, values and traditions you can recognize as your own ones. Is this happening now in Hong Kong? Can we say, looking at the micro-sphere of this selection of articles, that a common view is emerging and that the opinion concerning the FCs and the role of the Pan-Democrats belong to a same ideology and lead to a same concept of Democracy and process of democratization for the Hong Kong SAR?

### **1.1. A method for the analysis**

This analysis, as already specified, will start from a quantitative analysis of the presence of the selected keywords of *Functional Constituencies* (功能組別, 功能界別), *Democracy* (民主), and *Universal Suffrage* (普選). The sources from which the methodology for such analysis is taken is a book always from Norman Fairclough, previous to *Language and Power*. The title of this work is *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social research*<sup>117</sup>. Other source selected to such aim is a book written in collaboration by Linda Lombardo, Louann Haarman, John Morley and Christopher Taylor titled *Massed Medias: Linguistic Tools for Interpreting Discourse*<sup>118</sup>. First step to proceed to analyse is represented by three small tables showing the rate of presence of each keyword, one small table for each newspaper. The results that these tables will show us represent the higher or lower presence of one or another keyword in each newspaper.

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<sup>117</sup> N. Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*, Routledge, London, 2003

<sup>118</sup> L. Lombardo, L. Haarman, J. Morley, C. Taylor, *Massed Medias: Linguistic Tools for Interpreting Media Discourse*, Edizioni Universtarie di Lettere Economia Diritto, Milano, 1999

Concentrating more or less on an issue than on another one can distract the ideal reader from what might also represent a focus of the process. Or the fact that a word is repeated too much can give the idea that the positive or negative result put into being during the process all depend on the role played by this word more than some other.

Thus, first of all an attentive look at numbers will lead us to the main focus of each group of articles, helping us to discover what is the surface of the answer to the research question. The process of analysing will proceed newspaper by newspaper and only at the end of these single reviews, the general opinions, points in common and disagreements will be put together and confronted. Each small table has been specifically designed in order to make the quantitative section of this chapter easier to follow, describing all the numbers, while the pie charts focus on percentages emerging from the tables. The very first section of the following sub-chapter will explain the use of the keywords that had been done, as well as how the translation from English and Chinese have been chosen and which specific words belong to each group. Four groups have, in fact, been selected and each of these includes at least two words: the English one and the Chinese counterpart.

Then, the analysis will go on presenting numbers and percentages. The last step of this first section will be to try to individualise the hidden ideology and the consensus depicted by the numbers showed in the tables and in the pie charts. The analysis will, thus, go on with the so-called CDA, Critical Discourse Analysis. The contents expressed in each newspaper will undergo a specific review, concentrating on what is said, drawing the general opinion in each of the newspaper, as well as describing the ideologies and the common senses advocated by the SCMP, the Ming Pao and the Apple Daily. Main question to be scanned and answered to will be what they think about the Functional Constituencies. Are the journalists in the newspapers defending them? Should FCs be abolished or can they, in the opinion put forward by the journalists, be considered part of a democratic system of governance? What do they think about the Pan-Democrats? Did they do the right thing? Did they lose their credibility and accountability? What is the definition of Democracy they have?

As a conclusive section to this chapter all the views which will emerge from the previous sections will be put together to see whether it will be possible to find a common thought leading all the newspapers and, thus, leading the struggle for

Democracy in Hong Kong and also if there might be a common aim behind these journals. Is there a common opinion about FCs and Universal Suffrage and the role of the Pan-democrats? In order to reach such a point, first of all, we will start with the following sub-chapter and the quantitative analysis.

## **2. Quantitative analysis**

The quantitative analysis here developed takes as starting points the three keywords selected in the first chapter. As already specified in the short introduction to this third chapter, the aim for this analysis is to give a first overview on the contents of the journals selected as primary sources for this work. The quantitative analysis is considered to be part of the language analysis (henceforth LA), and even if this work is thought as a CDA, that is to say a critical discourse analysis, a more lexical stage as the LA, has been considered to be a quite good starting point from which we can quantify the incidence and the effects of the keywords in the texts selected. This might help us in a first recognition of a possible ideology. This ideology, which shape the surface of our research, will be of undoubted assistance to proceed with our critical analysis, which will go a step forward the surface individualizing the true ideology and common sense hidden in the discourse.

### **2.1. Analysis of the tables and pie charts**

As said above, three specific tables, each of them coupled with a pie chart, had been designed to make it easier to read the result from the quantitative analysis. The counting of the words has been made not using any kind of software (even if some computer programs do exist with such aim), but simply by underling the designed words and counting them mentally myself. The tables reports the real numbers, that is how many time the word is repeated in each newspaper, plus the total number of the appearance of all the keywords in the fifth column. The pie charts, instead, report these numbers under the form of percentages.

Let's start focusing on the first row of the first table, which is the same in all of the three. Here we can see the list of the keywords. As explained in the first chapter

concerning the methodology, the keywords selected were three. The first of these ones to be selected is *Functional Constituencies* (功能組別，功能界別).

As we can notice every keyword has in its space also a Chinese translation. In this case two words have been listed: 功能組別 (*gongnengzubie*) and 功能界別 (*gongnengjiebie*). Each keyword has been first translated in Italian, basing such translation on the English-Italian/Italian-English Dictionary *Dizionario Hazon Garzanti Inglese Italiano Italiano Inglese*, printed in Italy in 1963 by Garzanti Editore. They have after this been translated into Chinese, basing the translation on the 意汉词典 (*yihancidian*) printed in Beijing in 2001 by the 商务印书馆 (*shangwuyinshuguan*), the Commercial Publishing House.

The second keyword is *Democracy*. The Chinese translation for this second keyword is 民主 (的) (*minzhude*). To this category also belong the adjective *Democratic* and the adverb *Democratically*. They have been considered as a sub-group of the word *Democracy* because, even though the adjective appears quite often in all the three journals the adverb *Democratically* basically has no incidence at all, as it appears only twice in the South China Morning Post. Consequently, the final decision to merge the substantive, the adjective and the adverb in one category was taken. The following is actually not a syntactical analysis, we will not concentrate on the lexical and grammatical aspect nor on the style of the articles, thus, it has not been considered primary to differentiate the element of the single sentences if they refer to the same concept, such as the case of *Democracy*, *Democratic* and *Democratically*, and it most of all is in total compliances with the structure of the Chinese language. The DP has been considered by itself. Thus, the third column comprehends *Democrats*, *Pan-Democrats* and *Democratic Party*. Translation for this group of words provides two alternatives 民主黨 (*minzhudang*) and 民主派 (*mingzhupai*).

The last keyword is *Universal Suffrage*, and the Chinese translation for this word is only one and it is 普選 (*puxuan*).

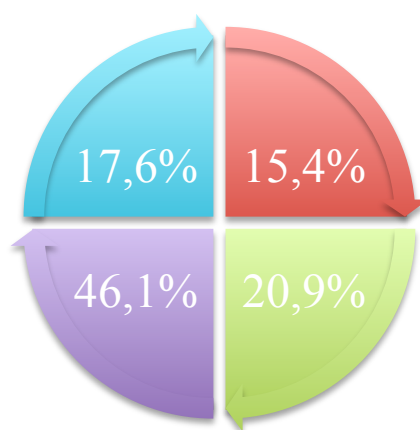
The last column in each table reports the word *Total*. This, of course is not a keyword, but refers to the calculations of the total amount of presences of all the keywords in each newspaper.



**Tab.1**

**South China Morning Post**

<b>FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCIES</b> 功能組別 功能界別	<b>DEMOCRACY (DEMOCRATIC, DEMOCRATICALLY)</b> 民主的	<b>DEMOCRATS (PAN- DEMOCRATS, DEMOCRATIC- PARTY)</b> 民主黨 民主派	<b>UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE</b> 普選	<b>TOTAL</b>
86	117	258	99	560

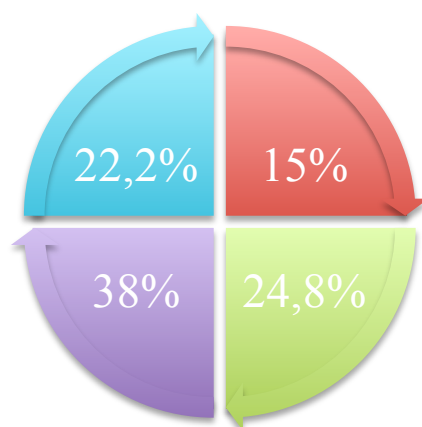


**Image n.1 Percentages of South China Morning Post**

**Tab. 2**

**Ming Pao Daily, 明報日報**

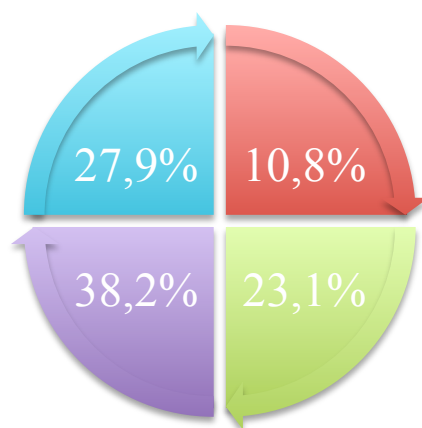
<b>FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCIES</b> 功能組別 功能界別	<b>DEMOCRACY (DEMOCRATIC, DEMOCRATICALLY)</b> 民主的	<b>DEMOCRATS (PAN- DEMOCRATS, DEMOCRATIC- PARTY)</b> 民主黨 民主派	<b>UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE</b> 普選	<b>TOTAL</b>
127	211	323	190	851



**Image n.2 Percentages  
of the Ming Pao Daily**

**Tab. 3 Apple Daily, 蘋果日報**

<b>FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCIES</b> 功能組別 功能界別	<b>DEMOCRACY (DEMOCRATIC, DEMOCRATICALLY)</b> 民主的	<b>DEMOCRATS (PAN- DEMOCRATS, DEMOCRATIC- PARTY)</b> 民主黨 民主派	<b>UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE</b> 普選	<b>TOTAL</b>
64	137	226	165	592



**Image n.3 Percentages  
of the Apple Daily**

Table1 and Image n.1 refer to the South China Morning Post. Table2 and Image n.2 refer to the Ming Pao Daily, while Table 3 and Image n.3 refer to the Apple Daily.

Thus, we have that the keyword *Functional Constituencies* (功能組別, 功能界別) appears 86 times in the SCMP, 127 in the Ming Pao Daily, and 64 in the Apple Daily. The word *Democracy* (民主) and its sub-groups appear 117 times in the SCMP, 211 times in the Ming Pao Daily, and 137 times in the Apple Daily. The word *Democrats* (民主黨, 民主派) and its sub-groups are repeated 258 times in the SCMP, 323 times in the Ming Pao Daily and 226 times in the Apple Daily. The last word, *Universal Suffrage* (普選), appears 99 times in the SCMP, 190 in the Ming Pao Daily, and 165 times in the Apple Daily.

Focusing on the three pie charts we can see that in each of the three newspapers the keyword with the highest grade of incidence is *Democrats* with 46,1%<sup>119</sup> in the South China Morning Post, 38% in the Ming Pao Daily and 38,2% in the Apple Daily. The second one is *Democracy* in the South China Morning Post with 20,9% and in the Ming Pao Daily with 24,8%, while in the Apple Daily the second one is *Universal Suffrage* with a percentage of 27,9%. *Democracy* is at the third place in the Apple Daily with a corresponding value of 24,8%, while *Universal Suffrage* occupies the third place in the South China Morning Post with the 17,6% and in the Ming Pao Daily with a rate of presences of 22,2%. In all the three of them the keyword *Functional Constituencies* is at the last place with a percentage of 15,4% for the South China Morning Post, 15% for the Ming Pao Daily, and 10,8% for the Apple Daily.

This calculation is approximate, as the total of the words in each newspaper is not taken into consideration and as the number of articles is different for each newspaper. But from these single evaluations we can see that the Democrats occupy a role of high importance in the discourse. This, even though this keyword does not appear every time in each of the articles analysed. The only two keywords, which appear in every article of each newspaper, are *Universal Suffrage* and *Democracy* (only this word and not the two subgroups). Looking at the repetition of the words, we can assume that all the three newspapers focus on the DP. We can for sure postulate that they might have different

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<sup>119</sup> The percentages always refer to the incidence of each keyword on the total of repetitions of the all keywords in each newspaper.

opinions and visions and that their ideologies refer to different interpretations of concepts, however, in this section we only focus on the quantitative incidence of words on the discourse.

## **2.2. The incidence of the keywords in the discourse**

Thus, we can affirm that the Democrats have the highest incidence in the discourse of each of the newspapers selected for this analysis. The keyword *Democrats* is the centre of concentration and the ideal reader will be somehow pushed to reflect profusely and to make an opinion out of what he/she is reading about them. They might be considered the favourite subjects within the group of words we decided to take into consideration. We can say that the newspapers are trying to point out that the Pan-Democrats are having a principle role in the process of reform and that what has been approved, has also been accepted by them. Thus, what is accepted from a Democratic Party, which struggles for and defends Democracy, is democratic, too. *Democracy* is, actually, the second word with the highest grade of presence in the discourse. So the subject of the discourse, the DP, is directly connected even in numbers to the aim of the discourse itself. Aim is to demonstrate that the Hong Kong People are witnessing a democratic event and the democratisation of the system, through a process of democratic reform of the election system. Thus, the highest grade of attention is put on the actor, which is co-operating in leading this healthy and natural development inside the system, followed by the scope that everybody is trying to gain. The press, the Central Government, the HKSAR Government and the people of Hong Kong are all together collaborating in order to succeed and, finally, develop a democratic system of election, based on democratic features and targets that will bring new hopes and results inside the system. This step forwards leads us to the third place in our assessment of rate of presences.

The keyword *Universal Suffrage* holds this position. We can, now, assume that if at first we concentrated on the subject and secondly on the aim of the subject, now we reached the “how”. That is to say, what is the means to achieve such democratic development? We already specified in the introduction that the main feature of a democratic system of Governance is people ruling people<sup>120</sup> (as states one of the

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<sup>120</sup> See *Intro*, p. 1

Principle of the Basic Law: Hong Kong People ruling Hong Kong<sup>121</sup>) people being equal in front of justice and being equally represented in the Government and having a fair and equal possibility to express opinions and be elected as representatives of the people's will. The only way to reach such equality in a democratic system has always been considered to be the so-called Universal Suffrage. That is to say the right for everybody who has the prerequisites to be inscribed in the voters' lists to vote for the representation in the Government, and to stand for elections. Such prerequisites should be concerning age, mental sanity and social integration more than gender, social position or political or economical power. So, still from our point of view (which concentrates on numbers and not on the contents of the articles), we can say that up to now our ideology is that democracy needs somebody to fight for, in this specific case the DP, and that main feature and first means of a democratic system is the Universal Suffrage.

What is, then, the place held by the Functional Constituencies? They occupy the last position, the fourth one, in the scale of percentages. Thus, it looks as if they were not of primary importance in the process. Our ideal reader will be too busy paying attention to who, why, and how more than concentrating on the issue of the so-called Functional Constituencies. So, are they part of the process? If, as we have postulated, the ideology being designed by this quantitative analysis is that a democratic system is characterised by Universal Suffrage, what place should the FCs occupy in such a scheme? Is the attention diverted to a different topic in order not to focus on such an issue? If the Pan-Democrats are participating in the democratic process, in which the whole population will be granted an equal and just system of voting as well as a right and fair representation in the Government, how can FCs be considered part of such a system? If they represent, as already specified<sup>122</sup>, specific interests of businessmen, how can we say that they symbolize the general interests of the common people? Basing this first level of our analysis on the percentages we got from the quantitative analysis of the keywords, we depicted a possible assessment, which identifies as a major activist and focus of the attentions of the newspapers the Democratic Party and its actions.

The main point is that democracy represents a system and a society in which fair representation, obtained through the means of universal suffrage, is at the base of the

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<sup>121</sup> *The Basic Law*, Article 2

<sup>122</sup> see *Intro*, p. 4

whole process of policy making. As we saw already in the introduction, the specific case of Hong Kong incorporates in the body of its institutional processes the so-called Functional Constituencies. The ideological struggle might result in two possible solutions: the introduction of the FCs in a democratic system (being them under the shape of the District Council Plan or being them as they already are) and an acceptance of a somehow democratic value of the system. Otherwise another solution could be the total abrogation of such an idea from the concept of democracy, with the non-acceptance of indirect elections for the FCs.

### **2.3. The conclusions of the quantitative analysis**

The aim of this first short analysis was to demonstrate that, from a quantitative point of view, and concentrating on each newspaper individually, the discovered points were that Democracy and the role of the Pan-Democrats are looming problems in the everyday-life of Hong Kong, and that quite broad space is dedicated to such matter. Moreover, it has been underlined that Universal Suffrage is widely discussed along with the previous questions and is seen as means and problem of major importance in the process of democratisation. Thus, it is quite clear that in Hong Kong they know and understand what Democracy really means and what it needs as fundamental prerequisite. If we stop our analysis here, that would represent a perfect framework. However from a critical point of view the podium might change its winner.

Here we come back to the FCs and their role. If, as is most likely, the FCs will never be abrogated, what role can they have in a democratic system? This work will now proceed with the critical analysis of the discourse trying to demonstrate if what has in this short sub-chapter being discovered might also be valid in a critic context and if as a matter of fact a system including the FCs can, according to the opinions expressed in the articles, be representative of an equal and just system of democracy.

## **3. Analysis**

The analysis of the articles will be, as already specified, divided by the different newspapers selected for this thesis. Thus, at the end of the chapter we will hopefully have a complete overview of the leading thoughts of the three different newspapers,

which will contribute to provide our research question with an answer. The first newspaper to be analysed will be the South China Morning post, followed by the Ming Pao Daily and the last one being the Apple Daily. The very last sub-chapter of this third one of analysis will be a final confrontation of the ideas and opinions expressed.

Conclusions will, then, be fully discussed in the last and conclusive chapter of this work, outlining the opinions of the common people emerging from the source we have been analysing throughout this thesis and their expectations and disappointments. Let's start now, then, with the CDA of the first of our three newspapers: the English-written South China Morning Post.

### **3.1. The analysis of The South China Morning Post**

As already specified in the first chapter of this work, the Kuok Family, which owns this newspaper, keeps nice and collaborative relations with the Mainland China. Thus, what we might find out during the following analysis will be a quite positive and expectant opinion expressed throughout the pages of this newspaper. The opinions and views of the journalists reflect such feelings of friendship and mutual collaboration, which led to the endorsement of the reform package such as it has been accepted by both the authorities in Beijing and the Democratic Party in Hong Kong. The leading thought that we will define basing on the contents of the article will also be representative of such positivity and progress. What will emerge during the analysis will represent a layout and will consider the three aspects connected to the main question of this work.

First of all we will try to define the role of the Democrats and the views expressed in the newspaper about them, thus answering the question concerning their role in the process reforming. We will then continue talking about the Functional Constituencies and the general opinions concerning them, trying to see whether, regarding the opinions expressed in the articles, they can be embodied in a democratic system of elections. Finally, the last step will be to analyse the opinions about Universal Suffrage, which are deeply connected to the issue of the FCs.



### 3.1.1. The role of the Democratic Party

The first aspect on which we are going to concentrate is, as said above, the role of the Democratic Party as depicted by this newspaper. As we specified in the quantitative analysis, the keyword *Democrats* got the highest percentage (46,1%), so we there postulated that they might be the protagonists of the articles selected from the South China Morning Post. And so it was. The journalists are trying to give them the leading role in this crusade for reform. The first aspect about them to be outlined is the separation of the Pan-Democratic Groups and the decision of the Democratic Party to, basically, stand alone as a good point for starting a successful collaboration with Beijing. The fact that Beijing agreed to start an official negotiation directly with the Democratic Party in Hong Kong, as it emerges from the articles here analysed, might represent a positive improvement for the people of Hong Kong. Even if it is clear that the path leading to true democracy still has a long way to come, the fact that eventually the Central Authorities are participating somehow to the reform can help Hong Kong moving on with several issues. The aim of a better and faster dialogue with the Central Government has finally been achieved, after a more than ten-years-long impasse. This shift of the Democrats far away from the radical part of the Party convinced the Central Authorities that there was a need to communicate with the pan-democrats on constitutional reform<sup>123</sup>. The role of the DP has, thus, changed. For the first time in Hong Kong's history under Chinese flag, they are dealing directly and official talks were held concerning the reform and the contents of it. Even if it was clear since the beginning of these talks that Beijing “...will probably not offer any concession relating to the 2012 political reform package”<sup>124</sup>, the SCMP gave a high importance to this development of the relations between the CCP and the DP. What emerges from the articles is that if the reform was passed this should be considered a merit and a success for the DP, while if it would have not been approved that would have been a shame of the DP and a defeat of Albert Ho, their leader. It is also a clear point of the SCMP that China most likely engaged herself in this negotiation in order to keep the rank of the

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<sup>123</sup> G. Cheung, *Alliance ready to Leave Stage Clear for Democrats*, The South China Morning Post-SCMP.com, 26 May 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

<sup>124</sup> F. Ching, *Open to Debate*, The South China Morning Post-SCMP.com, 26 May 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

democrats apart, thus, the first part of the articles, up to the 25<sup>th</sup> of June (day in which, the second part of the reform was ratified) looks like being aimed to design the leading role of the Democratic Party and the “...new willingness on the side Beijing to engage directly with the Democrats”<sup>125</sup> even if they clearly state that an aim might be to maintain the democratic groups separated.

Nevertheless, a new hopeful climate arose from this new phase of the political scene. The new hopeful climate, which is being drawn by such positive atmosphere, gives even more power to the role of the Democrats. After the package have been approved, on June 25<sup>th</sup>, Albert Ho says that this reform “...will bring new hope to the public”<sup>126</sup>, while another article states that “*The breakthrough in negotiations between the Democratic Party and the central government that led to the passage of the 2012 political reform passage was a victory for rationality, both in Hong Kong and Beijing*”<sup>127</sup>. What the SCMP wants to put under the attention of its ideal reader is that compromise does not mean cowardice, but actually is a step forward.

Even the local government of the HKSAR and its leader, Donald Tsang, stated that it was really important not to veto the reform again, as had been the case in 2005. “*If we do not see progress this time, I fear that a mood of pessimism and cynicism will take root...*”, adding to this Tsang’s opinion that this package represents the most democratic form the HKSAR can reach under the present circumstances<sup>128</sup>. Underling the fact that the DP, even if now divided from the alliance of the Pan-Democrats, took a rational decision, the newspaper stresses that this is a decision, which had led the people in Hong Kong a step closer to the final aim of Universal Suffrage. We are witnessing the victory of rationality<sup>129</sup> and it is of fundamental importance to pursue this

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> G. Cheung, A. Wong, F.W.Y. Fung, *Cheers and jeers for political reform vote*, The South China Morning Post, 25 June 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

<sup>127</sup> F. Ching, *Signs of a More Flexible Beijing give People Hope*, The South China Morning Post-SCMP.com, 12 July 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

<sup>128</sup> Staff Reporter, *Tsang Warns of Public Cynicism if Reform Vetoed*, The South China Morning Post-SCMP.com, 31 May 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

<sup>129</sup> Ching, 12 July 2010

communication with Beijing. The role of the HKSAR Government should now be to let this new collaboration blossom and continue in such a positive way.

The Democrats did not resign to Beijing's will, they are, on the contrary, collaborating with the only ones who actually have the power to allow Democratisation in Hong Kong. The so-called policy of "one man, two votes"<sup>130</sup> now accepted with the reform will give more Democratic sense to the election system. This, at least, is what emerges from the articles. It is time to "[T]horw away your old maps" because "*the political landscape is changing*"<sup>131</sup>.

### 3.1.2. The role of the FCs

Of course what most of the people wishes for the election system in Hong Kong is, one day, to see the end of the system of the Functional Constituencies. The Basic Law allows for universal suffrage as early as 2007. Unfortunately, that very year the Beijing authorities decided that direct elections of the Governor in Chief would have to be postponed to 2017, while the election of all other members of the legislature would have to wait for universal suffrage until 2020 "*at the earliest*"<sup>132</sup>. In all this, mainland officials declared that Functional Constituencies "*..could still need to be retained*"<sup>133</sup>. This 2010 reform, actually, helped to improve the system of FCs, adding five more seats to the council. It is one of the opinions expressed in these articles<sup>134</sup> that FCs should not be regarded as the only focus of the process for true democracy, but that critics should embrace a wider scale, such as more freedom of expression, more rights for workers and so on. "*Instead of pouring all of their energy into what is almost certainly a losing battle...the democrats could...demand concessions...could agree the*

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<sup>130</sup> *The system of the functional constituencies can, basing this on the "one man, two votes" policy, be made more "universal and fair" allowing every Hong Kong person to have two votes: one for the geographical constituencies and the other for the functional constituencies.*

<sup>131</sup> A. Leung, *A Changing Political Landscape*, The South China Morning Post-SCMP.com, 25 June 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

<sup>132</sup> Staff Reporter, 31 May 2010

<sup>133</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> A. Wong, *Bids to Thwart Democracy March Will Lift Numbers, Organisers Say*, The South China Morning Post-SCMP.com, 4 June 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

*government one vote...in exchange for adopting the World Health Organisation's strictest air-qualities guidelines*"<sup>135</sup>. But if the system of protecting small groups of interest is not abolished, how could such improvements of general freedom happen? Beijing of course would rather have the preservation of the FCs, in order to safeguard the economic development of trade in Hong Kong. Or, at least this is the general opinion that is used to justify the FCs. All the groups referring to the Pan-Democrats (民主派), the Alliance for Universal Suffrage (終極普選聯盟), the Democratic Party (民主黨) and the Civic Party (公民黨), asked for the abolition of the FCs by 2020, but eventually the Democratic Party left the Alliance and agreed with the reform package designed together with the Chinese Government. Here they don't seem to exclude that the system of Functional Constituencies can be made compatible with the idea of Universal Suffrage.

How? This can be made thanks to the already mentioned politics of the "one person, two votes". This manoeuvre would give each registered elector a second vote, the first one within the realm of the geographical constituency and the second one for the functional constituency. As the Central Government has not made its position about the FCs clear yet, and has not specified whether it will or will not allow them to be abolished eventually, having a more "democratic", or simply, wider system of voting for the FCs, is better than one decade of impasse.

This reform marks, anyway, a change and a new hope for the whole system. It is a starting point from which the DP can start a new strategy for the challenge of Universal Suffrage in 2020. Now, it has the possibility to have direct talks with the central authorities and consequently a good occasion for a faster positive development.

The threat that now might challenge true democracy is, what if the "one person, two votes" will be considered a good solution and enlarged? One of the fears, which is emerging from the reform is, as Lee Chu-ming, a veteran from the Democratic Party, said, that Beijing could claim that "*...since Hongkongers had already got a taste for*

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<sup>135</sup> P.G. Harris, *Putting a Price on "Yes" Votes for Political Reform*, The South China Morning Post, -SCMP.com, 28 May 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

*voting in functional constituencies,..., they could be kept beyond 2020*”<sup>136</sup>. What if, instead of abolishing the Functional Constituencies, the system will be applied to all of them? And what if new seats will be created following such a scheme?<sup>137</sup> The clear point is that Functional Constituencies are not compatible with Democracy and even less with Universal Suffrage but what seems to be designed is that Democracy can have several meanings. Depending on which context we want to develop a democratic system in, democracy will have different features. Hong Kong is one of the possible contexts, together with the “District Plan” and the policy of “one person, two votes”, that, thus, belong to the concept of Hong Kong Democracy. The system of the Functional Constituencies is the basis of the “one person, two votes” politics, so, the Functional Constituencies belong to the concept of Democracy in Hong Kong. This is an act of pragmatism, the above-mentioned victory of rationality, which will help a healthy and fast “democratic” development in Hong Kong.

### **3.1.3. The place of the universal suffrage**

What is, then, the place of the Universal Suffrage? How can we talk of genuine Universal Suffrage? Actually, the reform package for 2012 is not directly linked to how Universal Suffrage Elections will be held<sup>138</sup>. Donald Tsang and the Democrats agreed that, right now, Hong Kong has no other choice. People cannot and have not to wait longer for progress.<sup>139</sup> Hong Kong has this only opportunity to make a progress and a step forward a democratic system, so what people should do now is to accept this reform and give this reform a chance. The SCMP states that when Hong Kong people, Hong Kong voters, will understand that “...*the package will bring some reforms in*

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<sup>136</sup> A. Leung, and A. Wong, *Pan-Democrats Divided on How to Vote*, The South China Morning Post-SCMP.com, 19 June 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

<sup>137</sup> G. Cheung, *Chamber Chief Eyes change for Trade Seats*, The South China Morning Post-SCMP.com, 27 June 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

<sup>138</sup> Ching, 26 May 2010

<sup>139</sup> *The Great Divide-Two Perspectives on the Way Forward*, The South China Morning Post-SCMP.com, 18 June 2010, retrieved 10 August 2010, <<http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/>>

2012 while not excluding future ones, public support will probably grow”<sup>140</sup>. This reform represents a great step forward and history will prove it<sup>141</sup>.

#### **3.1.4. The main assessments of the SCMP**

The South China Morning Post, we can conclude, even if it is aware of the fact that the problem of Functional Constituencies has not been solved, yet, and that it could see a further development (which could lead to the enlargement of the directed elected seats in the system of FCs), is anyway pro-reform and believes that this package represents a move forward and a progress of the ten-years-long impasse of Hong Kong politics. The South China Morning Post is actually the only one among the three newspapers analysed, which focuses so much on facts and dates and puts more emphasis on how the reform was happening rather than focusing on the philosophical level. It avoids depicting a political manifesto, it concentrates more on giving a wider range of opinions and gives space to every representative of the Democrats. It also gives space to the Chinese officials and the Liaison Office. The central authorities occupy a wide role, much wider than the local government itself. Even if the position and opinions of the people of this newspaper are quite clear, space is also given to the other voices.

Thus, what we see here is the confirmation of the Democratic Party as the protagonist of this plot and the main threat to the Functional Constituencies. Even if the reform is considered a positive progress, anyway the fear of the small groups of interests still remain, still it is not obscured by the positivity, which this reform brought along with a new climate of collaboration with the Liaison Office<sup>142</sup>. The problem of the Functional Constituencies is clearly the crux of the whole process of democratisation in Hong Kong. The journalists working for the SCMP are well aware that only the final abolition of such a system could finally bring this project to a complete and fair realisation. However, sometimes it is necessary to lose a battle in

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<sup>140</sup> Ching, 26 May 2010

<sup>141</sup> *The great divide*, 18 June 2010

<sup>142</sup> *The Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is an Organ of the Central People's Government. It is responsible of the relations between the People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison and the office of the Commissioner of the Foreign Ministry in Hong Kong. Its duties and aims will be discussed in the conclusive chapter of this work.*

order to win the war. And this reform is an occasion to move on and it also leaves space for more negotiations and further reforms in the future, eventually breaking the political impasse, which bounded the political landscape of Hong Kong for the last decade. The South China Morning Post is favourable to the positive attitude, which came along with the Chinese direct participation. It is well aware of the fact that the Democratic Party is now playing an increasingly important role and that the occasion the party had to develop direct contacts and negotiation talks with the central authorities is a golden occasion to develop and protect from useless misstep or wrong and fast decision. What is of vital importance now is to be patient and to advantage of this friendly Chinese behaviour. The final aim of the total abolition of the FCs and the ultimate aim of universal suffrage have never been forgotten; they just had to face the reality of the Hong Kong situation. The Basic Law is, unfortunately, not clear enough to favour a faster process of democratisation and in order to give to the DP more anchorages, on which they could base a more efficient protest.

The SCMP is clear about this: pragmatism and rationality have to have priority. To accept the reform package as it has been approved was a victory for both pragmatism and rationality. This will leave more than one door open for future battles in the years to come and will give more opportunity to achieve the real aims of the Hong Kong people.

### **3.2. The analysis of The Ming Pao Daily**

The Ming Pao Daily, as said in the first chapter, is one of the most trusted Chinese written newspapers. It is really appreciated and its transparency and accountability are well known. Its style is quite different from the style of the South China Morning Post, though. All the articles here analysed refer quite often to China and to the Chinese Communist Party, while for example in the SCMP the CCP is never mentioned, they quite often refer to the Liaison Office but never directly refer to the Chinese Communist Party. It is more theoretical than the other two and refers much more often to history and general thought than to the practical facts of the package of reforms.

#### **3.2.1. The development of democracy in the Western countries**

Quite often it refers to the fact that Western countries needed a lot of time to achieve true and genuine Democracy. They declare that only the US developed a

democratic system quite fast, but the conditions and the background, which were the main features of the United States of those times were really different from Hong Kong's nowadays conditions. When the USA pushes for faster and more democracy they do not understand the necessity of more time that China and Hong Kong still have when we refer to a development of a true democratic system Great Britain needed from 1688 up to 1969 to reach a wholly democratic system. The Western world now wishes to see democratisation in Hong Kong in less than 30 years. England is not the only example, as we mentioned just above and as we all know, and Democracy itself witnessed different kinds of revolution that could have been characterized by non-peaceful means. But what is happening now in Hong Kong is that even though the West would like to see a democratic Hong Kong as fast as possible, it was China that pushed for administrative reform<sup>143</sup>.

### 3.2.2. The bad precedent of Great Britain

The last Governor of the Colony of Hong Kong, Christopher Patten, in fact, created a bad precedent, feeding a substitute of the Western style free democracy. It is considered possible, from the views expressed in the Ming Pao Daily, that the system developed by the British administration drove the healthy development of the Hong Kong political system away from the right path, causing delay in the process of democratisation<sup>144</sup>. Actually Britain and the colonial period are given a high

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<sup>143</sup>“英國1688年「光榮革命」確立政體,直到 2000年才有了首位直選的倫敦市長,歷經312年之久;這個決定規定了,2020年的立法會議員可以由普選產生,意味回歸之後23年香港市民即可普選立法會議員,這樣的步伐在世界 歷史上也是比較快的。英國若從1688年算起,直到1969年才實現普選權,歷經281年之久;美國若從1776年宣布獨立算起,直到1971年才實現普選權,歷經195年之久;...。香港僅用了23年的時間,難道算慢嗎?”。Li, T., *Zhong Ying Liang Guo Dui Xianggang Minzhuhua de Zhengce Zhi Bijiao*, (Comparing the Political Tactics of China and England Concerning Hong Kong Democratisation), Media Chinese International Limited, 25 May 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>144</sup> “...「虛擬自由主義」去解釋香港近三十年的政治。其始作俑者就是引入這些「西式自由民主」代用品的彭定康。從去餅舖食蛋撻,到每次發表施政報告後,都會親自出席電台節目接聽聽眾提問,都是以改變香港「政治文化」為名,被大力吹捧歌頌。做騷變成親民、親民靠近民主,漸次做騷也成為港式「民主代用品文化」的必要部分。... 殖民末代,主權更替在即,對那些「民主代用品」你喜歡也罷,不喜歡也罷,以假亂真也好,假戲真做也好,糊裏糊塗就完成過渡。”。Wen, A.Z., *Zhouri Huati: Xuni Minzhu de Zuihou Tange* (Sunday Topic: Last Tango in Virtual



importance and quite big space in the articles. They refer more often to the facts that happened during the past and make quite often connections to the Sino-British bilateral relations than quoting what actually is going on right now.

Today's events are seen as the natural consequents of the past behaviours of the last period of the British colonial rule and the results of the actions and the decision taken by both China and Great Britain. What Hong Kong has experienced in the past decades was said to be a fake democratic system, a substitute of what democracy really means and implies. The reason why Beijing always proved itself to be doubtful about the process of democratisation in Hong Kong is related to the past events connected to the colonial governance and especially connected to the last period of that, with all the improvements and reforms put forward by Governor Christopher Patten<sup>145</sup>.

### **3.2.3. The role of the direct negotiations between the CCP and the DP**

Another reason, to which Beijing's doubts are connected, is represented by the past disastrous talks and attempts of negotiations with the Democratic Party, which took place in the since from after the handover and which collaborate in making these last attempts as a breaking-ice session<sup>146</sup>. Thus, what is happening now, the fact that, as mentioned above, China agreed to start official talks with the Democratic representatives in Hong Kong, actually is a golden occasion, which should be neither underestimated nor lost. Pan-democrats should always remember that China always considered them as a subversive party and as an obstacle to China, and now that they are given this opportunity they must not waste it.

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Democracy), Media Chinese International Limited, 20 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>145</sup>“...，中央就此...，一直以來拒絕...公開交往。”。 *Zhong Ying Minzhudang Maichu Yonggan Yibu Suzao Lixing Zhenxing Shengtai Xian Qiji* (The Fact that the Sino-British Democratic Party Stride one Brave Step Forward is an Opportunity to Shape a Rational Political Environment), Media Chinese International Limited, 25 May 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>146</sup>“中 央官員與民主黨成員昨日的會晤，給本港政治揭開新的一頁，意義重 大。這次會晤雖然被視為「破冰之會」，但是民主派與中央隔閡21年，而且政制安排錯綜複 雜，一次會晤就解決全部問題的可能性不大，不過，若取得積極成果，對塑造本港理性務實 的政治生態，會有決定性作用。” Ibid.

The DP, even if alone now and split from the coalition, can alone do a lot for the progress of democracy in Hong Kong<sup>147</sup>. The Chinese central authorities and the Democratic Party now should 求同存異 (*qiutongcunyi*), that is to say that they should “seek common ground while accepting existing differences”<sup>148</sup>. The duty of the Democratic Party is now to collaborate to enlarge the democratic features<sup>149</sup> in the political system of Hong Kong and to seek and develop the official talks with, as well as the interaction with the Central Government of China. What the Democrats have to do now is to renovate their leading principles and to find the trust of peoples again. They should go on and put a real effort in the official negotiations that China eventually begun with them. Hong Kong needs new strategies in order to pursue democracy. The Democratic Party should just focus on how to help democratisation and not to try to stop or delay it anymore. Go on with talks and seek for general improvements, this is the first aim they should pursue<sup>150</sup>.

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<sup>147</sup> “...我們認為作此決策的人,除了政治智慧,也顯露政治勇氣和承擔,邁出勇敢一步”。Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> “我真誠希望立法會議員和香港各政團能夠順應民意,從維護香港整體利益和促進香港民主發展的大局出發,求同存異,支持通過2012年兩個產生辦法的修改方案,從而為按照全國人大常委會決定的時間表實現行政長官和立法會普選創造條件。” *Xianggang Zhenggai he Weilai Puxuan Wenti—Qiaoxiaoyang Fayan Quanwen* (The Political Reform of Hong Kong and the Issue of the Future Universal Suffrage: The Whole Speech of Qiao Xiaoyang), Media Chinese International Limited, 8 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>149</sup> “香港民主運動從上世紀80年代參與區議會選舉至今,都秉承寸土必爭的精神——在制度內不斷擴大民主成分和力量,與體制外的公民社會相呼應爭取民主。泛民甚至參與功能組別和特首小圈子選舉,為的是在制度內擴大民主元素和握有更多票數去監督政府和推動制度改革,今天亦不應放棄這種機遇。” *Wei Zhenggai Jie Sijie Wei Xianggang Xunchulu* (Solve the Insoluble Enigma for the Political Reform, Search a Way-out for Hong Kong), Media Chinese International Limited, 21 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>150</sup> “真正值得關注的是,怎樣才能成為香港民主進程的助力,而非阻力?民主派的一個政治使命,是爭取民主。過去泛民只有一種方法,就是街頭抗爭,與當權者無話可對;如今,有了另一種方法,民主黨與中央正式展開對話,今次更取得初步成果,...” *Tuidang Lihe Nai Binjiachangshi Zhengqu Minzhu xu Zeshanguzhi* (To withdraw from a Political Party is a Common Issue in Military Operations, and Democracy has to be stubborn), Media Chinese International Limited, 24 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

### 3.2.4. The alliance of the Pan-democrats and the threat of the past

The alliance of the Pan-Democrats is now the real and only anchor, which stops the genuine development of the reform. They have to accept and understand the fact that it is not possible to go on like they did during the past decades but it is now necessary to admit that the DP took the only rational decision and that this decision will finally bring something new on the stage. They are the real promoter, even Mr. Tsang drop the anchor. The split of the democratic coalition will not, hopefully, last long and the struggle for true democracy will be able to go on<sup>151</sup>. Recent talks are of an immense importance and the people should see and appreciate the importance of such events.

If peoples themselves do not want to move forward but prefer to be stuck in the past, and if they are not willing to change and improve, why should Beijing look for debate? People should support the talks and the development of the debate<sup>152</sup>. Hong Kong peoples are the real, only victims of the political paralysis. This impasse is affecting their everyday life, and it should always be the aim of the Government to protect and help the people<sup>153</sup>. Thus, the public consensus to this first reform (because this is only the opening of a new era of further reforms) valid for the elections of the 2012 will accelerate the way to a complete and successful comprehensive reform, which will lead Hong Kong to the ultimate aim of Universal Suffrage<sup>154</sup>. Common citizens

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<sup>151</sup> “曾蔭權並無成功「起錨」,而是「拋錨」,因為最終通過的方案根本不是他 提出的方案,而民主黨才是「真正起錨」...是民主黨的一大步, ...泛民主派遲早會重新整合,分裂只是一時及表象 , P.F., *Zhenggai Zhihou Xia Yi Bu gu Lingxiu* ( The Leaders of the Political Reform After the Last Assessment), Media Chinese International Limited, 30 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>152</sup> Ma, J.H., *Yuqi Dantiao, Buru Qundou* (Group Fighting is Better Than Being Singled Out), Media Chinese International Limited, 27 May 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>153</sup> *Ceng Yu Bianlun Guohou Chongxin Jujiao Qu Hui Gailiang Fang'an* (After the Tsang-Eu Debate, Focusing Again on the Districts Will Ameliorate the Scheme), Media Chinese International Limited, 18 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>154</sup> “這個方案是經過3個月的公眾諮詢,在廣泛聽取社會各界意見基礎上形成 的... 社會重要共識...這些共識反映出在政制發展問題上理性務實 的聲音是主流,這既有利於當前處理2012年兩個產生辦法的修改 問題,也有助於未來在普 選問題上逐步凝聚共識。” , Political Reform of Hong Kong and the Issue of the Future Universal Suffrage, 8 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

play, in all this process, a role of major importance. Of course, they are aware of the fact that this reform has its limits<sup>155</sup>, they are pragmatic, though, and they know that even if it is not satisfying, the reform is anyway a step forward<sup>156</sup>. Even if some of the articles refer to the mass movements and the awareness of the masses as a means to achieve democratisation<sup>157</sup>, the newspaper's main thought concerning the role of the people could be sum up, saying that people are, or at least should, be aware of the difference between the political principals and the reality of politics. Even if on a matter of principal, the citizenship of Hong Kong might feel betrayed by the DP and its decision to accept the compromise with Beijing, in the reality of the political sphere, the Democratic Party should have the comprehension of the people, and should be esteemed worth people's trust<sup>158</sup>.

### 3.2.5. The need to abrogate the FCs

People, as was already made clear by the South China Morning Post, and as it is here confirmed, want the abolition of the so-called system of the Functional Constituencies. As Ian Scott says, the FCs distort people's will and bring instability to the system<sup>159</sup>.

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<sup>155</sup> “香港人熱愛民主,但同樣非常務實,清楚知道政改的局限”, To withdraw from a Political Party is a Common Issue in Military Operations, and Democracy has to be stubborn, 24 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010

<sup>156</sup> Zheng, J.F., *Zhongyi Liang Nanquan (Loyalty is a Dilemma)*, Media Chinese International Limited, 25 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>157</sup> Ouyang, S.J., *Minzhu Yundong geng Yilai Qunzhongde Juexing er feidan shi Duihua* (The Democratic Movement Relies More and More on the Awakening of the Masses and not just on Dialogue), Media Chinese International Limited, 26 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>158</sup> “從堅持政治原則的角度看,民主黨的做法是會引起非議的;但是,從接受政治現實的角度看,它也許可以獲得人們的諒解。”, Cheng, X., *Yuanze yu Xianshi de Silie* (The Rip Between Principles and Reality), Media Chinese International Limited, 1 July 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>159</sup> “學者Ian Scott演說 值得反省 功能界別議席的存廢,是無法逃避的核心問題,愈是拒絕面對,社會要付出的代價就愈大,就如有病的人拒絕就醫一樣。... Scott列出了功能界別議席的「四宗罪」,其中第二宗罪是「扭曲民意」。他說:「一個以地區直選和功能組別合成的立法機關,很難真正反映選民的授權,因為這個制度給予功能組別的比重,會影響直選議員所能發揮的力量在我們的制度之下”, Wu, L.Y., *Gongnengzubie shi Zhenggai de*

This newspaper agrees with saying that while all Functional Constituencies should be abolished by 2020, the “one person, two votes” policy is a good solution to improve the democratic component in the LegCo and make the FCs more appropriate<sup>160</sup>, even if does not mean that they do not have be abolished in order to pursue the final aim of true democracy. Functional Constituencies are as a matter of fact against democracy and not possible if a genuine and just Universal Suffrage is the ultimate aim of these reforms, they favour small interests groups and guarantee a privileged status to close circles of influential business people and tycoons<sup>161</sup>.

### 3.2.6. The main assessments of The Ming Pao

In the quantitative analysis of the first part of the chapter, as also in the case of The South China Morning Post, the keyword *Democrats* had the highest percentage, 38%, while *Functional Constituencies* had the lowest (15%). In the middle were *Democracy* (24,8%) and *Universal Suffrage* (22,2%). Thus, the focus of the analysis still is on the Pan-Democrats and their role, as we already explained above.

However, this newspaper focuses also on the role of history and the “damages” caused by a colonial rule that, as it emerges from the articles, was never positively accepted nor appreciated by the Hongkongers. The Ming Pao Daily is quite clear when it expresses what the aim and focus of the (ideal) reader should now be.

Beijing never gave a clear explanation of its intentions with regard to the so-called Universal Suffrage, the Basic Law is in this case not crystalline and it might be open to different ways of interpretations, especially from the officials of the Liaison Office. Thus, as we already said, Hong Kong peoples are the real and only victims in such a

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*Zhenzheng Hexin* (The Functional Constituencies are the Very Core of the Political Reform), Media Chinese International Limited, 16 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

<sup>160</sup> The Political Reform of Hong Kong and the Issue of the Future Universal Suffrage: The Whole Speech of Qiao Xiaoyang, 8 June 2010

<sup>161</sup> *Liangxing Hudong Qiji Zhaxian Quanmian Jiejue Zhengzhi Wenti* (The Opportunity of Interaction Suddenly Appears As a Comprehensive Settlement of the Political System), Media Chinese International Limited, 30 June 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

landscape. The real aim now, should be to get a clear definition of Universal Suffrage by the central authorities as well as an answer if in the Chinese official leaders' minds the system of Functional Constituencies, can be embodied in a fair and just democratic system. In Hong Kong everybody should be given the right to vote and stand for elections, this rule should accord to the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, and to the rule imposed by the NPC, National Chinese Congress<sup>162</sup>.

China agreed that Universal Suffrage implies the right to vote but the Chinese politicians never mentioned the right of nomination or to stand for elections<sup>163</sup>. This is why it is a common fear that sooner or later, or maybe already now, small groups of interests and businessmen can fight in order to preserve the *status quo*, especially about the politics toward Beijing and the closure of the official negotiations. This is why now the Democratic Party should be really careful and not waste the golden opportunity of official and direct negotiations with Beijing.

The main questions that this newspaper draws can be sum up as follows:

- How can the Honk Kong's people now fight for fast and real development under the system of "one country, two systems"?
- How to find a practical deal in order to have a concrete and effective political movement, which will unify everybody under the promise of true democracy?
- How to combine in a genuine way politics together with the social movements and the official talks and negotiations in order to get a satisfactory and efficient collaboration between Hong Kong's politicians, Chinese politicians and the Hong Kong people?

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<sup>162</sup> “在《基本法》和全國人大常委會規定的軌道上討論香港政治發展問題,推進香港民主不斷向前發展。” The Political Reform of Hong Kong and the Issue of the Future Universal Suffrage: The Whole Speech of Qiao Xiaoyang, 8 June 2010

<sup>163</sup> Wu, A.Y., *Zhenjia Puxuan Liang Tiao Qian Lu* (Two Roads Before True/False General Elections), 2 July 2010, retrieved 13 August 2010, <<http://www.mingpao.com/>>

Thus, what emerges from the analysis of this second newspaper, is that, as it was for the South China Morning Post, the Democratic Party plays the role of the main actor in Hong Kong's political arena and that people should be aware that its chairman, Albert Ho, took the only possible decision, which proved him to be a pragmatic and rational man. He and his party now have to go on collaborating and pushing for more and wider regulations. The only means they have nowadays is a collaborative way of negotiating directly with the officials of the mainland, not any more with the mediating action of the HKSAR authorities.

The abolition of the so-called Functional Constituencies still will have to face with a maybe longer maybe shorter period of political battles and struggles. A warning that The Ming Pao Daily gives to the DP is not to forget the real aim of the reform, which is a true Universal Suffrage. Universal Suffrage cannot, it has to be clinched, co-exist together with a system, which protects the interest of small interest groups as is the case in the FCs' system.

### **3.3. The Analysis of The Apple Daily**

The Apple Daily is, as just said above, the last of our newspapers. It is the strongest in expressing its opinions and is considered subversive by the Chinese authorities, and is for this reason banned in the Mainland China. In its case, from the quantitative analysis we can observe that the keywords *Democracy* and *Universal Suffrage* switched places, being the first one at the third place with a percentage of 23,1% and the second one at the second place with a percentage of 27,9%. The first and the last, on the contrary, are the same as for The South China Morning Post and The Ming Pao Daily, being respectively *Pan-Democrats* and *Functional Constituencies*. In their cases the percentages are of 38,2% for the keyword *Pan-Democrats* and of 10,8% for *Functional Constituencies*<sup>164</sup>.

Thus, also in this last case the system of the Functional Constituencies is at the last place, while the Democratic Party has the main role. As for The Ming Pao Daily, The Apple Daily refers quite often to the Communist Party and Communist China. However it is distancing itself from the Mainland and their way of thinking. It is said that what is happening right now in Hong Kong may affect somehow Mainland China,

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<sup>164</sup> see p. 61

and that Hong Kong is China's conscience<sup>165</sup>. It is interesting to observe that this is the only newspaper, which connects the events now happening in Hong Kong with some possible future events in the Mainland China somehow connected to a process of democratisation for the Chinese people all over China.

### 3.3.1. The Chinese threat

Quite naturally, they have more freedom to refer to such topics, since their newspaper is banned in the Mainland PRC. However it is interesting to see that in Hong Kong some people believe in a huge influence that this reform might have on the future of all China. The official talks and negotiation, however, should be held really carefully because Beijing is a terrible counterpart. They do not trust the Communist China and see possible taps, in which the Democratic Party may fall. Even if the fact that they finally accepted to start official exchanges with the Democratic Party, the DP itself should be very alert in order not to fall in a trap erected by the CCP<sup>166</sup>, they say. They must not be mislead in the wrong direction by the central authorities and must not forget their aims, the abolition of Functional Constituencies, universal suffrage and true democracy for Hong Kong<sup>167</sup>. This might be the strategy of the Chinese side, they like to have, in fact, a Chinese interpretation of most western concepts, in order to adapt them to the specific Chinese situation. The Democratic Party in Hong Kong already betrayed the people<sup>168</sup> allowing and promoting a reform which instead of abolishing the

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<sup>165</sup> *Meinian Xian Weiyuan Diandian Zhuguang Dou Weidao Zhenhan Chailing: Xianggang shi Zhongguo de Liangxin* (The Annual Candle Ceremony at Victoria's Park is Struck by Chai Ling: Hong Kong is China's Coscience), Nextmedia Group, 2 June 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

<sup>166</sup> “究竟這是北京向港人及香港民主派伸出的和解 橄欖枝,還是為求通過政改方案而耍的權宜手段呢?”, Zhang, H., *Tanzhen: Fanmin yu Beijing jiechu de Jietiao* (Probe: The Doctrine of Beijing and The Pan-Democrats being in contact), Nextmedia Group, 28 May 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

<sup>167</sup> *Pinglun: Guanjian shi wu wang Zhen Puxuan* (Apple's Theory: The Key is not to Forget Genuine Universal Suffrage), Nextmedia Group, 6 June 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

<sup>168</sup> “戀人分手,千萬不要弄至惡言相向,皆裂髮指。今次民主黨「變心」,事前未作諮詢,說變就變,一下子就放棄「爭取二〇一二雙普選」的競選承諾,讓部份支持者目瞪口呆”, *Tanzhen: Minzhudang gai Ruhe Yu Xuanmin Fenshou* (Probe: How the Democratic



so-called Functional Constituencies and, thus, enlarging the democratic features of the system, helped the improvement of such system. We already said, in the analysis of The Ming Pao Daily, that one of the dangers hidden in this reform is the “rationalisation” of the system of the FCs. The Democratic Party did its move already, but what they can do now, since the new five seats were added, is not to be ambiguous, nor too optimistic<sup>169</sup>; they should not stuck and wait for a some kind of grace from the Chinese side, but they have to persevere and go on fighting for the people of Hong Kong<sup>170</sup>.

However, the Democratic Party should be, as mentioned above, cautious. China said: 飯要一口一口的吃，民主要一步一步的走 (fan yao kouyikou de chi, minzhu yao buyibu de zou), “as food has to be eaten one bite at a time, thus, we should reach democracy step by step”<sup>171</sup>. This might mean that China is not willing to see a fast development of the reform and of the democratisation of the Hong Kong society. And it might also mean that this first row of concessions might be followed by a new impasse or the stagnancies of the political reforms.

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Party Broke Up with Voters), Nextmedia Group, 29 June 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

<sup>169</sup> “... 以香港民主派來說,也就是對民主的堅持;責任倫理 是指從政者必須對自己政治行為可預見的後果負責,由於現實世界許多政治行為是非理性的,一味推行善的願望,不一定可帶來善的結果,有時反會帶來惡的後果。因此,從政者 必須顧及政治現實,考慮到後果就要作出階段性妥協,以逐漸推進自己的意圖。”, *Pinglun: Xianggang Minzhu Yundong de Kunjing he Minzhudang de Zeren* (Apple’s Theory: the Plight of Hong Kong’s Democratic Movement and the Democratic Party’s Responsibility), Nextmedia Group, 10 July 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

<sup>170</sup> *Pinglun: Zhenggai bu Neng Jin Yi Bu Tui Liang Bu* (Apple’s Theory: The Political Reform Cannot Move One Step Forward and Two Steps Backwards), Nextmedia Group, 25 June 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

<sup>171</sup> *Zhengzhi Xiang Qianpu* (The Political System goes Forward), Nextmedia Group, 30 May 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

### 3.3.2. The Chinese interpretation of the concept of democracy

Or, as already mentioned above, it might mean a specific meaning added to the concept of democracy, a “Chinese democracy” with specific features, which may result weird or awkward to the Western democratic countries. Proceeding and going on with the reform does not always mean “progress” in a positive way, a way that is to say, which will bring a true democratic system in Hong Kong as soon as possible. Unfortunately what is called “ultimate universal suffrage” is, too, a concept open to different interpretations from the Chinese side. Thus, depending on what meaning the Chinese are willing to give to this concept, the process of reform might take a different way<sup>172</sup>.

Consequently, even the so-called system of Functional Constituencies might be included in a system of election characterised by universal suffrage, but in this case we would better talk about a system of semi universal suffrage<sup>173</sup> (the already mentioned “rationalisation” of the Functional Constituencies). Even if it is hard to break a 20 years long privilege such as the one of Functional Constituencies, they always represent the interests of small groups and in order to accept the fact that they cannot be embodied in a system of universal suffrage, it must be understood that the concept of universal suffrage implies the right for everybody enlisted in the voting lists to stand for nomination and elections and that small interest groups cannot lead the voting system to their own personal advantage<sup>174</sup>.

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<sup>172</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> *Xianggang Minzhu Zhenggai de Sangzhong* (The Funeral Bells of the Democratic Political Reform of Hong Kong), Nextmedia Group, 14 June 2010, retrieved 14 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

<sup>174</sup> Chen, Q.Q., *Xin Minzhu Yundong Xia Jieduan de Tiaozhan* (The New Challenges of the Next Phase of the Democratic Movement), Nextmedia Group, 2 July 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

The new five seats added to the FCs are nothing else but a new kind of privilege. The focus of the reform should always be centred on the system of the Chief 's election as well as the final abolition of the functional constituencies<sup>175</sup>.

### 3.3.3. The possible future implications of the reform in the Mainland

The Apple Daily claims that democracy is dead<sup>176</sup> and that the funeral bell is already ringing<sup>177</sup> and calling for regret. It is the only newspaper, which refers so often to the mass reaction to the reform. Everybody is worried about the future of democracy in Hong Kong<sup>178</sup>, but what this newspaper is trying to say is that, from their point of view, what is now happening in Hong Kong might be a test site for future development for Mainland China and that Hong Kong and its people should be more aware of the means they have in order to spread their movement for democracy, such as for example Internet and all the possibilities it offers<sup>179</sup>. As we said at the beginning of this last part of the three newspapers' analysis, the journalists belonging to The Apple Daily called Hong Kong the conscience of China. The consequences that this process might have in Mainland China are, in these journalists' opinion, worth to be paid attention to.

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<sup>175</sup> “廢除功能組別、特首參選門檻不再提高,應該是真普選的基本原則,也是今後談判不能再退讓的底線。”, *Pinglun: Zhen Puxuan Husheng bu neng ting Hezuo bu neng ting* (Apple's Theory: The Dispute Concerning the General Elections and the Cooperation cannot Stop), Nextmedia Group, 2 July 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

<sup>176</sup> *Dao Minzhu Yi si Shimin Lihui Wai Gongji* (Democracy is dead, Mourning Ceremony for The Public Outside the Legislative Council), Nextmedia Group, 25 June 2010, retrieved 18 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

<sup>177</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> The New Challenges of the Next Phase of the Democratic Movement), 2 July 2010

<sup>179</sup> “過去一、兩年來,香港社運一浪接一浪...香港的公民行動雖然活躍,但並未充份發揮互聯網的力量。... 香港社運群眾擴大了泛民政黨常說,推動香港民主就是推動中國民主”, *Zhongguo Boke Di Yi Ren Kan Xianggang Yushan Yong Huliangwang Chuanlian Neidi Minzhong Zhuangda Gongmin Liliang* (The First man of a Chinese Blog Pleads Hong Kong to make a Good Use of the Network in Order to Establish a Contact with the Masses in the Mainland and Expand the Power of the People), Nextmedia Group, 5 June 2010, retrieved 20 August 2010, <[http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec\\_main.php](http://www.hk.apple.nextmedia.com/template/apple/sec_main.php)>

### **3.3.4. The main assessments of The Apple Daily**

Even if the Democratic Party betrayed the Hongkongers, it now has the opportunity to talk with officials from the Mainland. Even if this might be a big challenge and the CCP might be playing tricks, the DP has an opportunity to recover trust among the people of Hong Kong and what they have to do since now on is to push for the main points of their reform. Compromise cannot go on forever but it might be a good starting point from which to develop a new way of reforming Hong Kong, leading this land closer to universal suffrage. The Democratic Party should go on fighting in order to impose the true meaning of “universal” and in order to obtain a constitutional reform, which can fulfil the requirements demanded by the Basic Law. They have to go on with their battle under the flag of true and just democracy for the Hong Kong people, and try to avoid the so-called “rationalisation” of the system of Functional Constituencies, that is to say the grouping of such concept together with a Chinese interpretation of the democratic election system. The Democratic Party has means of great importance, it should now use them and go on fighting and struggle for further implementations for the elections of 2016 and 2020.

Thus what emerges from this newspaper is a strong and effective view of the possible future of reform in Hong Kong. As the other two newspapers, The South China Morning Post and The Ming Pao Daily, the general opinion expressed in this newspaper is that the package endorsed June 25, 2010 represents a new beginning and a move on from a long lasting political impasse. Attention now should be focused on what might be hidden behind this last move of Beijing. The Democratic Party has a leading role now and should not forget its aims and the promise it made to the people. From now on, official talks and negotiations should go on and never change direction.

This was the last of our newspapers. What we will do now is to try to sum up the mains points and ideas that emerged up to now, trying to identify what these newspapers have in common and what they have not, or interpret different, thus drawing a general opinion about the reform process.

## **4. Conclusions**

### **4.1. The pragmatism of the DP**

From the analysis above we can sum up what follows: first of all, the quantitative analysis and the three single analysis confirmed that the Democratic Party has the main role and the main attention is focused on their behaviour. It is general opinion that they took a rational and pragmatic decision, leaving the coalition and going on with the official talks with the authorities in Beijing. The Democratic Party singled out what was the best option at this particular moment. It agreed to an act of rationality and pragmatism, which broke the political impasse. All the three newspapers agree in saying that this was the only solution, the only possibility Hong Kong nowadays has is to go on and to proceed with the process of democratisation. The package is the most democratic way that Hong Kong should hope for. And it is also general opinion that, even if the reform is not satisfying, it will bring new ground, on which a debate could be started.

The disappointment concerning the Functional Constituencies is not at all hidden. They have to feel content now, in order to be ready for future battles. Everybody knows and underlines that the Functional Constituencies cannot be held nor embodied in a democratic system and that as long as Hong Kong will have these constituencies as part of its system it will not experience true democracy. The role of the Democratic Party still is to fight for their abolition and go on with the roadmap to the ultimate aim of universal suffrage.

Thus, the three newspapers have a positive, or at least hopeful, opinion concerning the Democratic Party. Even if the first part of the articles of each newspaper (up to June 25, 2010) is quite doubtful, they all recognize that the Democratic Party now can have more influence and can, eventually, achieve some new results. All the pressure of the changes and the endorsement of the reform were put on them.

It is declared that they betrayed people, and broke their electoral promises. Thus, they now have the occasion to re-gain the trust of the people and to participate actively to the improvement of democracy.

It was important not to veto once again the package and create a new phase of stasis in the political landscape. The newspapers clearly stated that all was depending on the Democratic Party. Eventually, the reform finally was approved and accepted.

As said, it was the only improvement Hong Kong could reach at this moment. Even if strong voice and negative opinions were claimed, such as the outcry that “democracy is dead” and that Hong Kong was witnessing the funeral of Democracy<sup>180</sup>, it is quite clear that everyone, or at least, most of the people, whose articles we analysed here, think that a new space for more battle is now open.

#### **4.2. The role of the citizens**

It is interesting to notice that, while The South China Morning Post does not mention the people (normal citizens) as active subjects of this process, the two Chinese newspapers, The Ming Pao Daily and The Apple Daily, underlined that people in Hong Kong can and should have an active role. The South China Morning Post refers more to the protective role that the politicians should have towards the people and to the fact that this is why politicians should be really careful with the reform: never to betray people, but always to fight for the good of the people<sup>181</sup>.

#### **4.3. General assessments from the three newspapers**

The articles in Ming Pao Daily and Apple Daily are stronger in their views concerning the people and the power of the masses, looking sometimes more like a political manifesto than a newspaper. As said already, The South China Morning Post is the only one of the three newspapers, which pays wide attention to the facts of the reforms and to describe what is going on, with numerical and poll analysis. Even if, for example, The Ming Pao Daily is paying a lot of attention to the historical background, it does this just to prove its thesis. The South China Morning Post does not mention the past, in fact, it tries to distance this reform from the past decades, that is to say that this is something new and a process which does not have any roots in the past. What was in the past is gone now, and a new phase is opening for the Hong Kong landscape.

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<sup>180</sup> see p. 84

<sup>181</sup> “*The great divide*”, 18 June 2010

The Ming Pao Daily and The Apple Daily, see the phase of stagnation and political impasse as a bequest of the colonial time. The colonial time is, actually, never mentioned in The South China Morning Post, while the other two are quite often referring to it. And they do not have a very positive opinion about that. Especially the last phase of the reform under the Governor Christopher Patten is judged quite negatively, especially by The Ming Pao Daily. They say that he created a bad precedent for democracy<sup>182</sup>.

Thus, we might say that The Ming Pao Daily and The Apple Daily have a more historical approach to the question of reform, while The South China Morning Post is concentrating more to actual facts, leaving the historical background or the suppositions on why Hong Kong still is at this phase of the reform process out.

However, they all agree in two points: the Democratic Party has the main role and the Functional Constituencies should be abolished as soon as possible.

Even the more China friendly South China Morning Post and the more impartial Ming Pao Daily totally agree with the abolition of such system. The Functional Constituencies do not correspond to a democratic criterion of governance.

As we specified the real threat now is that China might find a way to rationalize<sup>183</sup> the Functional Constituencies in order to embody them in a democratic system with special features, especially designed for Hong Kong. The policy of the “one person, two votes” is seen as a move forward and a pragmatic decision, but, for example, The Apple Daily never refers to it as something positive. We could say that the only positive aspect they see in this last phase of Hong Kong politics is that China talked with the Democrats. The Democrats can now know better their enemy. But the threats and the traps still remain and are now even more dangerous.

#### **4.4. The future of the process of reform**

All of the newspapers are aware that for the elections of 2012 the system of elections is settled and implies these five new FCs’ seats and that now the battle would be for 2016 and 2020. We said that by 2020 all the Functional Constituencies should be

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<sup>182</sup> see p. 74

<sup>183</sup> see p. 70

abolished. Not modified but abolished. This means that “one persons, two votes” should be abolished together with the FCs.

It looks as if they are aware of the fact that FCs have to be abolished, but they refer to the now existing system and they say that this new concept of new FCs is a good improvement. As China still did not give her final answer, we might think that a change in the system might be as good as the total abolition. The point is to move on. Right now it is impossible to say whether this is going to happen or not. They all say that universal suffrage and democracy itself can be open to different kinds of interpretation. This represents the second threat Hong Kong People will now have to face.

The Democratic Party should now go on and fight for the right interpretations of such concepts. The Ming Pao Daily and The Apple Daily add to this that peoples have the power to help the DP and should fight together with their politicians in order to achieve their aim. But they also say that people will have to wait for the next round of elections. The Ming Pao Daily claims that the Hong Kong people are pragmatic and rational, too, and that they should understand that the endorsement of the reform package was a positive development. But they do not close the doors to mass demonstrations if the reform does not go on the way it should.

Really close attention has to be paid on what it is going to happen. The impasse has been broken, but now the process should go on in the right way, leading Hong Kong to the ultimate aim of Universal Suffrage (which should happen in 2020). Even if this is a semi reform, it still represents first step of something new. All the three newspapers are positive about that. The Democrats should not be an anchor to the process anymore, they should be aware of the fact that Democracy needs time and that it needs most of all agreement.

Thus, from this analysis we can conclude that the general opinion about the reform package is quite positive, being the reform a step forward. What actually is worrying everybody is its future development. Too many issues are still without solution and the threats of the Functional Constituencies have, unfortunately, not been solved, yet. This is what we can see from these newspapers. The solution they give is to wait, be pragmatic and optimistic. It is really puzzling that Functional Constituencies *de*



*facto* occupy the last and less important focus of attention. All newspapers agree, we said, in saying that they must be abrogated, but why then not to put more attention on this issue? Why they do not claim and ask from Beijing a clear answer about that? The problem is only one: they can or they cannot be part of a democratic system and Beijing must say something. This something must be a final answer. These newspapers should discuss this topic much more and should make it clear that this is the reason for the debate. If we search the Internet we can see more facets to this debate, which are actually not mentioned in the articles selected.

#### 4.5. The role of “Youtube”

When we search the internet for some interactive material, the majority of the videos we find refer or are about to the debate between Audrey Eu and Donald Tsang, which was held live on television on June 18<sup>th</sup> 2010 (even if, for example, The South China Morning Post carries one small article about this fact, quoting some of the sentences the two political leaders said at the beginning of the debate). There is a quite interesting video online, which was taken the day after the live-debate, during which Audrey Eu points out her way once again, underlining the most important achievements she got during this Tv-debate<sup>184</sup>. Other videos concerning the protests that took place after the endorsement of the reform are available on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), such as for example marches of thousands of people, protesting and claiming for the failure of the democratic process<sup>185</sup>. The problem of the Functional Constituencies is paid much more attention to and it is actually depicted as the focus and discussed as being the focus. From the quantitative analysis, we could have concluded that it was not even considered. From the articles we can conclude, as we actually did, that they recognise the FCs as a problem and they are aware that they must be abolished if Hong Kong wishes to have a true democracy. However, in the articles we selected they do not have a leading place.

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<sup>184</sup> Youtube, “*Audrey Eu: The Morning After the Debate-What next Political Reform in Hong Kong*”, retrieved 22 November 2010,  
<[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kH\\_wTG\\_jFXE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kH_wTG_jFXE)>

<sup>185</sup> Youtube, “*Hong Kong-Massive Pro-Democracy March during Handover Anniversary*”, retrieved 20 November 2010  
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBrkU5sTdxY>>

In the next and conclusive chapter of this thesis we will try to analyse quite shortly some videos concerning the reform found in [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) as well as concluding and summing up our work. There still are some more questions to which we should try to give an answer in order to finalize our analysis.

First of all, a little more attention should be paid to what the other members of the ex Pan-Democrats' coalition think and what they think about this package of reform. In all the three newspapers the really biggest attention is given only to the Democrats and to their official talks with China. Audrey Eu and the Civic Party are cited but this cannot be confronted to the importance paid to the role of the DP.

Other important issues which need to be outlined are that, referring to the Basic Law, the Chinese Government cannot interfere with the local affairs of the HKSAR Government. What is the role of the Liaison Office, then? The newspapers point out that one of the threats of the official talks with Beijing is that the central authorities will mislead the reform and that future talks might not take any concrete progress. Beijing already stopped the constitutional reform in 2002 and 2006 and postponed it all. There is no assurance that China will not do this again.

## CONCLUSION

### 1. General contents

We began with the introduction explaining the aim of this work. We specified that the principle leading this work is that a democratic legislature should be representative of all the interests and viewpoints of the electorate<sup>186</sup>. Thus, Hong Kong and its recent electoral reform represent a quite interesting ground for research due to its specific features.

This is why the second chapter of this work focuses on the historical background of Hong Kong, trying to outline what it has come over in the past decades; the nature of the electoral system as well as its development under British rule first and then after the handover. We started trying to outline what it means to be a Hongkonger nowadays.

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<sup>186</sup> See p. 1

The problem of the cultural identity is a topic of huge and important influence in Hong Kong and it is strictly related to the question of the Chinese Diaspora.

As we said the Hong Kong People went through different phases that saw them as colonial subjects and as second-rate citizen in their own land. Additionally, we tried to briefly outline the difficult relationship with their bother and sisters in Mainland China. We finally concluded that the Hong Kong cultural identity cannot be defined to be either Chinese or English, but as a Hong Kong identity of its own, which is the result of all the past experiences the population went through in the last century and a half, and that participated in building specific features of the Hong Kong society, as well as a cultural identity, which identifies the Hong Kong people as Honggkongers.

The historical background went on focusing on the facts and political events that led to the Handover of July 1, 1997. The official talks and the diplomatic efforts, which finally led to the signing of the Sino-British Hong Kong Declaration in 1984; as well as the personalities of Margaret Thatcher and Deng Xiaoping. We finally described the evolution of the electoral system and the very last phase of British rule including the pushing of reforms by the last English Governor in Hong Kong, Christopher Patten.

We concluded in the analysis of the third chapter that he created a bad precedent of fake democracy, which contributed to the impasse of the last decade. Once we outlined the historical background, we started with the analysis.

The methodology of this work was explained in the first chapter. A system of CDA (critical discourse analysis) was chosen. The methodology is based on the work of Norman Fairclough, and it consists of the analysis of three Chinese newspapers. We explained which newspapers we selected and why. We went on explaining the process of selection of the keywords and we concluded underling again the main question of our work. The analysis itself was discussed in the third chapter. Each newspaper was analysed individually, first from a quantitative point of view, than from a CDA's point of view. The conclusions we came to, though, have left some points open that still need further researches and explanations.

The starting point of this thesis is that the Chinese Government changed the electoral system. What we asked is whether the Functional Constituencies can be representative of a democratic system, and what the role of the Pan-Democrats is.

From the analysis of the newspapers we concluded that the Functional Constituencies must be abolished if Hong Kong really wants democracy and that the Democratic Party, especially now that it is separated from the coalition with the Pan-democrats, is the only one with a democratic base to talk directly with the Chinese authorities. It has the main role, and a great pressure is now on its representatives because they have the great opportunity to engage themselves directly with official talks of high rank from the CCP. Still, there are a couple of points, which need a brief discussion.

First of all the role of the Liaison Office and how it is that now China is interfering in the Hong Kong's internal affairs and, second, the figure of Audrey Eu, leader of the Civic Party.

## **2. The Basic Law and The Liaison Office**

The second article of the Basic Law states that “[T]he National People's Congress authorizes the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to exercise a high degree of autonomy and enjoy executive, legislative and independent judicial power, including that of final adjudication, in accordance with the provisions of this Law”. This means that China should not directly interfere with local politics. When Hong Kong was still a colony of the United Kingdom the 新華通訊社 (*Xinhua tongxunshe*), the New China News Agency, which is the official press agency of The People's Republic of China, was serving in Hong Kong as a kind of diplomatic office. As China did not recognise British sovereignty as well as the three treaties, which China claimed were unequal, she could not for sure have an embassy there. This is why the New China News Agency was working as a *de facto* diplomatic mission in the territory<sup>187</sup>.

### **2.1. The debate on electoral reform: The Pulse, May 28, 2010**

Martin Lee, the founding chairman of the Democratic Party of Hong Kong, and one of the politicians, who participated to the drafting of the Basic Law, said that during the official negotiations the Chinese officials declared they will need a small office, in

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<sup>187</sup> Wikipedia, *Xinhua News Agency: Xinhua in Hong Kong*, retrieved 15 November 2010, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xinhua\\_News\\_Agency#Xinhua\\_in\\_Hong\\_Kong](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xinhua_News_Agency#Xinhua_in_Hong_Kong)>

order to deal with practical matter, such as passports<sup>188</sup>. Thus, the New China News Agency became the Liaison Office. An office that should have no influence at all on the political life of Hong Kong, the Central Government Liaison Office. Martin Lee says that it was a huge operation in the background at the beginning, but now this office is clearly taking a position saying what they want and what they do not want<sup>189</sup>. This is all part of a Tv-interview for the television programme of the RTHK.HK, “The Pulse”.

Other guest in that same date was a financial journalist named Chris Yeung, who states that since 2003 Beijing took a more aggressive and generally active way with Hong Kong and he explains the shift and the beginning of the official talks as a way to conquer the trust of the citizenship in order to obtain the favour of the population.

Thus, regarding what Mr Yeung said, we might conclude that Beijing is now more active. Martin Lee’s fears of the nineties’ that this Liaison Office would become the center of Mainland Chinese power in Hong Kong have become true. Now that the DP is officially and directly talking with the authorities, they should be really careful, Martin Lee says that he is afraid because “... *human nature will make it difficult for you (the Democratic Party) to stand up and walk away from the table*”<sup>190</sup>. He is worried because it looks as if the whole DP is engaged in these direct talks, but they cannot fight the central authorities on a level of principle. Now that they agreed to start such negotiations they will not be able to go back, and Beijing is going to deal with situation in its own way. Beijing got a point, it managed to divide the coalition of the Pan-Democratic Parties and now, the Democratic Party is self has no excuses to refuse such talks, Mr Yeung said. This is, actually what people have wanted since 1984.

## **2.2. The statements of the Councillor of the Mainland**

The problem is that Beijing should give a final answer concerning the future developments of the process of reform. But, as the Chinese leaders often did in the past, they are trying to postpone an official final declaration concerning such matters. In another show of “The Pulse” the problem of an official and final answer was directly

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<sup>188</sup> Youtube, “2010-5-28: *The Pulse: Electoral Reform*”, retrieved 20 November 2010, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70DJdCFjPB0>>

<sup>189</sup> The Pulse: Electoral Reform

<sup>190</sup> *ibid.*

asked to Leong Che-hung, Executive Councillor of Mainland China. When asked he just replied that China is open to dialogue, but did not give any kind of answer<sup>191</sup>.

Other people present to the debate were Frederick Feung of the Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood, Alan Leong of the Civic Party, and Leung Kwok-hung of the League of the Social Democrat. This last one asked directly the Chief Councillor for a clear answer about the Functional Constituencies. He said that it is not difficult at all: Functional Constituencies are part of the system or they are not. They are a feature of democracy or they are not. If China gave a clear answer about that, there would be no more debate. He said that it is like going to Heaven or going to Hell. It is quite clear what kind of answer Mr. Leung is wishing to hear. But when he himself was asked if the reform should be held "in offices" or in the streets, he declared that a balance should be found and that the constitutional reform grows from the mutual collaboration of the people and the politicians.

### **2.3. The necessity of clear definitions**

Thus, even the radicals still want to try a contact with and still are willing to use peaceful means to talk with the Mainland. This is why China must give an answer. Mr. Leong said that China is open to bargain but they already said so and universal suffrage is postponed every time and the Hong Kong people still do not have a clear definition of what China means to say with that term. General opinion, also emerged from the newspapers, is that stand still is not good and that the Hong Kong people will not tolerate stagnation anymore, and that a move forward is better than no move at all, the direction does not matter.

But, can we really say so? A Chinese 成語 (chengyu) states "寧缺毋濫" (*ningque wulan*), literally "rather go without than have something shoddy", but the new motto of the Hong Kong people would rather sound like the opposite: rather something shoddy than go without. Or, at least that is the viewpoint of the more radical Democrats. What is clear is that there is an urgent need of clarification. Mr Feung said that this package is worse than the package of 2005 and there is no mention of a true electoral system. The Functional Constituencies are pulling the legs of Hong Kong. Still what the Chinese

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<sup>191</sup> Youtube, "2010-5-21 The Pulse: Studio Discussion", retrieved 20 November 2010, <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i99C\\_O7\\_Yeg&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i99C_O7_Yeg&feature=related)>

side is trying to entrench in every possible occasion is that the reform moved forward and that to stand alones right now is not an option for Hong Kong<sup>192</sup>. The polls demonstrate that, Mr. Leong says, the people of Hong Kong would rather accept the reform package of 2010 than refuse it. The view Mr. Alan Leong, from the Civic Party, has is different though. They might have not achieved that much but one thing they did achieved. They managed to zoom in on Functional Constituencies, which now are not the only but the main topic of the official talks with the authorities. Central authorities say that nobody says that they cannot discuss them and they are open to debate. We really hope that a real and effective debate will start soon, then!

### **3. Audrey Eu**

The second and last topic to discuss briefly is Audrey Eu. Audrey Eu was born in Hong Kong in 1953 and is current leader of the Civic Party. She entered politics in 2000 and was elected in the LegCo the very same year. She is leading the Civic Party since 2006. On June 17, 2010 she participated together with Hong Kong Chief Executive Donald Tsang to a live political debate.

#### **3.1. The debate on the constitutional reform package live**

During this debate they both pointed out their main opinion concerning the process of reform. Donald Tsang said that he was not content with the movements pushed forward by the Democrats and expressed quite critical views about that. He said that this reform will bring more democratic feature to the system, as well as an higher rate of political representation and more rights to the voters. It is a pragmatic and progressive step, which also has a legal basis. He was sure, and declared in the debate, that nothing else would reach the necessary majority and that if the package would not be accepted Hong Kong and the reform would have not go anywhere<sup>193</sup>.

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<sup>192</sup> The Pulse: Studio Discussion

<sup>193</sup> Youtube, "*Debate on the Constitutional Reform Package Live Part 1-7*", retrieved 20 November 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0pyY4oKqXk&playnext=1&list=PL2916BABE79118498&index=2>



He stated that he already achieved a secure timing from China for the introduction of universal suffrage and the election of the Chief Executive for the elections of 2016 and 2020. He is aware of the fact that the reform process has now reached a critical point and it now needs even more attention and energies. Public opinion is crystal clear and polls state that 75% of the people do not want the *status quo* anymore. History will prove us, in his opinion, that the endorsement of the package was the right decision to take.

During this debate Mrs. Eu said that the public does not want arguments anymore. They want answers. The HKSAR Government and the Chinese central authorities said that the people of Hong Kong were responsible for the LegCo already in 2007 and that China did not interfere. But what we are witnessing now, is something quite different. Even if now China says that universal suffrage will be allowed and FCs abolished, all this by 2020, what kind of assurance do Hong Kong people have? This constitutional reform is basic to people's lives.

Additionally, newspapers reported that the Democratic Party was the real anchor to the process of reform, together with the apathy of the citizens of Hong Kong. This is not, in Mrs. Eu's opinion, true. The real anchor is the central authority, which cannot understand that Hong Kong wants clear and final answers to its problems. The longer the system remains like it is now, the greater damage Hong Kong will suffer. Universal suffrage with Functional Constituencies has no meaning at all. Mr. Donald Tsang was defeated quite badly during this live. However, the reform package passed, and the new direction is already taken.

### **3.2. The interview at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Hong Kong**

In an interview held at The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Hong Kong the day after the television debate, Audrey Eu, declared that she was happy and satisfied with the debate of the previous day because she had three objectives, which she wanted to explain to the audience, and she reached them all<sup>194</sup>.

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<sup>194</sup>Youtube, "*Audrey Eu: The Morning After The Debate-What Next Political Reform in Hong Kong*", retrieved 22 November 2010, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kH\\_wTG\\_jFXE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kH_wTG_jFXE)

First of all she explained why it is so important to oppose the package. It was said that Hong Kong people are extremely tired with the political situation and are desperate to see some kind of improvement. This is why it is better to move on somehow than not to move at all. And this is, according to Mrs. Eu's point of view, completely wrong. It represents a wrong approach to the problem, which could also make the problem bigger than to solve it in the right way. Hong Kong needs to move for sure, impasse is no more tolerable, but it needs to move in the right direction, a direction that will not take it far away from its real aims.

Second, she managed to tell the Chief Executive that he should drop out. He is blaming the democrats for all what went wrong or did not move on. He blames the Democratic Party for the veto of 2005 but he is not making enough efforts in order to propose a better reform, a reform that could actually help Hong Kong and its society.

The third point, actually, was to explain why this constitutional reform is so important. If Hong Kong wants to develop, it needs a fair system, and society needs to have an occasion to be fair. Functional Constituencies are causing problems within society, they represent an obstacle to a fair and just development of society itself. Thus, we can see that the reason why the Civic party abandoned the Democratic Party is that they do not believe that such kind of talks with Beijing will lead Hong Kong closer to the final aim of Universal Suffrage.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The reform is, eventually, an act of rationality and pragmatism or is it the main gate to the wrong path? The DP has now this golden chance to talk directly with Beijing.

When Christopher Patten stood up and abandoned the table of negotiations at the beginning of the nineties', he had Great Britain to secure his shoulders. Who does the Democratic Party have, if it decides to abandon the table? Are we sure that, might be the case, there is a way out from this new phase of the reform?

The central authorities took part into the process, already. The role of the DP is now delicate, and it could lead to opposite results. The Democratic Party did not forget its aims, but they might think to adapt them to a way of interpreting that might be more

comfortable for the authorities in Beijing. The greater threat still is represented by the Functional Constituencies. Their future is strictly connected to how the DP will play his game. The role of these FCs is clear and clear is that they should undergo to an end, the question is how fast and if they will face their final abolition and a great role in this will be played by the Democrats. If FCs remain, no universal suffrage can be realised and without a fair representation of the whole population and the right to stand for elections and the nomination of the Chief, there cannot be true democracy. Democracy cannot have privileged circles, nor can it tolerate some specific Chinese features, which might look like democratic in the surface (but may be not even there) and instead hide the authority and the power of the CCP.

What we are witnessing right now is an ideological battle, ideological in the terms we described in the first chapter. To get rid of the system of Functional Constituencies could actually be quite easy. The point is that from our (Western) point of view what we call Democracy cannot enclose a system of Functional Constituencies. The leading authorities in China will have to specify their own concept of “universal suffrage”, “just and fair” and “comprehensive representation of the people’s will” and, eventually, produce a common sense that will be accepted by the population of Hong Kong.

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## **Abstract**

Diese Arbeit befasst sich mit Hongkong und die kürzlich verabschiedete Reform des Wahlsystems. Die Reform wurde am 25. Juni 2010 verabschiedet und beschloss, dass zehn weitere Sitze im LegCo (The Hong Kong Legislative Council) hinzugefügt werden. Von diesen zehn Sitzen werden fünf dem College of Geographical Constituencies hinzugefügt, während die anderen fünf dem College of Functional Constituencies zugesprochen werden.

Das System der Funktionellen Wahlkreise verkörpert das System Hongkongs und ist ziemlich bekannt für seine Tendenz, die Privilegien von Hongkongs einflussreichsten Magnaten und Politikern, nahe der zentralen Behörden des Festlands Chinas, zu schützen.

Die Fragestellung dieser Arbeit lautet, ob dieses System der Functional Constituencies in einem fairen und demokratischen System enthalten sein kann.

Die Arbeit ist als kritische Diskursanalyse konzipiert. Die verwendete Methode basiert auf dem Buch „Language and Power“ von Professor Norman Fairclough und beginnt mit der Selektion von bestimmten Schlüsselwörtern, welche die Basis der Analyse bilden.

Ziel ist es, 93 Artikel zu analysieren, die aus drei verschiedenen, in Hongkong verkauften, Zeitungen ausgewählt wurden: The South China Morning Post, The Apple Daily and The Ming Pao.

Zu Beginn dieser Arbeit wird im ersten Kapitel die Methode der Analyse erklärt, welche im dritten Kapitel dazu verwendet werden wird, eine Übersicht der in Hongkongs Presse abgedruckten Diskurse zu erhalten. Ziel des zweiten Kapitels ist eine kurze Erklärung des historischen Hintergrunds der Kolonie Hongkong, der Übergabe von 1997 und der Entwicklung des Wahlsystems. Die Diskursanalyse ist in zwei Phasen geteilt: dem ersten Teil der quantitativen Analyse, dessen Fokus auf der effektiven Wiederholung der ausgewählten Schlüsselwörter liegt, während sich der zweite Teil auf die spezifische Analyse des Diskurses in jeder Zeitung konzentriert. Desweiteren wurden einige Videos der Internetplattform Youtube berücksichtigt und im Fazit kurz analysiert.

Diese Arbeit will aufzeigen, dass das Konzept der Demokratie ein System wie das der Functional Constituencies nicht mit seinen Werten in Einklang bringen kann und dass die momentanen Diskussionen in der Presse von Hongkong beweisen, dass die wirkliche Bedeutung der Demokratie, der Functional Constituencies und des allgemeinen Wahlrechts im Alltagsleben der Hongkonger Bevölkerung Probleme aufwirft und besonders bei der Bestimmung ihrer Zukunft wichtig sein wird.

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