

The Image of Hong Kong in Official Newspapers and the Propaganda Strategy of the Chinese Communist Party in the 1960s' Hong Kong – Take *Ta Kung Po* as an example

The aim of this research is to investigate the purpose and function of constructing Hong Kong's image in official newspapers and the propaganda strategy of the Chinese Communist Party (the CCP) in Hong Kong in the 1960s. The project takes *Ta Kung Po* 大公報, one of the CCP's official newspapers published in Hong Kong, as an example, studying its uses of texts and illustrations and the methods of spreading political messages. It also analyzes the relationship between the Hong Kong image and the political situation, notably the outbreak of the 1967 Riots and the effect of that designed image on its readers.

The 1960s was a turbulence era, not an exception for Hong Kong, mainland China and Taiwan. For the People's Republic of China (the PRC), it had just experienced the Great Famine from 1958 to 1962, causing at least 30 million people to unnaturally died. It did not return to peace and kept trapping in several political movements and struggles. In May 1966, the Cultural Revolution broke out. On the other side of the Taiwan Strait, the Nationalist government had never given up the dream of returning to mainland China since the Retreat to Taiwan in 1949. After joining the Korean War from 1950 to 1953, it rebuilt its relations with the US and regained its military assistance, buying fighting jets and other armaments from the US. In 1961, it secretly started "Project National Glory" (國光計劃 *Guoguang Jihua*), planning to counterattack China and restore the domination.

As a British colony, Hong Kong avoided dropping into the endless political struggles in mainland China and the keep-fighting mode in the Taiwan society. However, it still could not escape from the effect caused by their movements and policies. Owing to the implementation of the Laissez-faire policy, which was applied not only on political and commercial aspects but also on the press and culture, the British colonial government allowed foreign and domestic parties and organizations to set up newspapers and publishing houses in Hong Kong, issuing publications with different ideologies. To gain international support, both the CCP and the Kuomintang (the KMT) actively established official newspapers there and frequently represented its colonial identity to help promote their governments and political stances. By studying that constructed image, the research explores the methods of spreading political messages and its relationship with the development of the political situation.

Ta Kung Po is the oldest active newspaper in China. It was established in Tianjin in 1902 and was one of the most influential newspapers in the Republic of China (1912-1949). During the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949), it supported the Nationalist government initially but turned to sympathize with the CCP later and started to criticize the government. In March 1948, it moved the headquarter to Hong Kong and changed to support the CCP. Since 1949, it has become an official newspaper of the PRC and been controlled by the Publicity Department of the CCP Central Committee. Even though its influence is no longer as significant as before, its editorials and commentaries used to be an indicator of the CCP's policies and the local leftists' spiritual food, not least in the 1960s. The research analyzes the CCP's policies to Hong Kong in the 1960s and its influence on the local leftists by studying the articles.

The sustained unstable political and social situations in China since 1945 had pushed millions of people to flood into Hong Kong, causing the shortage of housing, resource and work, public security problem, and extremely unstable the society. Two riots happened in 1966 and 1967 respectively and nearly broke the community into fragments. Especially the one in 1967, it lasted for eight months (from May 6, 1967, to December 1967) and led 51 people died, 832 injured, 4,979 people arrested and finally, 1,936 people were put into jail. That was a riot led by local leftists, and the leftist official newspapers played an essential role in it. On the one hand, they kept depicting the colony as a sad, poor place tortured by capitalism and imperialism, waiting for a rescue. On the other hand, they actively reported several conflicts between workers and employers from December 1966, trying to stir up the public's anger towards the government. The research takes *Ta Kung Po* as an example, investigate the role of official newspapers in the riots and their profound influences on the readers.