Preserving the Liberal World Order in an Age of Globalization:
Representing the People's Republic of China in the American Prestige Press

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ABSTRACT

This research project seeks to understand how American prestige news publications represent the People's Republic of China (PRC) through the specific example of the 2009 pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong. Conducting Critical Discourse Analysis on the textual and intertextual properties of these newspapers will allow me to better understand the nature of the discourses present within these publications and to draw further conclusions about how these discourses interact and compete with each other.

While there has been an abundant amount of literature addressing the PRC's ability to capitalize on increasingly globalized markets and networks to become a global economic force, the ideological implications of this new dominance has yet to be explored fully. By analyzing the representation of the PRC in American top-line newspapers, this research project seeks to understand the analyzed discourses as either working to perpetuate particular forms of 'cultural imperialism' or opening up the possibility for the establishment of a more 'cosmopolitan' world order, as described by theorists like Ulrich Beck and Roger Silverstone. I assert that conducting research within a 'cultural imperialism'/'cosmopolitanism' spectrum is a valuable way of understanding the characteristics and potential influence of media discourse in an increasingly globalized society.

After conducting the empirical CDA, this research project concludes that particular kinds of liberally-oriented discourses are present within the American prestige news press' coverage of the protests in Hong Kong. A variety of textual and intertextual devices are used to construct these discourses, which prioritize traditionally Western values and preferences by representing the PRC in a deliberate and often negative manner. I conclude that the liberal discourses constructed by the selected news texts are thus not conducive to a cosmopolitan acceptance and understanding of difference and heterogeneity but may in fact sustain certain trends of 'cultural imperialism' and related power structures, a development which holds substantial implications for Western society in particular as globalization continues to destabilize traditional structures of dominance and authority.

INTRODUCTION

> America is the world's living myth. There's no sense of wrong when you kill an American or blame
> America for some local disaster. This is our function, to be character types, to embody recurring themes
> that people can use to comfort themselves, justify themselves and so on. We're here to accommodate.
> Whatever people need, we provide. A myth is a useful thing.
> Don Delillo, The Names

It can safely be argued that the concept of 'globalization' has supplied fodder for a global discussion about related political, economic and social implications, fueling the fire of a preoccupation over the subject, particularly within the media, which has reached a near frenzy in the past several years. While the increasingly interconnected nature of modern society has facilitated the beneficial growth of global networks and relationships, what cannot be ignored is the simultaneous increase of social movements, facilitated by new levels of connectivity and sharing through these very same global systems. One way of understanding this new protest movement is to see it as 'a salutary awakening of citizens who brought to the fore terms such as domination, power struggle and inequality.' (Mattelart 2002: 68)

The notion of power, and more importantly, the contestation of dominant power relations, is an inescapable concept – bringing with it a substantial ideological dimension – within a broader discussion of the possible impact and influence of the current era of concentrated globalization. The economic and social dominance of traditional Western nation-states, with particular emphasis on the United States in the post World War Two era, has allowed their particular ideological position to flourish into a 'liberal international order' (Halper 2010: 2). However, the recent liberalization of the previously highly restricted and anti-capitalistic economic market of the People's Republic of China (PRC), coupled with highly interconnected global networks of business and economic activity, has shone a light on not only the socio-economic alternative to the traditional world order that the PRC's model might offer but also on the stark difference in the two ideological positions. These ideological differences raise substantial issues and questions which must be answered as the world continues to 'flatten' through the continuing growth of global networks, thus weakening the importance of national, physical or geographical borders. How does the West engage with the PRC, and more importantly for the future, other nations, organizations or individuals asserting an ideological position which challenges the values and authority of the liberal world order? What responsibilities and moral obligations do citizens of the West have, as simultaneous 'global citizens', to understand the rest of the world? What are the benefits and detriments of doing so?

The media, particularly within the competitive, capitalistic market environments typically found within democratic systems, plays a crucial role in facilitating or obstructing the important need to understand different ideological positions, and more broadly speaking, the ability for modern citizens to operate within or overcome existing power relations. Indeed, the media embodies the ability to confer or withhold an all important – though highly symbolic and latent – 'linguistic capital' (Bourdieu 1992: 52) which allows one the ability to not only understand the world as it is represented in the mass media but to express one's voice or opinion. Through this capability, the media acts as an inescapable filter or funnel for the comprehension of reality. It is through the media's crucial role in the inevitably selective and rarely objective portrayal and interpretation of the world that particular discourses or ideological frameworks become dominant, naturalized, and ultimately accepted as simply 'the way things are', or more commonly, the ways things 'should' be.

This research project seeks to explore the representation of the PRC within American prestige press news publications, a highly influential sector of the media in the United States, arguably the most dominant political, social and ideological force in the West within approximately the last century. Investigating this representation through the specific lens of a pro-democracy social movement occurring in Hong Kong, a former British colony and current 'Special Administrative Region' of China, will underline the nature of particular discursive trends within the American prestige press. More importantly, this project seeks to place the analyzed discourses on a spectrum which places a modern form of 'cultural imperialism' on one end and the establishment of an egalitarian 'cosmopolitanism' on the other. I assert that this structural framework will highlight the characteristics of the present discourses within an analytical perspective that allows us to answer some of these probing questions and to provide valuable insight into the modern media's potential direction as we as a society head into an increasingly globalized future.

THEORETICAL CHAPTER

This chapter offers a review of the existing academic literature relevant to the research at hand, beginning with a discussion of the cultural implications of the increasing prevalence of globalizing processes in modern society. After a brief synopsis of Ulrich Beck's 'cosmopolitan realism' and the importance of establishing a new kind of cosmopolitan framework particularly during the current era of globalization, the chapter then offers an examination of the nature of the media's function within society and its subsequent ability to act as a tool for sustaining a cosmopolitan mindset, or to perpetuate a modern version of 'cultural imperialism'. After a short introduction to the case of Hong Kong's protests for a full democratic system as an example the People's Republic of China's ideological opposition to the West, the chapter then finishes with a conceptual framework and statement of objectives of the research undertaken for this project.

Existing Academic Literature – A Critical Review

Globalization

Much has been said about the transformative effect of globalizing forces on modern life, characterized by changing structures of management and industrial labor, an increasing gap between wealth and poverty, as well as a highly networked global 'culture of real virtuality constructed by a pervasive, interconnected, and diversified media system.' (Castells 1997: 1) From this, modern globalization can be helpfully understood from the perspective of 'complex connectivity', in which the term 'globalization' itself 'refers to the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependence that characterize modern social life.' (Tomlinson 1999: 2) In other words, globalization, particularly in the 20th and 21st centuries, is a multimodal process through which the increasing interaction between economic, social and political systems also means that different cultural framework and perspectives are simultaneously coming into dialogue and debate.

In an era of globalization, the notion of culture is just as significant as other economic or political processes, because culture provides a frame within which society as a whole renders significance onto the phenomena observed in social life. In other words, culture is simply a vehicle for 'making life meaningful.' (Tomlinson 1999: 18) More importantly, as Raymond Williams points out, the locus for the creation and circulation of modern culture is 'mundane' – ubiquitous and every day. Modern 'culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind' (Williams 1989: 4; quoted in Tomlinson), a process which is deeply embedded within every

day life and as a consequence, highly naturalized and not often questioned, bringing to the fore issues surrounding the possibility and legitimacy of a new 'world culture' within the current trends of increasing globalization.

Tomlinson's notion of globalization as a form of 'complex connectivity' is a useful concept in understanding the potential benefits and detriments of the development of a 'global culture'. In the current period of increasing globalizing processes, previously disparate cultural systems come into contact and contestation with each other, bringing about the renegotiation of what is culturally significant within a modern context. Theorists like Manuel Castells have written about the potentially homogenizing nature of this 'global culture 'which may seek to legitimate one set of cultural practices over others at the expense of difference and diversity (Castells 2008) thus creating an unbalanced form of 'cultural imperialism'. However, John Tomlinson cautiously points out that the establishment of a 'global culture' may also be driven by 'hopes and aspirations for a better world in which all human existence may be united, improved and pacified.' (Tomlinson 1999: 72) In other words, such a globalized culture ultimately has the potential to, and indeed should aspire to, establish a more egalitarian world order in which difference and heterogeneity is not only acknowledged but accepted.

A Globalized Cosmopolitanism?

Ulrich Beck distinguishes between different kinds of cosmopolitan frameworks such as the political and moral perspectives, and ultimately advocates a 'cosmopolitan realism' as the most feasible and necessary in an era of globalization, because it 'involves an affirmation of the other as at once both different and the same.' (Silverstone 2007: 17) This new cosmopolitanism reconciles traditional binaries between the local and the global, the close and far away, the familiar and the foreign, recognizing the importance of both in the constitution of an ethical platform of universal respect. 'Individuals are rooted in one cosmos but in different cities, territories, ethnicities, hierarchies, nations, religions – all at the same time. This creates not exclusivity but rather an inclusive plural membership.' (Beck 2003: 6) This important recognition of heterogeneity, diversity and the Other[1] demonstrates the need for a general and media ethics that allows for both the articulation and acceptance of different voices.

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[1] Emmanuel Levinas attaches particular significance to the Other (as opposed to the 'other') because the presence of any Other – that is to say, someone foreign who it is tempting to exclude – demands some kind of moral response. For more on the ethical implications of the Other, see Levinas (1974).

Roger Silverstone writes about the transformative capacity of difference and its acceptance by opening up new avenues for the expression and acknowledgement of different and divergent voices. While there is difference across cultures, 'there is at the same time the possibility of sameness: the possibility of recognition, the possibility of identification, the possibility of communication.' (Silverstone 2007: 17) Globalizing processes bring with them the potential for the establishment of a truly cosmopolitan and hospitable media marketplace which 'begins in the recognition of the other and in the sound of his or her voice. It is the hospitality of a cosmopolitan society and of an intensely mediated culture. It involves sharing that space and taking responsibility for it. And it involves all parties accepting the obligation to open their space to the stranger.' (Silverstone 2007: 143) The practical feasibility of Beck's 'cosmopolitan realism' involves a new 'critical cosmopolitan theory' which locates the empirical creation and sustaining of a hospitable cosmopolitan world order specifically through 'a mode of cultural framing which is not reducible to rights or particular identities, but concerns cultural models by which the social world is constituted.' (Delanty 2006: 27) The media's crucial role in the representation and framing of reality, and its function of circulating cultural symbols throughout society, makes it a prime contender through which a new cosmopolitanism can be constructed.

Discourse and Power

Thus, the unavoidable mediation of the social world – or the way our world is represented to us – establishes the discourses through which we must understand reality as well as our knowledge of 'the way things are.' Michel Foucault's seminal work on modern discourse asserts that all aspects of reality can only be discovered and rendered significant through the production of knowledge through language. 'Just as discourse 'rules in' certain ways of talking about a topic, defining an acceptable and intelligible way to talk, write, or conduct oneself, so also, by definition, it 'rules' out, limits and restricts other ways of talking, of conducting ourselves In relation to the topic or constructing knowledge about it.' (Hall 1997: 44) However, it is important to point out that Foucauldian analysis of language and discourse takes place within a social constructivist framework which assumes that 'reality remains profoundly unknowable since our only access to it is through the constructionist prism of discourse. It therefore becomes pointless, in the Foucauldian view, to argue about the accuracy of any representation of the real world.' (Macdonald 2003: 17)

There are other ways of viewing the representation of reality such as the reflective approach, in which language instead 'functions like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exists in the world' (Hall 1997: 24) therefore implying that such the understanding of 'true'

meaning is ultimately achievable. For Foucault, however, any attempts to understand this true meaning, or 'Truth' will inevitably be affected by and take place within a discursive framework and is inevitably bound up and affected by contested and unequal power relations. What is instead more productive and feasible is the examination of the sets of discourses present within our world and how they compete with and interact with each other.

The indivisible connection between discourse and power has significant implications for the media's substantial function in society. According to Pierre Bourdieu, the media exercises what he termed 'symbolic power'[2] which means the media institutions embody and exercise 'the power of constitution' (Bourdieu, 1989) and the ability to 'signify and create meaning' in reality (Ibid). More crucially, however, is the media's potential to render power and individual agency across other realms of social reality, like economics and politics. The media is in itself a 'symbolic system', which is defined as a 'structure of misrecognition that works precisely because of its pervasiveness across social space, on account of its totalizing force.' (Couldry 2003: 665) Capital within the media space can be thus understood to potentially translate into forms of capital and power within other social spaces. Couldry further suggests understanding 'media power also as a form of 'meta-capital' through which media exercise power over other forms of power.' (Ibid: 667)

As one of the most substantial constructive elements of the social world, the fact that media systems are inextricably bound up in power relations which are constantly being contested and renegotiated has enormous implications for the media's representation of discourses through which reality is necessarily understood. So how should we comprehend media discourse in an age of globalization, complex connectivity and increasing convergence of political, social and ideological frameworks? For Foucault, the notion of power within contesting ideological frameworks means that his model 'precludes any possibility of ranging one set of powerful or 'dominant' discourses against another set of relatively powerless 'alternative' or 'oppositional' ones' (Macdonald 2003: 35) but is rather about examining how these discourses and the power structures they entail are contested and renegotiated within a modern context.

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[2] Whilst an extensive review of Bourdieu's theories is beyond the scope of this paper, he wrote extensively not only on the media's societal power (1999) but also on its ability to construct tastes, trends and to sustain social divisions (1986).

A New 'Cultural Imperialism' vs. A New 'Cosmopolitanism'

While we have established the media's potential to act as a tool for the extension of cosmopolitanism, we must also be cognizant of its equal potential to shift the modern media framework away from the institution of a more egaliatarian, open cosmopolitanism. According to Ulf Hannerz (1990), globalization, from the perspective of of complex connectivity, has the potential to bring about an 'integration – the networking – of cultural practices and experiences across the world [which] can be understood very broadly as a 'world culture'.' (Tomlinson 1999: 71) However, Hannerz is rightfully skeptical of this development given the existence of inherently imbalanced power relations embedded within capitalistic, profit-driven societal institutions like the media[3]. The highly latent and naturalized nature of the media power in society as well as the discourses within which these power relations are embedded can easily turn hegemonic in nature. Antonio Gramsci, for example, defines hegemonic power relationships as 'relations of domination based upon consent rather than coercion, involving the naturalisation of practices and their social relations as well as relations between practices, as matters of common sense.' (Fairclough and Chouliaraki, 1999) Instead, skeptics of the new cosmopolitanism cite the danger of the media acting instead as the progenitor of modern, 21st-century form of 'cultural imperialism'.

While the concept of cultural imperialism has been defined and analyzed from a myriad of perspectives, Serge Latouche's analysis of the phenomenon as a 'Westernization of the world' includes not only the proliferation of economic structures like capital driven consumerism but also 'the adoption of an urban lifestyle based around industrial production, a pattern of cultural experience dominated by the mass media, a set of philosophical ideas, and a range of cultural values and attitudes.' (Tomlinson 1999: 89) Latouche views process of 'Westernization' as a largely universalizing, homogenizing cultural phenomenon which, dangerously, does away with diversity and difference. The 'historical 'success' of this model is bound to result in a cultural uniformity that he deplores, since its success involves the destruction of all other 'versions', all other ways in which life may be lived.' (Ibid: 90) For Latouche, 'Westernization' constitutes one of the most detrimental forms of cultural imperialism, particularly in an era of globalizing processes, because of its homogenizing, universalizing tendencies.

However, it is this highly totalizing view of cultural imperialism that forms the basis for much for the concept's critiques. Theorists like Anthony Giddens assert that viewing cultural

imperialism as a Western-centric, one-way dominating flow of cultural imposition is far too generalizing and overly determinist. Most importantly, the 'Westernization' hypothesis and others similar to it ignores the possibility for human agency, particular from those with a non-Western, non-capitalist background. 'Even if we acknowledge…that abstract social forces like capitalism, industrial society, and/or modernity have significantly restructured human subjective experience, to view that restructuring simply as a process of imposition in which individuals play no active role would be a profoundly determinist conception of human social life.' (Dunch 2002: 307)

Instead, Giddens advocates reconceptualizing cultural imperialism within a new 21st century context in which 'globalization today can no longer be spoken of only as a matter of one-way imperialism…increasingly there is no obvious 'direction' to globalization at all and its ramifications are more or less ever present.' (Giddens 1995: 96) Conceiving of the presence of any 'Westernizing' discourses in the modern media simply as a form of continued Western cultural domination ignores the West's growing 'uncertainty about once unquestioned cultural values, this being directly related to the pluralizing cultural properties of globalization…this undermining of certainties is also liable to be accompanied by apprehension about the future.' (Tomlinson 1999: 96) The 'complex connectivity' of globalization, which allows for the heightened interaction between economic, political and cultural frameworks, destabilizes the Western cultural dominance of the 19th and early 20th centuries, making a reexamination of cultural imperialism from a more dialectical perspective absolutely crucial.

A Discursive Exploration of the PRC

Exploring the People's Republic of China (PRC) and its representation in the Western prestige press provides a particularly salient example of what could be termed a 'Westernizing' cultural imperialism, as a possible consequence to the increasing American uncertainty about its future as the leader of the existing world order. Heightened globalization in the 21st century and the rise of economic and social alternatives to American neo-liberalism have placed the PRC and the United States in ideological opposition to each other, in addition to their status as economic and political rivals.[4] Among the many of Beijing's challenges to a world order and agenda set by the United States, none are more

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[3] Adorno and Horkheimer (1972) provide a seminal critique of the media's substantial power in society and its ability to create and sustain a 'Culture Industry'.

[4] Halper (2010) provides helpful insight into why China's authoritarian system may provide the basis for its position as the political and economic leader in a new 21st century world order.

prevalent than the Chinese alternative to 'governance norms that the U.S. has frequently supported, ranging from basic humanitarian concerns to political issues such as corruption and the rule of law.' (Twomey 2007: 538) While the nature of America's foreign policy response to the rising Chinese 'threat' is beyond the scope and indeed field of this research project, we can nevertheless postulate about the role of U.S. media working to sustain existing sets of power relations which may prioritize American ideological values and interests.

A prime example of the Chinese alternative to traditional American values can be seen in the PRC's continued denial of a full system of democracy and universal suffrage to the former British colony of Hong Kong which returned to Chinese sovereignty in 1997. While the region's constitution, or the 'Basic Law', allows for the eventual implementation of universal suffrage, the PRC has been particularly reluctant to establish a timeline or to approve reforms to Hong Kong's functional constituency system within its parliamentary legislative body, which allows for 'the selection of some legislative members by special groups on the basis of their trade or occupation...[permitting] overrepresentation of certain groups or functions in the legislature.' (Chan and Chan 2006: 257) Among other economic and political values traditionally espoused by the United States in the current world order, democracy and the eventual possibility for democratization have long proved to be among the highest priorities. Beijing's seeming unwillingness to foster such political processes in Hong Kong has led to widespread public protests based on the assumption that 'the non-partisan executive-led system under the Basic Law regime was designed by Beijing to discourage democratization.' (Zhang 2009: 328)

Conceptual Framework and Objectives of Research

This project seeks to characterize the discourses present in the representation of the PRC in American prestige newspapers and to understand how these discourses interact and compete with each other. By analyzing specific examples of press coverage of Hong Kong's recent protests for a fully democratic political system, we can begin to locate the discourses present in the American prestige press along a spectrum which places the potential for establishing a more cosmopolitan mindset on one end and a tendency towards 'Westernizing' forms of cultural imperialism on the other. By analyzing these discourses through the juxtaposition of cosmopolitanism and cultural imperialism, we can seek to examine whether or not the construction of particular discourses in the American prestige press opens up the possibility for a more cosmopolitan 'mediapolis' (Silverstone 2007: 25) in which individuals of an ideologically different background can be heard. Conversely, the ubiquitous nature of today's

media and the substantial symbolic power embodied by modern media institutions might lend itself to the establishment of discourses which instead act to sustain hegemonic forms unequal power relations, as a way of maintaining America's 'Westernizing' influence in an era of increasing economic and political uncertainty.

This project's ultimate objective is to explore and characterize the nature of the discourses present in the American prestige press' representation of the PRC, through the specific lens of their news coverage of the on-going pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong. I postulate that analysis of this particular case example will help to shed light on the power of the American press to shape particular power structures through upholding particular exclusionary discourses. These discourses, while placing emphasis and preference on traditional Western values, prevent the establishment of a more cosmopolitan mediaspace where previously foreign 'Others', like those living in the PRC, can be effectively heard and engaged.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY CHAPTER

This chapter will outline the research strategies employed to answer this project's goal of locating the discourses present in mainstream Western media along a cultural imperialism/cosmopolitanism spectrum. The research undertaken for this project seeks to address the main research question: How do premier American newspapers represent China through their coverage of Hong Kong's protests for democracy in 2009? This chapter begins by stating the basic rationale and strategy behind the methodology chosen to investigate the research question, followed by a more detailed description of the methodological process, including research procedure and sampling justification.

Research Strategy

This research project will utilize Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the primary qualitative research methodology to explore the research question at hand. Because the aim of this research project is to understand and characterize the nature of the discourses present within the representation of the PRC in premier American news publications, discourse analysis is a particularly useful tool in the examination of these texts because it starts 'its enquiry with an ear to the texts themselves and in a spirit of openness to the patterns that may emerge…it acknowledges the role of the media in constituting the very realities that are referenced in media texts.' (Macdonald 2003: 3) By conducting analysis on the news texts themselves while also paying attention to the wider socio-cultural context within which the communicative event takes place, discourse analysis allows for the in-depth exploration of textual and thematic linkages that connect the media texts to socio-cultural reality in general.

Furthermore, this project employs Critical Discourse Analysis as a specific method of discourse analysis because CDA as a practice crucially recognizes the socially constituted nature of language – that any text has a social and historical background and context – as well as the highly interconnected nature of language and relations of power. 'Specifically, connections between the use of language and the exercise of power are often not clear to people, yet appear upon closer examination to be vitally important to the workings of power.' (Fairclough 1995: 54) In order for this project to provide a complete analysis on the discourses present in the American premier press, the research must take into account what

Norman Fairclough terms 'Discourse Practice' which involve processes of text consumption and production and their transformative effect on media texts.[5]

Finally, Fairclough's mode of CDA also introduces a 'Socio-Cultural Practice' dimension to the examination of discourses, accounting for three broad areas of wider social context: 'economic, political (concerned with issues of power and ideology), and cultural (concerned with questions of value and identity).' (Fairclough 1995: 62) Critical Discourse Analysis involves a high level of detailed and specific insight into texts and the surrounding contexts, thus limiting the number of news texts which would be feasibly be possible to analyze to the fullest and most significant level for a project of this scope. However, Fairclough's 'Socio-Cultural Practice' element of CDA connects the discourses found within media texts to larger, macro societal processes in general, making it easier to extrapolate basic generalizations about the way premier American news publications chooses to represent the PRC through coverage of the protests in Hong Kong.

Before continuing, however, it is important to note that there is an inherent obstacle that different forms of critical discourse analysis, espoused by theorists like Fairclough and Van Dijk, will most likely be unable to overcome. Because researchers place linguistic texts within pre-selected social or political contexts before embarking on any in-depth analysis (Schegloff 1997, quoted in Scheuer 2003: 143), 'CDA is in danger of insisting on political agendas without simultaneously offering methods that adequately justify the analysis, independent of its political agenda.' (Scheuer 2003: 144) The highly interpretive nature of CDA as well as the limited number of texts feasible for a research project of this scope renders it thus unrealistic to expect any level of wider generalization to be made about the nature of the American press' discursive representation of the PRC and its ideological position.

Rather, this project acknowledges an unavoidable bias on the part of the researcher in selecting a particular political or social context within which the research takes place – in this case, a politically-oriented framework which examines the nature of existing power relations and any potential change or shifts of influence within these relationships.. Examining trends or shifts within political discourse can help to highlight how 'discourse genres from one sphere of life impinge on others for functional purposes, and this against a backdrop of changes in power relationships in society.' (Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000: 453) Within a social constructivist approach, there exist multiple potential sets of results, depending on the

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[5] Fairclough differentiates between 'institutional processes' and 'discourse processes' but in the case of the relatively brief parameters of this project, we will treat both groups generally as examples of 'Discourse Practice'.

researcher, selection of texts and audience background. This project seeks instead to be as transparent and legitimate as possible in the justification of methodology and the subsequent analysis and interpretation of results.

Research Procedure

In order to retrieve an appropriate group of texts from which to form a more deliberately selected sample on which to conduct in-depth Critical Discourse Analysis, an initial Nexis search was conducted for articles from American newspapers containing any or all combinations of the following terms: 'Hong Kong', 'China', 'democracy', and 'protests' between the dates of January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009. The 2009 calendar year was chosen because of its significance as the 20th anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, an event of such a violent and anti-democratic nature that many view June 4, 1989 to be a paradigmatic date for Sino-American relations.[6] While pro-democracy protests have occurred in Hong Kong since the region's return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, the 2000s have seen a marked increase in awareness and participation, culminating in record levels of participation in the summer of 2009, coinciding with the anniversary of Tiananmen Square. 'The above events can be interpreted as constituting a re-invigorated pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong...they were collective performances making the collective call for quicker democratization, with the Hong Kong and Chinese governments as the target authorities.' (Lee and Chan 2008: 85)

From the sample of news texts retrieved from this original search, the selection was then filtered down only to include American news publications which would commonly be considered as 'prestige' 'for reasons of geography, influence and circulation.' (Boykoff and Boykoff 2004: 127) Furthermore, tangential articles of a smaller size or comparatively irrelevant nature such as news summaries and photography captions were also excluded to yield a final selection of four articles from the following publications: the *New York Times*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today*.

Using steps adapted from Norman Fairclough's method of Critical Discourse Analysis, the texts were then analyzed from what Fairclough terms the two 'twin' perspectives of CDA: analysis of the communicative event itself – in this case, the newspaper texts themselves – which involved examination at the textual, discursive practice and socio-cultural levels – and

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[6] For more on Tiananmen Square's consequences for the PRC's foreign policy, particularly with the United States, see Stephen M. Young (1995).

then further analysis of the order of discourse, where 'the focus here is upon the configuration of genres and discourses which constitute the order of discourse [and] the shifting relationships between them.' (Fairclough 1995: 56; emphasis the author's own) Examining the order of discourse is particularly relevant for the objectives of this project because such analysis would help to reveal the change, if any, of discourses within the American press as worldwide trends of globalization become increasingly ubiquitous and acute, bringing into question the United States' position as the leader of the contemporary world order.

During analysis of the communicative event, special attention was also paid to linguistic elements such as word choice, sentence structure, and evidence of bias, which would be particularly indicative of 'particular representations and recontextualizations of social practice...perhaps carrying particular ideologies.' (Ibid, 58) Examining American representations of the authoritarian PRC and its non-Western values has substantial implications for the perpetuation of particular ideological and power structures, because 'Beijing's transformative, leading role in the rise of a Chinese brand of capitalism and a Chinese conception of the international community, [is] both opposed to and substantially different from their Western version' (Halper 2010: 11) thus making a sensitive and all-encompassing approach to textual analysis highly relevant. Fairclough's two-pronged method of discourse analysis allows for an in-depth, multivariate examination of the communicative event whilst linking it to discourses present at the wider level of social reality.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter will outline the results of the in-depth Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on the sample of selected newspaper articles from American prestige news publications. The first section, organized by thematic findings, focuses on the first of Fairclough's two perspectives of CDA, the communicative event, outlining the results from this project's analysis of the communicative event. The following section addresses the second perspective, the order of discourse, which serves to connect the results of the CDA analysis to the larger research question at hand by engaging the thematic findings with the conceptual framework which aims to locate the discourses at work within the texts on a cultural 'imperialism'/cosmopolitanism spectrum.

The Communicative Event

Linking the Pro-Democracy Movement and Tiananmen Square

The analyzed coverage of Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement in 2009 revealed an apparent thematic connection between the protests for universal suffrage and full democracy and the events of Tiananmen Square. Whilst the largest public protest of the year occurred on July 1, 2009, nearly four weeks after a large memorial gathering in Hong Kong's Victoria Park in honor of those killed in 1989, several publications drew significant connections between the two issues. For example, the New York Times stated on July 2, 2009:

> An enormous crowd for the annual June 4 candlelight vigil, the largest since 1990, had raised the hopes of Hong Kong democracy advocates that the same enthusiasm might carry over to their movement. The movement has been struggling after several small successes from 2003 to 2003 [...] The immediacy of democracy demands here has faded somewhat as Beijing officials have ruled out direct elections for the chief executive until 2017 and the legislature until 2020.

This article demonstrates a clear juxtaposition between the large-scale enthusiasm for the 20th anniversary Tiananmen Square memorial and the – comparatively- flagging levels of participation in the local plight for democracy. Approaching this trend from the discourse practice level of analysis, which attempts to relate the properties of a particular text to relevant discursive practices, we can see attempts by the *New York Times* to recontextualize the pro-democracy protests within a larger discourse of neo-liberal values. According to Fairclough, recontextualization within institutions like the media 'involve principles of selectivity and filtering devices...recontextualisation of meanings is also transformation of meanings, through decontextualisation (taking meanings out of their contexts) and

recontextualising (putting meanings in new contexts).' (Fairclough 2010: 76) While discontent with the PRC's authoritarian central government still remains one of the main concerns of the protestors in Hong Kong, their demands also encompass a myriad of other concerns such as the rights of domestic helpers to minority issues, all of which did not have a directly tenable link to Tiananmen Square. This distinct juxtaposition of the pro-democracy protests and the events of 1989 is once again evidenced in another, similarly left-learning news publication, the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Consider the lead paragraph of the *Chronicle*'s coverage:

> Mainland China remained quiet Thursday on the 20th anniversary of the bloody Tiananmen Square crackdown, while <u>tens of thousands of people</u> staged a protest in Hong Kong.

A later paragraph then adds:

> On Thursday, <u>the only place on Chinese soil</u> where a large-scale protest took place was Hong Kong, the former British colony that has <u>maintained its own legal system</u> since it reverted to Chinese rule in 1997.

The linguistic choices demonstrated in the *Chronicle* text – selective word usage referring Hong Kong as the 'only' place where protests occurred and as a liberal bastion allowed to uphold 'its own legal system' despite the fact the Basic Law and any amendments to it must be Beijing-approved[7] - serve to connect the collective, representational nature of the Hong Kong protests to a portrayal of an undemocratic, autocratic PRC. While the *Times* nor the *Chronicle* have not removed the protests for democracy completely from its original context of a grass-roots movement fighting for universal suffrage, linking the issue with Tiananmen Square and the widely attended vigil juxtaposes the democratically organized protests starkly against the PRC's demonstration of distinctly un-Western values during the violent events of June 4, 1989. 'On that night, China made a decisive turn away from liberalization and back toward an authoritarian kind of politics' (Nathan 2001: 724) which, along with a comparative lack of emphasis for traditional human rights and freedom of expression, still remains the hallmark of Chinese domestic policy today. The emphasis or construction of connections between the two events serves to sustain a Western-centric discourse which construes traditional, liberal ideologies as safer and more justified.

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[7] See Chan and Chan (2006) for a succinct explanation of the Basic Law and for potential social and political problematics surrounding the issue of functional representation.

Levels of Participation and Popularity

Further analysis of selected coverage of the 2009 Hong Kong pro-democracy protests demonstrates an additional ideological justification for protestors' cause through the manner in which the pro-democracy's participation and popularity is reported. While content analysis or other more quantitative research methods would provide a broader, more inclusive perspective on the overall tone of coverage through quantifying functionalities like coding frames (Hansen et al. 1998), using CDA to analyze the nature of the tone of coverage, any existing biases and their relationship to discourses present in the text is still highly relevant as the language of media texts 'construct[s] some aspect of reality from a particular perspective, for example the liberal discourse of politics.' (Fairclough and Chouliaraki 1999: 63) CDA's heavy emphasis on both textual and intertextual analysis thus makes it a particularly powerful tool within the theoretical parameters of this research project.

Several of the analyzed texts deliberately highlight the contentious issue of ultimately how many participants were involved in demanding the various causes of the Hong Kong protestors, achieved specifically through an emphasis on participant numbers and more specifically, the discrepancy between figures reported by organizers and police or government authorities. The *Wall Street Journal* reports:

> Tens of thousands of Hong Kong residents marched through the streets on the twelfth anniversary of the former British colony's return to Chinese sovereignty, one of the largest such protests in five years and a sign of discontent with this city's government.
>
> Police said at least 26,000 people participated. Organizers put the number at 76,000, still short of their forecast of at least 100,000. Police said last year's turnout was 15,000, while organizers put it at 47,000.

By deliberately highlighting the sizeable difference in the figures reported by both parties, the reinforces the inherent tension between the largely grass-roots organizers of the protests and the official authorities acting on behalf of the Hong Kong government, and by default, the PRC. The tone from the above excerpt is clearly supportive of the pro-democracy protestors, indicated by particular linguistic choices and syntactical construction. The last sentence, for example, poses what the police 'said' were the reported numbers of participants 'while' the organizers of the protests reported numbers almost three times as much as official figures. Furthermore, the *Journal*'s decision to begin the article's leading sentence, or 'hook', with a reference to the 'tens of thousands' of participants indicates an inherent supportive bias towards the protest organizers and the widespread levels of public support for their cause.

The coverage in the *New York Times* shares similar characteristics.

> The police estimated that 26,000 people had assembled in Victoria Park on Hong Kong island as the march began. The organizers had said that they expected more to join the march along the way, and they estimated that 76,000 people took part.
>
> The police had estimated the crowd at the June 4 Tiananmen vigil, at the same location in Victoria Park, at 62,800, while organizers put it at 150,000.

Like the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Times* has elected deliberately pointed out the difference between organizer reported numbers and the purported numbers supplied by the Hong Kong police. However, reference is made to a similar discrepancy with regards to the number of attendees at the Tiananmen Square memorial vigil held one month prior to the pro-democracy protests. By referring to the vigil, the *New York Times* coverage does not only link the July protests to the comparably well-supported Tiananmen memorial as discussed previously, but displays a sympathetic bias towards the pro-democracy protestors by informing readers of the historical precedence of the police or government authorities undermining the levels of participation in the increasingly popular pro-democracy movements.

Democracy and Economic Strength

Another instance of sympathetic coverage in the American prestige press is demonstrated through the references to the relationship between levels of democratic freedom and economic strength. A selection from *USA Today* reads:

> Recent experience has suggested that democratic freedoms can't be separated from economic growth and other issues. Degolyer says that in the earthquake that devastated China's Sichuan province last year, schools built by Hong Kong companies largely survived while those built by local provincial governments collapsed...
>
> Even with its liberties, Hong Kong is far from being a democracy. The city's chief executive, Donald Tsang, is chosen by an 800-member committee dominated by business leaders loyal to Beijing.

Here, direct parallels have been drawn between traditionally Western, liberal values of democracy and freedom and the subsequent success of projects financed through companies operating within Hong Kong's open market system. Furthermore, textual analysis reveals deliberate linguistic choices which highlight a supportive stance towards the movement to sustain levels of democracy in the region. Referencing the Hong Kong-constructed buildings which 'largely survived' the 2008 Sichuan earthquake lets readers compare its democratic, capitalistic infrastructure to the faulty 'collapsed' system supplied by Chinese 'local

provincial' regions. Finally, the deliberate statement that Hong Kong is still 'far from' achieving a system of universal suffrage and full-fledged democratic status belies a sense of urgency and justification behind any movements demanding democracy for Hong Kong's citizens.

The American prestige press thus construes democratic freedom and its associated values as important, if not necessary, conditions for economic growth and strength. The *New York Times* reports:

> Many marchers said they were <u>dissatisfied with government policies</u> to deal with the economy. Unemployment in Hong Kong rose <u>sharply</u> over the winter and leveled off this spring at 5.3 percent – a little over half the rate in the United States, but <u>a shock for a territory where the rate was 3.2 percent</u> last summer.

Similar sentiment is expressed in the *Wall Street Journal*, which reads:

> <u>Although</u> property and stock markets have seen a rebound in recent months, <u>unemployment is on the rise</u> and the government expects that <u>the city's GDP will shrink</u> by 5.5% to 6.5% this year. <u>Government workers and civil servants were among the marchers</u> this year, protesting pay freezes and other contract terms.

While discontent with the state of Hong Kong's economy drove many protestors onto the street, neither publication offers any further expert opinion into the particularities of capitalistic market functions or an explanation into how democratic political systems are the most conducive to economic stability, perhaps on the basis that both publications have reputations as being prestige, left-leaning newspapers, writing with a particular standard of expertise.

Interestingly, the *San Francisco Chronicle* is the only publication out of those selected which addresses the seemingly contradictory issue of China's growing economic strength and its authoritarian political system.

> Over the years, Beijing has taken a two-pronged approach to the <u>massacre</u>. <u>Domestically, the incident is ignored</u> in history books, and discussion about it is banned to the point that many young people know nothing of what happened. In arguments directed to the international community, Beijing has said that the <u>crackdown</u> was necessary to ensure <u>social stability</u>, which it says was a condition for <u>the market-driven changes</u> that have since transformed China into the world's third-largest economy.

The Tiananmen Square events are described by words such as 'massacre' and 'crackdown', which shed a distinctly negative light on how the PRC has decided to approach the incident domestically and on the international stage. 'The Tiananmen protests had demonstrated how

a limited student movement could quickly draw support from other elements and escalate beyond control…the only way forward, therefore, was three cheers for capitalism and absolutely none for democratic reform—however limited.' (Halper 2010: 146) Thus, by first describing the PRC's Tiananmen Square policy in a way which highlights the undemocratic nature of not only the incident itself but also the central government's tight-lipped post-Tiananmen reaction, the Chronicle is able to demonstrate similar sentiments with regards to the PRC's official policy of justifying the use of violence and other non-democratic means to ensure social stability and subsequent economic growth.

The Order of Discourse

This section will turn to the analysis of how the representation of the Hong Kong pro-democracy riots in the prestige press both constitute and reflect the existence of particular kind of discourses which change and evolve in accordance to their social and cultural context. Firstly, the publications selected for analysis are all characterized by what Fairclough terms a 'hard news' discourse type. What is interesting to note, however, is that while a 'hard news' discourse type typically exhibits an 'informational' genre – that is to say, its linguistic characteristics can be characterized with the intention to be informative and objective to its reader – all of the analyzed texts demonstrate aspects of a more 'persuasive' genre in which the reader is being convinced of a particular point of view, all of which contributes an 'ambivalence of voice' (Fairclough 1995: 72) on the part of the publications. This seemingly hybrid attitude is indicated by the characteristics observed in the prior analysis of the communicative event, achieved through deliberate linguistic choices to historical linkages which render a new sense of legitimacy onto the protests.

It is important to note, however, that *USA Today* presents a possible exception to the 'hard news' discourse type. While it remains one of the most widely circulated American news publications, its content has often been characterized by 'McDonaldized ideas' (Ritzer 2006: 212) in that *USA Today*'s news coverage deliberately includes and prioritizes the spreading of distinctly American values. Like its counterparts in the American prestige press, *USA Today* faces the same economic and ideological challenges in an increasingly globalized world, but functions within a framework where 'globalization…does not militate against the nation state, but rather increases its importance.' (Ibid: 211) A broader, thematic analysis of the selected *USA Today* text reveals that the subjects broached in the article include how members of the Falun Gong, a banned spiritual group within the PRC, are able to protest peacefully in Hong Kong, and how the Hong Kong economic model should demonstrate to the PRC's central government the importance of democratic values for further economic growth. USA Today's

overall emphasis on American values places the publication more within the aforementioned 'persuasive' genre in which readers are being convinced of a particular point of view. Thus, we can understand *USA Today* – with its 'McPaper' characteristics – as an example of a modern media institution which has the potential to propagate an ideology that is 'at best ethnocentric and at worst an expression of precisely the kind of cultural imperialism that it seeks to redress' (Silverstone 2007: 8) even in a 21st-century world of highly globalized political and economic processes.

The expected primary function of any news publication, particularly those categorized within the 'hard news' discourse type, is the mediation of sources of public information into the domestic, or private, realm for consumption and interpretation. While the scope of this research paper can not extend to a full discussion of the substantial implications of the media's important role in the transformation and translocation of information between the public and private realms[8],   it is crucial to realize that the mediation of information through institutions like the media can help sustain certain power relationships or the cultural prevalence of certain discourses. According to Fairclough, news publications and the media at large provide a 'recontextualisation of discourses (e.g., in processes of mediation) [which] may constitute meaning as a modality of power relations across networks of social practices...i.e., it may be ideological.' (Fairclough 2010: 79)

While there are a wide variety of possible factors which may influence the mediation of information from a public context to a private one to create the dominance of particular ideologies, the need to maximize circulation and profit is perhaps one of the most prevalent. Globalizing processes have brought about the convergence of platforms and information sources, rendering a new level of competition within all levels of media production. For example, the newspaper, including those in the prestige press category 'is mediating source events in the public domain to a readership in a private (domestic), domain under intensively competitive economic conditions.' (Fairclough 1995: 73) Despite the fact that prestige press publications like the *New York Times* have a well established readership and circulation, they face increasing pressure from competitors to diversify coverage whilst maintaining standards of journalistic quality which allows them to maintain their relatively well-educated and discerning reader base. Thus, when these publications mediate public discourses into the private domain, 'the language employed will thus be the newspaper's own version of the language of the public to whom it is principally addressed: its version of the rhetoric, imagery

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[8] Jurgen Habermas introduces the helpful, albeit normative, notion of a egalitarian public sphere in which media institutions can play a substantial role in educating and informing members of the private realm about public issues to form the foundation of equal and rational debate.

and underlying common stock of knowledge which it assumes its audience shares and which thus forms the basis of the reciprocity of the producer/reader.' (Hall et al., 1978: 61)

This is demonstrated in a thematic comparison between the selected texts from *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* texts and the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *USA Today*. Between the four publications, only the *Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* choose to engage with the subject matter of the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests directly by describing the movement in relation to viability of establishing a full system of democracy in Hong Kong in the near future within the parameters of PRC political control. By comparison, the Chronicle coverage of the protests occurs only within a wider context of a discussion about the legacy of Tiananmen Square. Similarly, *USA Today* approaches the Hong Kong protests through a discursive tone that is less 'hard news' or information-oriented but rather from an angle of more topical, 'soft news' in which Hong Kong itself becomes the subject of coverage. The characteristics of Hong Kong as a region, beyond its level of democracy and political system, are discussed in a 'feature' style article which emphasizes its substantial difference to the PRC, thus placing the city in a positive light for its largely American readership.

Whilst it may be feasible to argue that the *New York Times* as well as the *Wall Street Journal* choose to engage so directly with the subject matter because of their reputations as more liberal publications (Groseclose and Milyo, 2005) which would suit the demands and tastes of an educated, left-leaning readership, it is helpful to note that the *San Francisco Chronicle* has long enjoyed a similar reputation, despite the far briefer and less direct nature of its coverage on the Hong Kong protests. It is more realistic to postulate instead that the in-depth nature of the *Times* and *Wall Street Journal* coverage rather has to do with the larger and more global scale of their consumption compared to the *Chronicle*'s ultimately more regional focus and popularity. Regardless of regional or global focus, however, it is impossible to divorce the discursive trends and elements evidenced in the selected texts from socio-cultural power structures which may prevent the participation of lesser or disenfranchised voices from being heard from beyond a dominant, neo-liberal framework.

Despite the fact that full levels of journalistic objectivity are a normative ideal, particularly given the highly globalized and competitive system of political economy within which American newspapers operate, it is still useful to examine certain power structures and other discursive factors which may be preventing the achievement of such objective. Firstly, as news texts, such as the ones selected for analysis, mediate information from the public to the private realm, the imposition of media frames becomes inevitable as 'influence over a human consciousness is exerted by the transfer (or communication) of information from one

location…to that of consciousness.' (Entman 2003: 52) However, all four of the analyzed texts demonstrate frames which – in Entman's words – 'make salient' the importance of democratic values and the rightfully justified actions and demands of the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement participants, thereby rendering a point of view originating from the PRC, from either a government official or simply a resident of the country, unnecessary and somehow irrelevant. Thus, framing in the media can be seen ultimately as a way to 'prime values differentially, establishing the salience of one or the other.' (Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1991: 52)

The repeated references to the Tiananmen Square massacre, particularly in the *San Francisco Chronicle* text, and to the general sense of discontent amongst the Hong Kong people about their restricted democratic system, serve to render emphasis and importance on to liberal American values over other alternative value systems. Due to the highly latent nature of power and capital structures which govern the modern news reporting system, 'journalists may follow the rules for 'objective' reporting and yet convey a dominant framing of the news text that prevents most audience members from making a balanced assessment of a situation.' (Entman 2003: 56) Given the standard of prestige and journalistic quality enjoyed by all four of this project's chosen publications, as well as their highly prevalent cultural influence, dominant framing exercised by these newspapers may, potentially, prevent the establishment of a more egalitarian, cosmopolitan media landscape by ensuring the dominance of discourses focused on the preservation of Western-centric traditional values.

Discussion and Analysis

The brief presentation and interpretation of results above have shown that four of America's prestige news publications both contain and constitute sets of discourses which are characterized by an emphasis or preference on liberal, traditionally Western-centric value systems. Whilst I will contend that the presence of such discourses may prevent the establishment of 'cosmopolitan realism' as outlined by Ulrich Beck, where media technologies act as catalysts for an increased 'possibility of recognition, the possibility of identification, the possibility of communication' (Silverstone 2007: 17) it is helpful to first reflect on the constantly fluctuating nature of power relations within a social constructivist framework. As discussed previously in this project's theoretical chapter, particular discursive trends manifest and become dominant as a consequence of the media's 'meta-capital' 'which enables the media to exercise power over other forms of power…every day the media sustain their status as the legitimate controller of access to public existence.' (Couldry 2003: 12)

However, just as the attainment of any particular 'Truth' is not possible within a social constructivist framework, power relations are also constantly in flux; the current prevalence of the liberal discourses present in the analyzed texts are therefore unstable and not permanently guaranteed. According to Foucault, 'power and resistance to power are not conceived as opposites, statically ranged against each other, but as fluid force relations that group together, temporarily and uneasily, in oppositional formations.' (Fairclough 2010: 66)

The transient nature of power and discourse has substantial ramifications on social movements demanding transformation of the status quo, like Hong Kong's pro-democracy protests, as 'social transformations in contemporary social life are extensively 'discourse-led', in the sense that it is discourses which change first.' (Ibid: 77) Whilst analysis of the communicative event and order of discourse indicates the potential for the reinforcement of trends of 'cultural imperialism', the fluctuating and impermanent nature of media discourse does not preclude the possibility for establishing a more cosmopolitan media landscape in the future. Indeed, changing levels of media literacy and varying degrees and levels of audience reception make the acceptance of discursive forms, whether or not they are representative of cultural imperialism or cosmopolitanism, less immediate and effortless. Just as the viewing of television media is no longer about the straightforward acceptance or rejection of particular discourses or systems of power relations, because 'television programming is designed to engage and involve the viewer in a more general way, and often neither clarity nor simplicity are necessary,' (Livingstone 1990: 1) we should instead be concerned with the degree to which the particular discursive trends present within modern media are able to stimulate more cosmopolitan attitudes. This ability – or lack thereof – is crucial for the introduction of a global civic duty to maintain what Charles Husband terms the universal 'right to be understood' (Silverstone 2007: 103). Ultimately, the Critical Discourse Analysis undertaken for this project reveals the existence of liberally-oriented discourses which, though the particular and deliberate negative positioning of the PRC, serve to potentially perpetuate tendencies of cultural imperialism rather than to act as catalysts towards a more egalitarian, cosmopolitan civic society.

CONCLUSION

This research project set out to explore the nature and characteristics of the discourses present within the representation of the People's Republic of China within news publications belonging to the American prestige press, and to understand how these discourses interact, compete and are contested. The exploration of these discourses through the specific lens of the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement in 2009 allowed us to understand not only the impact of how a movement for democratic development might influence the interaction between two vastly different ideological systems, but also provided a conceptual framework of 'cultural imperialism' juxtaposed with a new kind of 'cosmopolitanism'.

The initial hypothesis at the conception of this project was that the American prestige press would work to preference the values and priorities of the traditional 'liberal world order' in its coverage of the protests, demonstrated by the presence and dominance of particular discourses and the absence of others. Critical Discourse Analysis on four selected publications, conducted at both the level of the communicative event and the order of discourse, revealed textual and intertextual trends which supported this hypothesis, leading me to the conclusion that the discourses present within the analyzed coverage are ultimately more conducive to perpetuating potential tendencies towards 'cultural imperialism', rather than acting to establish a more egalitarian 'cosmopolitan' world order which prioritizes the understanding and acceptance of difference and heterogeneity.

While CDA of the selected texts has generated a substantial level of in-depth analysis from which to generalize about the presence of discursive trends and tendencies within the American prestige press as a whole, any further study would have to encompass non-American publications which would allow for a wider extrapolation about the difference and potential contestation between traditionally liberal Western discourses and the ideological alternative offered by the PRC. Furthermore, expanding the scope of analyzed coverage from beyond 2009 would allow the research to take into account the ongoing nature of the protests in Hong Kong and the region's highly fluid and dynamic political environmental. A wider date range for analysis would thus give a better indication into the potential longevity and permanence of the discourses discussed and analyzed within this project's limited methodological scope.

Nevertheless, the methodological findings of this project have been able to not only substantiate the initial hypothesis but to highlight certain aspects about highly relevant and current trends of 'cultural imperialism' and the subsequent implications for the possibility of

establishing a crucial cosmopolitan media landscape. It is hard to overstate the importance of overcoming restrictive systems of power and discourse – the need not only to acknowledge but to understand the Other and difference is particularly paramount in a globalized and interconnected society. However, increasingly diverse levels of audience reception and media literacy further destabilizes the staying power of present discourses, making the creation of a more cosmopolitan world order more possible than previously anticipated. If anything, the media as a societal institution has the ability, and more importantly, the obligation to lead the way to such a world. The media, which defines 'the asymmetries, hierarchies, presences and absences of public space, then the contrapuntal relationships of self and other, of minority and majority, of minority and mainstream, and of the distant and the close at hand, become increasingly material as the foundation for contemporary public life and for the articulation of its moral order and disorder.' (Silverstone 2007: 102)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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