



TITLE OF THE THESIS

HONG KONG & THE PRESS, 1997 & PRESS FREEDOM

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## ABSTRACT

The return of Hong Kong's sovereignty back to China aroused great anxiety amongst the Hong Kong people who enjoyed quite a high degree of freedom. And the press, apart from that in Japan, enjoyed a rare degree of independency found. Enormous concern was raised both locally and internationally on the likely threat on the local press freedom highly regarded worldwide, with the unlikely compatibility of the capitalist Hong Kong and the communist China. The worry is understandable when one considers the huge difference of the press systems practised in the two places concerned. With a journey of Hong Kong from the time it became a British colony to the present time when it is back to be part of China: it began with a period of immense Chinese political influence, it slowly entered into a consolidating period which saw the development of the press and the Hong Kong society with the formation of a relatively "free" press and a distinguishing Hong Kong identity, subsequently it went into the transitional period with all the fear and anxiety, and "adjustment" shown by the society and the press when the imminent fate of going back to China was fixed, and finally it came into the new phrase when Hong Kong was turned into a Special Administrative Region under China.

Independent the local press seemed to be under the instrumental British rule; the author would like to show the inadequacy of the press independency found in the territory. Nevertheless, when the relatively unrestricted Hong Kong press meets the rather restrictive Chinese press, clash is unavoidable with the tremendous different ideology and theory working behind the respective press systems. Indeed, the promise of "One country, two systems" formula could not really allay the fear of the Hong Kong people.

But the press and the pragmatic public chose to adopt the accommodating gesture, instead of the confronting one, to deal with the "new" master. In a way, this helped smooth the transition. And we could not deny an emergence of a possible more open press on the mainland with the consideration of all the positive factors.

## DECLARATION

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University library, being available for loan and photocopying.

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fu Yuk-sze

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