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The Construction of Collective Identity:
A Study of the Housing Protests in Hong Kong

By

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Abstract


This study focuses on the significance of collective identity to mobilization. Taking social protests in a public housing estate as a case study, I aimed at investigating the collective identity construction process and mobilization result of the residents living in a redeveloping Ho Man Tin Estate in the Hong Kong context. I utilized the Framing Theory and qualitative data collection methods to shed lights on the framing process of the collective identity of three community groups with reference to the three main dimensions and strategic orientations of collective identity, namely: the boundary setting, the consciousness raising and the negotiation making. The three community groups were Happy Hour-Singleton and Cohabitant Senior Citizens Group (SCSCG), the Ho Man Tin Estate Tenancy Concern Group (TCG), and the Ho Man Tin Estate Redevelopment Concern Group (RCG). The boundary setting was specifically prevalent to the SCSCG, the consciousness raising was to the TCG and the negotiation process to the RCG. The findings showed the following results.

With regard to SCSCG, the forging of the boundary between ‘us and ‘them’ was developed at the inter-organizational and intra-organizational level by following the manifest and latent ways. Manifest boundaries constructed by the social workers did not exhaust all the latent boundaries developed within the group and inter-estate coalition. Boundaries were even developed and emerged over episodes and physical setting of collective action in configuring the antagonists, the protagonist and bystanders. To TCG, the politicization of identities related much to the development of critical understandings towards causes and solution of unjust situations, success expectation and the urgency of action in the small group context. TCG further selected and appropriated successfully three ‘collective identity frames’, namely the citizens frame, the public tenant frame and the working class people frame, for the purpose of understanding external injustice in a contingent and flexible way. A sense of anger, solidarity and obligation came together to provide the affective content that guided the emotional expression of the TCG members in a significant way. For RCG, negotiation making was processed internally between general members and the social workers while externally between the RCG and the authority. As a paid external professional, the social worker adopted a detached role in the organizing process that resulted in disassociation, mistrust and demobilization. The RCG failed to mobilize the members and offer a counter-frame on its own identity in disputes with the authority. It eventually won no changes in re-housing policy.
Acknowledgements

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## Abbreviations

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHM</td>
<td>Assistant Housing Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRP</td>
<td>Comprehensive Redevelopment Project</td>
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<td>EO</td>
<td>Estate Office</td>
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<td>HA</td>
<td>Housing Authority</td>
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<td>HD</td>
<td>Housing Department</td>
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<td>HM</td>
<td>Housing Manager</td>
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<td>HOS</td>
<td>Home Ownership Scheme</td>
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<td>JERCG</td>
<td>Joint Estate Elderly Redevelopment Concern Group</td>
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<td>RHOS</td>
<td>Redevelopment Home Ownership Scheme</td>
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<td>RU</td>
<td>Redevelopment Unit</td>
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<td>NLCDP</td>
<td>Neighborhood Level Community Development Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRH</td>
<td>Public Rental Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCG</td>
<td>Ho Man Tin Estate Redevelopment Concern Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCSCG</td>
<td>Happy Time-- Singleton and Cohabitant Senior Citizen Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMO</td>
<td>Social Movement Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWD</td>
<td>Social Welfare Department</td>
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<td>TCG</td>
<td>Ho Man Tin Estate Tenancy Concern Group</td>
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Chapter 1:

Introduction

This empirical research aims at studying the construction process of the collective identity among the public housing residents and its effects on the mobilization of housing protests in Hong Kong. In order to shed lights on the issue of movement identity as laid down by the 'cultural approach' in social movement theory, we suggest the study of 'collective identity' in community mobilizations by the Framing Theory.

The significance of the internal process of meaning making is highlighted by many of the theorists of the 'cultural approach'. As far as the development of social movement theories is concerned, the emergence of the 'cultural approach' from the 1990's has brought back the notion of 'collective identity'. 'Cultural variables' of ideational factors have replaced the 'structural variables' of system contradictions in social movement studies. Unfortunately, the discussion has been confined mostly to 'identity-based movement' like gender and environmental movements. Little research has been really conducted to examine empirically those popular protests concerning the daily life issues of ordinary citizens (Calhoun, 1991; Taylor and Whittier, 1992). We suggest extending the study of 'collective identity' to even those community movements.

Community movement, as a specific kind of urban social movement, deserves
its own right to be studied. Different scholars have pointed out the theoretical significance of studying community movements as a form of urban social movements. Among them, Castells argued that urban social movements have got their potential to be developed as 'genuine social movements' with its anti-systematic logic (Castells, 1983). Bearing the characteristics to be locality-based, short-term and issue-oriented, these kinds of community movements often involve ordinary citizens defending their shared interest around welfare issues. They have shown that the working class people under suppression and exploitation do act collectively to press for their demands, though the result may be indeterminate.

At the empirical level, community movements around public housing issues in fact have long been the most common and significant popular movements in Hong Kong in terms of frequency, intensity, as well as issue coverage and action repertoire. Although there have been several academic studies on those community movements in Hong Kong since the 1980's, we are still in lack of the knowledge about the internal process of meaning making in movement and its effect on mobilizations at various historical periods.

In this chapter, I shall review the foreign and local discussions and show the significance of present research. Before that I have stated clearly the objectives proposed and problems addressed by this study. The organization of the subsequent chapters in this thesis will also be summarized at the end.

1. Theoretical Background and Significance:
The issue of ‘collective identity’ has recently been seriously discussed in social movement literature (Melucci, 1988). From the cultural approach of social movements, it helps to explain the rhetorical dimensions of movement culture and the importance of meaning interpretation. In the study of community-based mobilizations, it points to the neglect of the identity issues involving in grassroots organizing activities in the past. Accordingly, I maintain that the significance of the present research mainly relies on the study of identity on social movement in general and its application on community-based mobilizations in particular.

1. The Neglect of Ideational Factors in the Study of Community Movement

There are two main approaches in the study of social movement, namely the ‘structural’ and the ‘cultural’ approach. The ‘structural’ approach has developed into different strands focusing on the social structure of capitalist societies, individual psychological traits and even interest-articulating organizational behavior. All the theories within the structural approach are used to explain movement participation by making reference to the underlying ‘structures’ (whatever it may mean). But over the years this approach has been criticized for ignoring the active meaning interpretation of the actors towards themselves and their cultural environment.

In the 1990’s, a ‘cultural turn’ emerged with its emphasis on the ideational elements and symbolic issues in movement mobilization. In this ‘cultural approach’, collective identity is an important cultural variable. There are three strands within the cultural approach: namely the New Social Movement (NSM), the Social
Psychological Theory (SPT) and the Framing Theory. The first takes the ideology and identity of contemporary social movements as the foci in research, while the second emphasizes the shared social cognition and categorization between individuals and groups (Melucci, 1989, Gamson, 1992b).

We have found the third strand of ‘cultural theory’, the Framing Theory, particularly useful to illustrate both the processual and collective dimensions in constructing collective identity. The framing theory takes the central problem of mobilization by linking the interpretative frames of social movement organizations with those of individual participants. In this framework, mobilization is a consciousness raising process to translate attitudes into actions. Through incorporating the notion of ‘collective identity’ with the ‘framing’ perspective, both the strategic forms of organizing and rhetorical process of identity construction are integrated.

However, it is also our contention that the contribution of the cultural approach to social movement has not yet been fully recognized in the field. The explanations of urban social movements are mostly drawn from the structural approach. And as a result, the issue about the construction of meaning and commitment has not yet been answered (Castells, 1983; McCarthy and Zald, 1979). As Hasson reminded us.

"...thinking in the field of urban social movements remains structuralist in character. It is difficult to find any penetrating theorization concerning the construction of social action as mediated by structure and agency, and the relation of the movements with their environment. There is almost no theoretical consideration of the search for identity..." (Hasson, 1993: 9)
Put forward by Pickvance, the crucial question as to how community movements develop 'from social base to social force' has not yet been answered satisfactorily (Pickvance, 1978; Dunleavy, 1980; Saunders, 1986; Avis, 1991).

2. Studying the Identity Framing of Community Movements:

We argue that studying the construction of 'collective identity' is particularly important in understanding community-based movements. Community movements are much different from the traditional workers movements or interest groups' politics. Many of them are pertinent to the interests concerning locality of residence or welfare right issues, which are mostly collective goods and cannot be constrained to its members easily. The voluntary nature of movement participation and vulnerable identification of groups' identities make it difficult for grassroots organization to acquire resources, coercive participation, and coordinate mass mobilization. Piven and Cloward found that the resources for the poor are so limited that they are difficult to maintain mass-based organizations, even with the help of external resources (Piven and Cloward, 1979).

Community movements require the active, intense and sustained participation of the constituents over a prolonged period of time. Over the process, it is important for the organizers to convince the members that the undesirable situation is unjust and capable of changing, while participation can bring positive result. How to achieve this took questions of identity building, interpreting and mobilizing.

To sum up, we argue that beside structural and organizational factors, we
should particularly address the issues about the importance of ideational factors in community movement. Small-scale and locality-based community movements depend much on intense interaction of residents in politicizing their ‘consciousness’ about the very identity of themselves and the subsequent perception of interest, opportunities and threats. The commitment and the participation of members in generating common movement identities are most critical to voluntary grassroots mobilization.

II. The Empirical Background and Significance

It is well known that the Hong Kong government is one of the largest public housing providers in the world. Almost one-half of Hong Kong’s population has been living in public housing sector since the 1950s. Nevertheless, the shortage of adequate public housing always remains a social issue in Hong Kong and accordingly, protest around housing issues is one of the most common reactions on the part of the grassroots towards their livelihood problems. The protests of this kind are the second and third frequent social conflicts that occurred in Hong Kong over the past two decades (Cheung and Louie, 1991 and Lau and Wan, 1997).

Of all the housing conflicts, the one concerning public housing accounted for more than half of the total. The characteristics of the housing conflicts in Hong Kong are: voluntary, issue oriented, locality-based, frequent, small scale, non-violent (but occasionally involving disruptive tactics), short-term, reactive or even defensive in nature (Lui and Kung, 1986; So and Kwitko, 1992; Ho, 1999).
What are factors contributing to these community protests, their present characteristics and the public perceptions? They are all in need of explanation. Unfortunately, we found that no significant discussions locally have been devoted to the above questions so far, although there are some empirical studies done (Lui and Kuan, 1986; Leung, 1995; Fung, 1986; Castells, 1991; Lai and Lui, 1992; Luk 1994 and Wu, 1997).

1. The Neglect of the Identity issues in Local Studies

These social actions seem to be powerless in influencing social policy, let alone affecting social changes. But urban sociologists thought differently. Castells argued that urban social movements are the struggles against the insufficient provision of 'collective consumption' by the government. The state intervention has unexpectedly raised the expectation of the grassroots and stimulated them to defend or ask for more of their interests (Castells, 1990). In the case of Hong Kong, Castells maintained that such protests, which are determined by the system need on reproduction of labor power, are significant for the public housing provision and policy implementation in Hong Kong. His explanation is criticized as somewhat mechanistic, without giving sufficient attention to the mediating role of social movement organizations and the specific political context in Hong Kong. Such an explanation is inadequate to explain the diverse paths of the development of public housing policies and the interactive process of various social actors including the government, the resident's organization and the general public.
Lui and Kung was dissatisfied with Castells' explanations and suggested giving
more attention to the insights of the RMT to fill the theoretical and empirical gaps
left in Castells' research (Lui and Kung, 1986). Lui and Kung's argument was that
the mobilization is facilitated by the intervention of professional activists who are
able to mobilize resources and capture the quick changing political opportunities. But
Lui's study was criticized for still failing to explain why some resources are
employed while others are not. In my view, the selection of resources is highly
related to the actor's judgment, perception and interpretation. Thus, the resource
mobilization should be more related to the meaning-giving process. Moreover, his
analysis was criticized as asocial and static because the pre-existing social network in
the community has not been identified, nor has the interactive political process been
well captured. And Lui in his later works indeed has recognized the necessity in
identifying the nature of contemporary communities and the importance of
identifying the resonance of the 'cultural themes' when explaining the ups and
downs of community movements (Lui, 1994).

Another study conducted by Wu on the public housing movement in the early
1990's in Hong Kong also attended to the structural factors through the 'Political
Opportunity Structure' Theory (Wu, 1997). Wu analyzed the different dimensions of
the political opportunity structure in the local context and concluded that the
proliferation of protest events in the 1990's was the result of the capture of political
opportunities in the years during the transitional period of Hong Kong's hand-over to
China. In Wu’s study, however, mobilization process is totally left unattended. Focus is too much concentrated on those macro social structure and institutions only, such as the various parties within the polity.

Lastly, it seems that social workers would be more concerned with identity making process as they are involved in the tasks of consensus making in mobilization. Moreover, they have played a significant role in mobilizing various community protests along the years (Fung, 1986; Leung, 1995). My review of social work literature in this respect, however, is not too encouraging. The discussions were mainly concentrated on identifying the outer threats and political opportunities in continuing grassroots organization, while the ‘identity’ of their principal clients was rarely discussed. The social workers, even if they were also critical of social policies concerning their clients, seldom studied the discursive process of their client’s identities in the public arena nor realized the relationships between this kind of construction, the subsequent definition of interests and the final effect on their intervention.

2. The Significance of the Present Study

In view of the neglect of the identity issues in local studies, the present research aims at improving our understanding of movement mobilization through a case study of public housing protests in Hong Kong. Such an emphasis on the identity formation process on community bears the following significance.

a) Studying the Fluidity of Community Movements
Community movement is not operated and organized in one-sort basis. It requires the members to interact and communicate along the process. The community movement is rather characterized by its fluidity and continuity. This research tries to record the day to day actual practice of the community movement organizations and the sustained and changing participation of the adherents along a specific period of time.

b) Improving the Method Used

In view of the fact that little attention has been paid to the day to day mobilization process and the active perception of the adherents, we suggest a qualitative analysis focusing on the meaning construction process of identity of a collective. This study could be seen as an attempt to show the usefulness of intensive interview and ethnographic method in the study of urban social movements alternatively.

c) Searching for Effective Strategies

The past discussion only asked the questions of achieving movement goals from mobilizing overt actions towards the enemies. We can learn how a collective is formed and changed, and the right strategy can be designed in mobilizing people. The answer to the question of identity building is particular important to social work practice, as the profession is indeed one of the most important organizing agents in urban housing protests in Hong Kong.

To conclude, in view of the lack of discussion on the crucial factor of
'collective identity' in the studies of housing protests in Hong Kong, this study will employ a constructionist and interactionist framework to examine the 'framing' of 'collective identity'. We expect that this rather new perspective may help to complement the previous studies on social movements and offer a more comprehensive understanding of the community mobilization process. The result of the study may also add something constructive to the knowledge of the professions and grassroots activism.

III. Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are then stated as follows:

1. To propose the study of identity construction process of community mobilization by reviewing social movement theories in the light of framing theory

Inspired by the cultural approach and especially the tradition of social constructionism, I would like to propose a more process-orientated analytical framework. Collective identity has shaped much of our subsequent meaning framework, the tactical choice of protest actions and finally the mobilization level of the movements. In other words, a favorable and legitimated identity helps to mobilize people and the reverse is also true. Such kind of 'collective identity' is a collective and an ongoing product formulated in a dynamic and interactive way.

2. To examine an analytical framework through an empirical case study of public housing protests in the Hong Kong context

The public housing protests in particular are found to be significant as a kind
of community-based movement. The mobilization process of the public housing
protests in Hong Kong is spotlighted as it is much more related to the unstable and
voluntary participation of the adherents and their conflicting characters, which are
always noted to be their main properties. In order to understand these mobilization
processes, we suggest a specific study on the identity construction of the public
housing residents and the relevant strategies adopted in the organizational work.

3. To evaluate and recommend strategies on identity building in mobilizing
community protests

As a kind of practical concern, the research aims to clarify the rhetorical
process in establishing movement identities. These processes can be recognized as a
strategic weapon of the grassroots to fight against the authority. Only if we can
delineate the identity construction process between various parties in different levels
can we recommend effective strategies for future mobilization. It is particularly
helpful for the social work professionals who are much concerned about mobilizing
their clients to voice out the concerns of their own.

VI. Organization of the Thesis:

In the next chapter, I shall start from a review of the development of social
movement theories in recent years, in which a ‘cultural turn’ emphasizing the notion
of collective identity as one of the cultural variables in mobilizing social protests will
be identified. Based on the Framing Theory, I suggest the concept of ‘collective
identity frame’ to identify the identity construction process in diagnosing problems.
suggesting solution and motivating action. An analytical framework formulated on
the three composing axis (boundary setting, consciousness raising and negotiation
making) and the strategic dimensions of identity constructions will be presented as a
base for the later empirical study of community protests in Hong Kong.

Then comes the methodological discussion in Chapter 3. The research will be
conducted through individual interviews with social workers and participants,
document analysis of the community work team and the media framing of three
community tasks groups in the target estate. All these are aimed at exploring the
subjective understandings of both the mobilizing agents and the constituents on the
‘identity’ issues within group and at the public discursive level. In addition,
participant observations are used on micro-mobilization level and in action episodes
to show that the small group context is the most immediate space for emerging
alternative and oppositional collective identities.

In Chapter 4, I shall present the contextual background of the fieldwork
settings, which are situated in a public housing estate under redevelopment. The
community profile, the inhabitants’ background, the redevelopment issues and the
organizational institutions will be listed out to demonstrate the immediate context
under which the identity construction process is undergoing.

The major findings of the field research will be reported in the subsequent
Chapters 5, 6, and 7. The three chapters will be structured to analyze the identity
construction process among three community task groups. Every group will be
illustrated with its salient characteristics along one of the three composing axis of identity construction process: the boundary setting, the consciousness raising and the negotiation making. It is suggested that these three composing axes should be better understood as inter-dependent and overlapping phenomena in reality. Particular attentions will be given to both the conscious and implicit strategies and tactics of the community work teams in negotiating a kind of ‘movement identity’ among the residents.

The thesis will be concluded by a summary of findings and postulations concerning identity building in small-scale community-based urban protests. The inadequacies of present research will be outlined and the line of further research areas and improvement will be discussed.
Chapter 2:

Literature Review and Analytical Framework

The study of social movement has a long history of development and has generated different theories to explain movement mobilization (Garner, 1997). Most of these theories are about mobilization theories and thus the question of how and why people participate in social movements remains their core concern.

The issue about the role of collective in mobilization, however, has received more attention only recently. The emergence of different kinds of New Social Movements (NSMs) in the 1980s highlighted the importance of the collective identity of social movements. A cultural approach was suggested for the exploration of the ideational factors. In this approach, the focal theoretical concern is meaning interpretation of social actors, instead of those factors highlighted by the structural approach, such as class positions, opportunity structures and social network, etc. The general question posed is which kinds of collective identity will generate, sustain or hamper collective action?

Following this cultural approach, we shall put forward the questions in this research about the identity construction process and its effect on the mobilization of community-based urban protests. In the following sessions, I shall first review and discuss the differences between the 'structural approach' and the 'cultural approach' in respect to social movement studies (Klandermans and Hank eds., 1995; Cerulo,
Among this newly developed cultural approach, I find the Framing Theory, though with its own inadequacy, is particularly insightful for us to illustrate the construction of ‘collective identity’ in community based movement.

This section is followed by our discussion on analytical concepts: namely the ‘identity framing’ understood as the ongoing process and the ‘collective identity frame’. We then turn to the discussion about the usefulness of integrating the concepts of ‘collective identity’ with ‘framing theory’ at operational level. Together with these concepts, an analytical framework is suggested, of which the three axes (boundary setting, consciousness raising and negotiation making) and the strategic dimension of identity construction are the analytical dimensions that can show the competition of the identity framing process. This framework will be used in our case studies as shown in the subsequent chapters.

I. Review of Social Movement Literatures

In the following sections, we shall discuss the ‘structural’ and ‘cultural’ approaches in social movement studies and point out the reason for the increasing interest in the concept of ‘collective identity’. We shall argue that in the structural approach the role of collective identity in movement mobilization has not been adequately conceptualized, while in the cultural approach, on the processual nature of social protests and the cultural embeddedness of social actors that is well-captured. Recently, the Framing Theory within the cultural approach has attempted to bridge the gap between the two seemingly contradictory approaches through the concept of
‘framing’. In our view, the concept of framing deserves greater attention in the case of studying the meaning interpretation and interactions of social actors towards external unjust situations at the micro-organizational level.

1. Structural Approach:

The Structural approach here refers to three theories, namely the classical Marxist Theory, the Collective Behavior Theory and the Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT). These theories share the view that structural conditions are more important than meaning interpretation in the mobilization process.

a) Classical Marxist Theory

The notion of collective identity can be traced back to the classical discussion of Marxist theory on class struggle (Marx and Engels, 1978). In the Marxist’s view, the identity issue is viewed as much relating to working class consciousness. Nevertheless, working class consciousness is regarded as corresponding to the objective interest of the working class and given that there is discrepancy between the consciousness and the objective class position. The oppressed people are recognized as blinded by the presence of false consciousness. The problems of movement identities then are reduced to whether working class activists are able to eliminate false consciousness and to foster politically correct revolutionary ambitions.

This straightforward and automatic translation from class-in-itself to class-for-itself, however, has been criticized as class-reductionism (Pahl, 1978). Critics argued
that the theory was too elitist in the way that the working class was assumed to be unable to acquire their self-awareness to understand their own position. Because of this problematic assumption, the Marxists are not interested in the mobilization process of the working class and thus have left the issues about opportunities and resources distribution for movement mobilization unanswered. In the Marxist approach, little attention has been paid to the formation process of group identity that is not class-based, nor on the process of mobilization mediated by the organization and the participation of the constituents.

b) Collective Behavior Theory

Collective Behavior (CB) theorists put the notion of ‘collective identity’ in a more psychological tune (Smelser, 1962 and Turner and Killian, 1987). They asserted that social movement activists and followers are somewhat different from the ordinary people in sharing grievance and generalized beliefs. They are a collectivity encountering a common chaotic situation with which they are unable to cope. Collective behavior becomes a way for them to reduce psychological strains. Thus the CB theorists tend to regard the movement participants’ behavior as irrational and aggressive resulting from the ‘loss’ rather than the ‘acquisition’ of identity, a problem arising for the mal-adaptation to the rapid social change.

Such a pathological view of the participant’s identity, in effect, hampers our further investigation into the purposeful orientation and rational accomplishment of different collective actions, which are always established from strong identification.
of a common identity. Obviously, the Collective Behavior theorists have neglected the differential reaction of individuals and organizational mediation of grievances that are the core concerns in the Resource Mobilization Theory.

c) Resource Mobilization Theory

In the 1970s, the Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) was put forward and became dominant in the discussion of social movements (McCarthy and Zald, 1977). Taking discontents and grievances as constant, RMT theorists directed their attention to the network building and the resource acquisition work of the social movement organizations (SMOs). Guided by a rational choice assumption, the theorists argued that the identity of the participants is regarded as determinant by a prior interest derived from pre-existing political cleavages of individuals. Collective identity is assumed to be present before organizational articulation and the organizer just has to make it visible and transform it into political demands.

Such a conception of collective identity, however, has been commented to be too narrow and problematic, and critics maintain that RMT’s understanding on the concept of ‘interest’ and ‘resources’ is premature. Firstly, as Calhoun criticized, identity cannot be captured adequately by the notion of interest in RMT’s terms (Calhoun, 1991). People do not make cost and benefit calculation in a social vacuum. They rather do the calculation with other people. The social and interactive process involved in cost-benefit analysis should not be ignored. Secondly, people may not make rational calculation, but through social action voice out a moral outrage
towards an unjust situation. Thirdly, the RMT theorists fail to recognize the importance of collective identity as an alternative form of incentives for participation and a decisive factor for adopting strategies (Downey, 1986). Bearing a narrow and over-generalized utilitarian logic, RMT theorists are unable to comprehend the value rationality of human beings and left the first group of critical mass just unexplained (Gamson, Rytina and Fireman, 1982). Buechler has argued for a higher theoretical significance attached to the collective identity than to self-interest rational calculation,

"For many mobilizations, the most central process is the social construction of collective identity that is symbolically meaningful to participants and that logically precedes any meaning calculation of the costs and benefits of joining in collective action." (Buechler, 1993: 228)

Lastly, in most of the grassroots movement, the scarcity of resource is always a problem and the only kind of resource which can be mobilized mostly is the 'human resource', such as manpower, disruptive tactics and numbers of people (Piven and Cloward, 1979). The mobilization of such kinds of resources is much different from that of other types of 'material' ones like equipment and money, because human beings are able to comprehend social meanings. There involves critical and intensive consciousness raising and interaction process between the participants, the organization and the unjust situation (Klandermans, 1984). The process may reach a consensus that helps to determine at the very first moment the range of 'resource' to be mobilized. In turn, a common identity can be seen as a kind of symbolic resource that helps to initiate and sustain mobilization.
All in all, we can see that in the ‘structural approach’, the presence of ‘structure’ is assumed to be critical to the rise of social movements. For the Classical Marxists, the structure stands for ‘economic/class structure’, for the Collective Behavior theorists, the rapid change social structure shapes the individual ‘psychic structure’ and lastly for the theorists of RMT the ‘social movement organizational structure’ matters. Their common postulates are: a) assuming an one-way effect of the ‘structure’ on the mobilization process, hence the basic unit of analysis must be those factors related to ‘structures’; and b) assuming a static and single identity of every collectivity determined by the structure.

The inadequacy of ‘structural’ explanations lies in these two assumptions. First, in the process of mobilization, it is important to see how human actors give meaning, establish attitudes and make response to those external structures. The identification of the presence or absence of structure cannot predict how the movement participants actively interpret and respond to the unjust situation. Secondly, there is no ground to assume that a collectivity has its own ‘essence’ and a fixed identity. Social actors can get their ‘multiple identities’ embedded in social environment, and some of them turn out to be salient in some situation, while the others are kept silent in other situations. Furthermore, the mobilization action can also create movement identity in return. As a result, we should better conceive movement identity as both a social process and a product developing in a particular period of time.
Based on the critique of the inadequacies of the ‘structural’ approach in explaining mobilization, there came an increasing interest in the study of subjective meaning and the identity formation in the mid-1980’s. This new turn was originated from the ‘cultural approach’ in which the foci are mainly on ideational factors, social psychological dynamics and the meaning construction process of social protests.

2. Cultural Approach:

Different from the ‘structural approach’ that centers on the structural factors affecting mobilization, the ‘cultural approach’ focuses on the ideational factors in the mobilization process, like values and ideologies, social psychological dynamics and the meaning construction process (Klandermans and Hunt eds., 1995; Hart, 1996; Kane, 1997; Polletta, 1997; Giugni, 1998). The variables in the previous social movement researches, such as resources, opportunity, grievance, network, etc. have all been replaced or given new comprehension. In this approach, human actors are treated as social actors having their social worlds and making decisions according to values and morality. It is argued that no structural contradiction can be developed, no opportunities can be grasped, and no resource can be mobilized without the active participation and interpretation of situation by movement leaders and their constituency.

This cultural turn of social movement study embraces different areas of concerns. Our discussion here will be concerned with three main strands of cultural theory, namely the New Social Movement Theory (NSM), the New Social
Psychological Theory (SPT) and the Framing Theory.

a) New Social Movement Theory:

The proliferation of various identity movements, like the black movement, the peace movement, the woman movement, etc. from the late 1960’s onwards directed the social movement students to investigate their outbreak and meanings. The NSM that emerged in the 1980’s has promoted the notion of collective identity explicitly.

From the view of the more cultural oriented version of NSM theorists perspective, the new movements stand for new kinds of struggle in the process of producing symbolic codes (Buechler, 1995). Many of these identity movements have arisen and posed themselves as a symbolic challenge to the post-modern world through their affirmative action, which aimed at establishing new social values (Melucci 1985). From this perspective, the theorists asked the very question of ‘who we are’ and ‘how we are treated’ in face of blurring boundaries between contrasting values and beliefs. As reminded by Melucci:

“Solidarity as an objective is another characteristic of the new social movements. The struggle centers around the issue of group identity; there is a return to the criterion ofascriptive membership (sex, race, age, locality) which is the form taken by revolt against change directed from above.” (Melucci, 1980: 220)

However, the macro-social tendency of this version of NSM theorists in another way round seems to take the collective identity issue too distinctive to those new movements. We do not find many reasons to support the claim that the discussion of collective identity should limit only to the so-called ‘identity-based’ movements. As we have stated before, all kinds of self-claimed movements concern
both the material and symbolic struggle at both political and cultural level, as in the case of community-based movements. This view is similar to what Calhoun argued,

"The constitution of identity, then, is a crucial concern for the study of social movements in all historical and cultural settings." (Calhoun, 1991: p.52)

The NSM theorists regard movement participants only as the carriers of these value changes in contemporary societies and leave little room for the creativity of movement actors. NSM theorists thus fall short of accounting for the exact process of meaning construction. Taylor and Whittier once pointed out this necessity to offer a practical framework as a supplementary of NSM:

"Despite the centrality of collective identity to new social movement theory, no one has dissected the way that constituencies involved in defending their rights develop politicalized group identities." (Taylor and Whittier, 1992:105)

As they commented, NSM theorists offer us little conceptual framework that can help to analyze the multiple dimensions of collective identities at various analytical levels.

b) Social Psychological Theory:

In the 1980s, some analysts have pointed out the neglect of social psychological process in movement mobilization. They reminded us of the importance of consciousness raising and conceptualized this process in terms of ‘cognitive liberation’, ‘injustice frame’ or ‘consensus mobilization’ (McAdam, 1982; Gamson et. al., 1982; Klandermans, 1984). These kinds of reminder have been well taken by the Social Psychological strand in the study of new social movements.

Klandermans in particular has worked out two concepts for the study of the
social psychological processes involving in movement mobilization, i.e. 'consensus mobilization' which asks for the sharing of grievance and 'action mobilization' that helps to motivate the constituents to take actions. Only when these attitudes have turned into actions could the 'mobilization potential' of a collective be realized (Klandermans, 1984). Gamson also identified the significance of movement identity by stating that it is accomplished by enlarging the personal identity of a constituency to include the relevant collective identities as part of their definition of self (Gamson, 1991).

According to this perspective, the study of 'collective identity' is the study of the process in negotiating a kind of 'contentious identities'. It has been formed by linking the 'individual' and the 'social' identity and through an enlargement and mutual expectation process. This help answer the very questions as to why and how some individuals are persuaded to taken action, but not the others (Gamson, 1992; Kelly and Breinlinger, 1996; Klandermans, 1997).

In comparison with the Collective Behavior Theory, SPT has improved much by locating the collective action on the sharing of collective belief between individuals and collective. However, this theory was still criticized by Snow et. al. as that:

"But that decision-making process has tended to be treated mechanically and processual...little attention is given to the actual process by which certain lines of action to be defined as more or less risky, morally imperative in spite of associated risks, or instrumentally pointless." (Snow et. al, 1986: 446)

On the one hand, some version of SPT has assumed an unnecessary steps-like
sequence in the development of participation, which makes participation activities rather one way (Klandermans and Oegema, 1987). In reality, the participants have to anticipate and evaluate their participation towards themselves and the others all along the participation process. On the other hand, equating psychological traits to identity are not helpful for us to recognize the importance of cultural influence already exerted on individuals before and after the mobilization process. In short, social movement in itself is more an interactive cultural making activity than a social-psychological phenomenon only.

c) Framing theory:

According to della Porta and Diani, there are mainly two different ways to conceptualize the relationship between movement and culture (della Porta and Diani, 1999). The first is to study the values and principles held by individuals and concerns, while the second is to treat culture as ‘cognitive praxis’ that could be drawn in various situations to construct a set of guideline (Kriesi, 1992; Inglehart, 1990; Eyerman and Jamison 1991, Swidler, 1986). It is the second view of culture, according to which the source of ‘interpretative frames’, has deserved our more detail discussions and received greater attention recently.

Aiming at bridging the SPT and the RMT initially, Snow and his colleagues suggested the idea of framing (Snow, et al. 1986; Snow and Benford, 1988 and 1992). Inspired by Goffman’s discussion of ‘frame’, they shifted their attention to the study of the strategic work of SMOs in aligning constituents (Goffman, 1974).
According to Snow and Benford, framing in this sense is moderated as:

"an interpretative schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences and sequences of action within one's present or past environment. (Snow and Benford 1992:137)

In this way, 'framing' is regarded as an interpretative tool that can be manipulated by the leaders of SMOs. Framing serves the functions of attribution of blame, suggesting solutions, and motivating collective action and each function has a corresponding 'collective action frame', namely the diagnostic frame, the prognostic frame and the motivational frame (Snow, et. al., 1986). In the mobilization process, the strategic decisions of the SMO leader in appropriating various cultural symbols to persuade its constituents has been highlighted. Mobilization is viewed as the process of linking the organizer's 'movement frame' to the 'mental box' for individual adherents in achieving an alignment or resonance. In short, it is a process of establishing collective interpretation of the movement itself and of the external 'injustice'.

Accordingly, the product of a frame alignment process, the 'collective action frame', can be achieved through four kinds of strategies including frame bridging, extension, elaboration and transformation (Snow and Benford, 1988). When the analytical level moves from individual-movement level to the inter-movement level, there comes a 'master frame' governing not only one, but also a cluster of movements in contest with the boarder cultures. The mobilizing potency of a specific movement depends then on the fulfillment of some other sets of factors, which are
related to the culture of wider society and the cycle of protest (Snow and Benford, 1992).  

The massive application of the framing theory thereafter has yielded many impressive empirical studies (Entman and Rojecki, 1993; Swart, 1995; Johnston, 1997; Cornfield and Fletcher, 1998). In recent years, there have also developed more and more comprehensive reviews, either internal or external, of the entire approach gradually to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses (Benford, 1997; Hart, 1996; Jasper, 1997; Kane, 1997).

Benford offered his internal critique, pointing out that there were many inadequacies in this perspective. Firstly, there were not many operational definitions for the concept of framing. Secondly, the framing studies were tended to be over descriptive, ignoring the role of participants and their emotion involved. Thirdly, they were accused of treating framing as ‘real things’ from the leader’s perspective only and it occurred in a one-step fashion (Benford, 1997).

The framing perspective was also criticized by those theorists not sympathetic to this approach of leaving the complicated relationship between culture and movement unexplained. The strategic orientations and autonomy of movement organizers in mobilizing constituents were exaggerated, while the constraining effect of prevailing culture was neglected. This problem has been illustrated in the dilemma of the SMO on deciding whether to break or adopt a culturally resonant in collective action (Hart, 1996). Another problem of the framing theory is that it directs
researcher’s attention to the time of recruitment, but not to individual biography throughout the recruitment process, and the relationship between a SMO and the broader culture context. As revealed by Jasper,

"Frames resonate with potential recruits precisely because these recruits already have certain visions of the world, moral values, political ideologies, and affective attachments." (Jasper, 97:77)

It has been pointed out that there were other aspects of collective action (e.g. emotional and narrative) present in social movement culture, and those aspects could render the outcome of collective action unstable. Kane’s has argued that:

"Meaning construction is at least as emotional as it is cognitive and strategic; meaning construction is a widely collective endeavor and not the preserve of the few; and finally, movement outcomes, because they are partially structured by cultural transformation, are contingent and unpredictable because the process of symbolic transformation is so indeterminate" (Kane 1997: 271)

Nonetheless, the framing theory is still among the few that can direct our focus on both the strategic and discursive dimensions of meaning construction and interpretation in social movement. These framing studies shifted the focus from the individual-SMO level to the very relationship of movement and culture. Movement mobilization in this case cannot be reduced to the individual cognitive and psychological structure but must be supplemented with a cultural explanation at a higher level. As a result, the ‘structural’ and ‘cultural’ approaches are united with a combined emphasis on both the organizational strategies and meaning consumption through culturally informed process.

One of the most critical tasks of strategic framing, as we shall illustrate, is to build up a collective identity by which group solidarity and cohesion are constructed
and reconstructed in ongoing fashion at various analytical levels. Thus, we maintain that the discussion on the concept of framing can be much improved if the following three main problems can be recognized in the future empirical studies. They are the under-theorization of the disputes and dynamics within a SMO, the counter framing of the opposing parties as well as the indeterminacy in understanding ‘framing’ as a process and product.  

To sum up, the new value components, the social psychological dimension and the interpretative frames of social protests have all been taken seriously within the newly developed cultural perspective. By investigating the cultural dimensions of movement mobilization, we can explore the cultural-conducive factors and the meaning making process in social movements and acquire more information about the dynamics and complexities in the mobilization process.

II. Integrating the Study of Framing and Collective Identity

As guided by the discussions on the Framing theory, the congruence between the strategic consideration of the SMO leaders in the interpretation of the undesirable situation and those of the constituent’s understanding is the most important factor affecting mobilization. Among the various types of the interpretative work, I would step further to find the framing process and its product on the very definition of the ‘collective identity’ in order to show that understanding the ‘identity’ of the collective is a prerequisite of the other framing works. In this section, I shall suggest integrating the notion of ‘collective identity’ with the concept of ‘framing’ by
distinguishing the process and product of identity construction in movement. The discussion summarized in this section will then be utilized to develop an analytical framework at the next section.

1. The Study of Collective Identity:

The central importance of the identity issue was first recognized by Melucci’s in the 1980’s (Melucci, 1985). He argued that collective identity should not be taken as a ‘thing’ and the collective dimension of social action did not exist as ‘given’ (Melucci, 1988:330). He rejected the view that there existed a kind of fixed and out-there collective identity. Collective identity should be regarded as fluid, ever changing and always involved ongoing negotiation and contests. It was also this collective that made real the process of interpreting resource, incentives, opportunities and discontent. In this way, Melucci declared that

"Collective identity is an interactive and shared definition produced by several individuals and concerned with the orientations of action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which the action takes place" (Melucci, 1988: p.342)

Melucci did not take ‘collective identity’ as a precondition leading to successful mobilization, but as constitutive to social protests. This view implies that ‘collective identity’ itself is possibly shaped and reshaped in the mobilization process. Nevertheless, Melucci still offered few guidelines for working out an operational framework to conduct empirical study. Instead, different theorists have suggested several much more practical tools for analyses by distinguishing the various dimensions and components as well as operational and organizational levels
in the construction of collective identity.

When discussing the lesbian and gay movements, Bernstein distinguished three analytical dimensions of ‘collective identity’ in movement, namely the empowerment, the goals and the strategy (Bernstein, 1997). The strategic dimension of identity construction is associated with the autonomy of the organizers when making identity construction, which is highly flexible and situational in nature. The ‘collective identity’ formulated in this case can be situational rather than a unitary one, as well as a blurred rather than a clear one (Pulido, 1996; Gamson, J., 1995). In many occasions, organizers in fact do not invent a new identity, but only deploy cultural identities in tradition and recreate it in a new way (Polletta, 1994). In this case, the multiple identity of a historically situated individual must be comprehended with reference to the boarder culture.

In analyzing American lesbian feminist movement, Taylor and Whittier offered three main components for the study of collective identity. They are boundary setting (us-them distinction), consciousness raising (interpretative frameworks) and negotiation making (meaning contest in public/private life) (Taylor and Whittier, 1992). They argued that the three components interact closely with each other in forming a ‘collective identity’ for political mobilization. Many analysts utilized this analytical framework and found it useful for empirical analysis (Gerson and Peiss, 1985; Margolis, 1985; Nagel, 1994; Kuumba and Ajanaku, 1998). Ellingson also demonstrated the effect of events interpretation on the subsequent
framing works, while Fantasia proposed a kind of collective consciousness, known as 'culture of solidarity', emerging in the course of collective action (Ellingson, 1995; Fantasia, 1988). In this way, even the non-verbal behaviors of the collective in particular events and collective action can also be transformed into a collective sense of 'us' and 'them'.

In summary, the empirical research reminded us that collective identity was a social construction that could be understood through the different analytical axis or dimensions. The dynamics of various actors (including the individuals, the SMOs and the public) would result in the formation of different identities that served as the collective action. Hence, a sense of 'we' or 'like minded individuals' is developed and provided a basic infrastructure for the interpretation of grievance, defining injustice, identifying antagonist and mobilizing subsequent action.

2. Framing Collective Identities

Having reviewed the discussions on both the Framing Theory and Collective Identity, we can easily identify a common constructivist and interactionist perspective among the two of them. In fact, there are more and more discussions developed recently by synthesizing the two previous mentioned literatures together for studying mobilization (Snow, Benford and Hunt, 1994; Coy and Woehrle, 1996; Silver, 1997). In this new line of work, they pose the very question as to the process and result in 'framing' the 'identity' of a collective and its differential effects on mobilization.
a) Relating ‘Framing’ with ‘Collective Identity’

The relation between the concepts of ‘framing’ and ‘collective identity’ was
revealed lately. Gamson suggested that there should be three components within a
collective action frame: ‘injustice’, ‘agency’, and the ‘identity’ frame. These more
specific frames can be used to study the process of defining a clear ‘we’ and even an
elusive ‘they’ for effective mobilization (Gamson, 1992a). Snow, Benford and Hunt
also suggested that the boundary framing between protagonists, antagonists and
bystanders is essential for analyzing the identity fields of movement.

“As our observation suggest, framing and identity construction process are
interconnected in a dynamic, almost recursive fashion”, (Snow, Benford and Hunt,
1994:203)

In this sense, the notion of identity is indeed a basic integral part in the
concept of framing, while collective identity exists both as the cause and result of the
framing process. In short, the relationship between framing work and collective
identity is ‘dialectical’ (Coy and Woehrle, 1996). On the one hand, the framing work
on ‘collective identity’ has presumed the other framing works, including attribution
of blame, suggestion of solution, motivation of action as well as understanding
urgency. On the other hand, these other framing works can constraint and facilitate
the identification of the boundary and setting the boundary of collective identity. In
other words, the collective identity reinforces the content, forms and legitimacy of a
specific collective action frame; and conversely, the other framing activities of SMO
can shape the collective identity of the organizations in return.
The 'identity frame' is then the most essential component among other types of frames, while the relationship between the 'collective identity' and 'framing' as a whole is reciprocal and mutual reinforcing. We have to take up a definition about 'who we are' first before we can decide why a situation is unjust, how it can improve, what we can do and when it is urgent. It is the discursive practice on the identity which underlines the other interpretative works.

b) Developing the concepts of 'Identity Framing' and 'Collective Identity Frame'

After clarifying the symbiotic relations between 'framing' and 'collective identity', I shall go further to integrate the insights offered by both of them. As mentioned above, framing collective identity can be both a process and a product at the same time. If we want to capture better such a kind of highly dynamic phenomenon, I suggest distinguishing two separated theoretical constructs analytically in an attempt to study their mutual constraints and reinforcement. Accordingly, I suggest the concept 'identity framing' to signify the ongoing process and the 'collective identity frame' as the temporal product of identity construction in movement mobilization.

'Identity framing' in this sense is the multi-dimensional process (including boundary setting, consciousness raising and negotiation making) which is formulated through the interaction of various social actors. This process is also a politicization process emerging in an ongoing manner. 'Collective identity frame' then is an identity specific frame, which helps to align the organization's collective identity.
with those of the individual participants. This particular and symbolic cultural theme once formulated will become the most fundamental interpretative framework in the other ongoing framing works, including diagnosing unjust situation, advising solutions and motivating further actions. In the theoretical sense, these two concepts occur in a reciprocal way.

More importantly, by formulating ‘identity framing’ and ‘collective identity frame’ in this way, we can go deeper in investigating into its effect on mobilization, inaction or even demobilization. Meaning assigning work of SMOs is ever embedded in a specific social and cultural context, which cannot be held by its own exclusively. Accordingly, identity frame alignment can be a problem either resulting from the frame dissonance with its internal adherents or for a failure in frame disputes with the outside parties. As Adair has made it clear:

“To state the obvious, the degree of association or dissociation between individuals sense of who they are and a collective action frame will influence the degree of movement activity” (Adair, 1996: 354)

We may then postulate that the problems of identity framing may happen at two scenarios: a) the SMO may succeed in retaining their own definition of ‘collective identity’ or: b) the SMO may lose in the struggle and adopt the counter identity frame constructed by opponents. ¹

To conclude, we suggest an interactive, interpretative and process-oriented understanding of ‘collective identity’ from the perspective of Framing Theory. We regard the ‘framing’ of ‘collective identity’ as both a process and a product that
occur reciprocally. In this view, ‘collective identity’ can neither be manipulated by organizational effort nor given by preexisting structures only, but exists as an ‘manufactured product’ of the active construction of human agency within the constraints and opportunities of prevailing cultural and social environment. It is the ongoing articulation and re-articulation of the identity of a collective that trigger off a movement and make it sustained over time which has allowed our observation.

III. Analytical Framework Proposed:

According to the theoretical discussion mentioned above, an analytical framework is then suggested to articulate the complex process and results of collective identity construction. It is then utilized to explore the collective identity of public housing residents towards the mobilization of housing protests in Hong Kong. Their place-based character provides a well-confined micro-context for observing how the actors ‘frame’ and ‘reframe’ their transient identities in various frequent interactions, or in other words, community protests are suitable to illustrate the framing process and result leading to political participation. All in all, the present case is a study of social movement mobilization in general, but community protests in particular.

In brief, the identity construction in social protests can be conceptualized as the mutual interactions between the ‘identity framing’ and ‘collective identity frame’ within a confined context and across multiple analytical levels. Acknowledging the construction of collective identity may be strategic, emergent
and interactive, I propose a relational and process-oriented framework to illustrate the issue as illustrated by Figure 1.

![Identity Construction in Micro-mobilization Context and its Effect on Mobilization](image)

We shall further identity the three composing axes: the boundary, the consciousness, and the negotiation components. The three axes and the strategic dimensions of identity framing construction are shown. The boundary-setting component helps to determine the us-them distinction both inside and outside an SMO, while the consciousness component figures out the content and meanings of the identity frames. Lastly, the negotiation dimension directs our attention to the interaction between different social actors.

To elaborate, we have identified different areas of concern within each component of collective identity construction process more specifically.

1. The Boundary Setting

We suggest that the boundary setting can be operated at intra-organizational and inter-organizational levels, configure the identity fields and are constructed in a
manifest and latent way. Firstly, the intra- and inter-organizational levels refer to the internal categorizations within groups and the external categorizations between groups. A group has to construct its member’s identities both within SMO and with other SMOs. Secondly, boundary setting is important in distinguishing the various fields of actors, namely the protagonists, the antagonists and the bystanders, for the group to act and react upon respectively. Thirdly, boundary setting can be constructed in a manifest, active and explicit way by the workers, as well as in a latent, voluntary and implicit way. The former refers mostly to the conscious attempt of the organizers, while the latter to the reaction of the members. We shall show that the boundary framing process, as an interaction accomplishment, can be highly fluid and conditioned by the situational and strategic decisions.

2. The Consciousness Raising

The consciousness making can also be divided into a cognitive and emotional dimension. The former dimension is related to the politicization process of the movement identity conducted in a more general way in performing the core framing tasks and a more particular way in appropriating various ‘collective identity frames’, while the latter dimension concerns the affections exercised in the group process. Accordingly, we suggest first examine the four core framing tasks of a group: the diagnostic, prognostic, motivational and urgency framing, then the articulation of the various types of ‘collective identity frames’ manipulated in the mobilization process. This meaning assigning process is in fact to link up the individual experience to a
structural problem out there. Besides the cognitive recognition of movement identity, an extra emotional dimension in social protests should also be addressed.

3. The Negotiation Making

Finally, since there is always more than one party that exists in the identity negotiation process, the dynamics between various social actors determine much the result. These dynamics are particularly acute in two significant spheres: the internal dynamics between activists and constituents and the external conflicts with the opposing parties. In other words, the negotiation making also involves an internal and external process. We shall show that the implicit identity dilemmas between paid activists and voluntary activists and the explicit competition of the SMO and the opposing parties can strongly affect the decision and direction of identity framing and the subsequent result on mobilization.

In short, the identity construction of a collective is an ongoing and interactive process developed at the multiple organizational level and within the socio-cultural environments. The three dimensions are formulated in an interactive way with one another. The framework is then applied to the subsequent empirical cases.

IV. Summary of the discussions

To conclude this chapter, we suggest the study of collective identity construction process and product in community mobilization from the insights of the Framing Theory. Inspired by the social constructionist view of Framing Theory, it is not the objectively existing structure, nor the subjectively felt discontent that can
explain mobilization fully. We should regard political mobilization as a more complicated and dynamic process in which the structural imperatives, the organizing agents and the subjective perception of the actors are intermingled.

The traditional dilemmas faced by students of social movement have to be solved by giving equal weighting to the structure and the agency sides, which are both mediated by a meaning construction process. The proposed analytical concept of ‘identity framing’ may help to indicate the ongoing process of identity construction along three axes and one particular strategic dimension. And the ‘collective identity frame’ can be of help by emphasis on the mobilization potency of the temporal product in aligning member’s identification between them and the SMO’s. As a result, both the ongoing process and the temporal product in identity construction are fully captured.

The fluidity of collective identity construction can be further articulated by the study of the three axes at the same time, namely the boundary setting, the consciousness making and the negotiation making. As for the boundary setting, what should be studied are its manifest and latent construction, the consciousness raising its cognitive and emotive dimensions, while the negotiation making its internal and external interactive process.

To put it into a more concrete illustration, the community-based mobilization may be one of the best examples to examine the identity issues. In the second half of the thesis (Chapter 5,6,7), I shall then concentrate on analyzing the three composing
axis of identity construction process in an empirical case study of the mobilizations of three different community groups. Each dimension will be illustrated from one among the three groups' daily organizational activities and with specific emphasis on SMO's strategic considerations. Before presenting the fieldwork findings, we shall introduce the methodological issues and methods used as well as the information on the fieldwork settings in the next two chapters.
Notes:
1 The first set relates to the content of the frame, which refers to the performance of the previously mentioned three core framing tasks. The second and third sets concern the internal constraints of the larger belief system in society and the resonance with the life world of potential participants in the way of having empirical credibility, empirical credibility and narrative fidelity. Finally, the fourth set refers to the cycle of protest in which movements are embedded.

2 Firstly, in the case in which a SMO involves SMO leaders (especially the external paid activists) and members, it is possible to find disputes between two parties. The paid activists' own identity may not be compatible and consistent with those of the adherents. An overly simplistic treatment of movement identity neglects how complex is the dynamic between the organizer and the organized. The interaction or disputes between the activists and the adherents' identity may yield a different effect on mobilization.

Secondly, the present framing theory tends to mislead us to think as if the 'framing' of an issue which can be manipulated wholly by the organizers on their own. On the contrary, the organizers often take part in formulating 'framing' in such a way that they tend to deny the problems to be unjust, solution as effective, and action as feasible. Frame disputes are discussed more within one SMO over time or between movement organizations (Benford, 1993a; Marullo, 1996), but less between the authorities and the movement (Evans, 1997; Nepstad, 1997). Looking from this way, we suggest that the 'framing' concept must be broadened to include the one imposed by the opposite actors in the forms of 'counter framing'.

Thirdly, it is too often to perceive 'framing' as either a process or a product in meaning interpretation process. Sometimes, 'framing' tends to be reified as a 'thing', while at the other times, it is identified as a process involving various dynamics. To clarify this issue, it is better to perceive it as both a process and a product at the same time. Only for the analytical purpose should we distinguish them into two separate constructs in order to study the dynamics of the formation of collective frame. Utilizing the Framing Theory in this way to study the process and product on constructing collective identity in movement may bring fruitful results.

4 In the former case, mobilization level will depend on whether the constituency and a SMO can develop various strategies to deploy the cultural resources and sustain their exclusive definition on their own identity, while in the later case mobilization just may not happen, or may be submerged. It is particularly the second case that cannot be articulated by outside observer easily since inaction is not visible.
Chapter 3:
Methodology

This chapter begins with discussing various methodological issues in studying collective identity frames. Then, we shall present the various criteria for the selection of cases and the data collection methods related to this study. It is important to stress that these three parts are mutually affecting the others.

1. Methodological and Analytical Issues:

Even if we have made clear the importance of studying the process and products of collective identity, but how can we achieve it? As Benford observed, frame analysis may simply remain under-theorized, especially in the fields of social movement studies (Benford, 1997). Systematic discussion on the methodology for frame analysis is still just few and far between (Johnston, 1995). Considering the fluid and changing character of collective identity frame, particular kinds of methods have to operate the concept and analyze the data collected.

Generally speaking, culture can be best analyzed first as cultural tool kits. As stepping further into the stage of conducting frame analysis, various analysts tried different strategies on studying each of the domain as a kind of 'political discourse' which can be manipulated in use as a kind of cultural tool kits (Donati, 1992; Swidler, 1986). Culture making in movement also mainly operates at two distinctive levels, which are the boarder culture level in the society and the organizational level
within the movement (Jasper, 1997). In this study, a little more attention will be
given to the cultural work inside the movement, where the organizational setting is
assumed to be the staging ground for alternative cultural practice.

Accordingly, the manifestation of collective identity frames in the forms of an
ideological construct can further be classified in three different domains, including
on speech utterances, on physical setting, events and action as well as among media
discourse at public level. The first two are more about the culture making within
while the third one is about the meaning interpretation outside movement in
connection with the wider societal culture. They come together as the three
categories of data to be analyzed in the present research. I shall just summarize some
discussions more relevant with the present research.

1. Discourses in speech utterance:

   Recently, qualitative methods like discourse analysis (Steinberg, 1996) and
narrative analysis (Somers, 1996), ethnography study (Turner, 1995) of social
protests rather than some quantitative methods such as the protest events analysis
have received much concern. These kinds of research methods are accompanied by
certain techniques for micro level analysis, like the micro-discursive analysis
suggested by Fine (Fine, 1995). In order to study the frame construction process of
the housing protests, not only the written text, but also the speech and conservation
of the participants and leaders has been found to be relevant, particularly the ones
made in the group situation.
Studying the verbal and written accounts of the participants are found to be significant in accessing the internalization of a particular kind of movement identity framing. The different skills of textual analysis developed in the field of social movement studies, in this case, may be helpful. As suggested by Johnston,

"...there is an inextricable link between discourse and frames: it is through intensive discursive analysis that the mental structures of social movement participants are best reconstructed..." (Johnston, 1995:219)

It is argued that identity can be studied via talks, through narrative analysis or even by vocabularies of motives. They are commonly regarded as political utterances embedded in individual biography, history and culture, which can be articulated as a form of frame alignment (Snow et. al, 1986). Such kinds of discourse analysis can enable us to do empirical research with more systematic and operative devise.  

Identity talk as a rhetoric devise, either in verbal or written forms, can be defined as such:

"Identity talk is defined as a discourse that reflects actor’s perceptions of a social order and is based on interpretations of current situations, themselves, and others" (Benford and Hunt, 1994: 492)

In this way, the subjective and reciprocal identity accounts of both the activists and the adherents towards themselves and the others over a certain period of time can become the data for analysis. Benford and Hunt have consequently suggested four moments of identity constructions from being aware, active, committed and weary (Benford and Hunt, 1994). It is exactly through these accounts, the individual’s identities with associative claims are aligned and meshed with the SMO.

Collective identity discourse can also be demonstrated in specific forms of
narrative account (Somers, 1996). Narrative is similar to talks in its verbal and written forms, but distinctive in the way that it is more elusive and with a storytelling plot specifying the time, place as well as persons who are most likely to be involved. It helps to condense the unique experience of various individuals in becoming a ‘collective’ in an internally consistent and comprehensible way.

Benford further proposed that besides framing activities, construction of vocabularies of motives, or ‘justification for participation’, are another primary mobilization processes (Benford, 1993b). These two interpretative mechanisms jointly affect collective identity in a circular and recursive way. According to Silver, vocabularies of motives can even be subdivided into an instrumental and expressive form, which are closely linked with the boundary framing process:

"...during boundary framing actors simultaneously articulate two vocabularies of motives for movement participation: an instrumental vocabulary about dire, yet solvable, problems and an expressive vocabulary about collective identity. Activists construe their goal-oriented actions as continually aligned with, and fueled by, identity claims." (Silver, 1997: 489)

These expressive vocabularies of motives always take the form as ‘As I am a member of a collective, I will act”. These motives always explain the justification of specific kind of involvement in the mobilization process in return.

All together, identity accounts can be manifested first in the forms of identity talks, narrative accounts and vocabularies of motives. The data found should be conceived as types of much more dynamic, expressive, and literal ‘text’, where we can identify the ‘thematic accounts’ in the fluid form of identity construction.
Accordingly, this research will also utilize the words spoken by the members and organizers in interviews and group, and the internal documents to study the identity construction of the research targets.

2. Physical Setting, Events and Action

Collective identity needs not only to express in discursive forms in verbal or written text only, but it can also be found in rather non-discourse formulation and behavioral acts. Among them, the importance of physical setting and events are always neglected in discussion (Ellingson, 1995). Identity of a collective sometimes may still be easily detected in outer physical appearance and non-verbal cues, like dressing and gesture, if we are cautious enough. But collective identity in the form of physical setting may not be captured for most of the time.  

Human being is also embedded in social settings, which are composed of not only words and text, but also many other aspects in daily social life, like emotions and experiences. As Hercus demonstrated, anger emotion has proved to be a motivating force in feminist collective actions (Hercus, 1999). As an integral part of framing activities, emotion generated in action also helps to facilitate a sense of identity and guide the actors how to feel in particular situation. The emotion, however, is rather difficult to comprehend, but only if we are cautious towards the body gestures and speech tones among the respondents in real social situations, then we can understand more the internal meaning that the actors want to attribute.

3. Competing Discourses in Media

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Not only the written text of the organization and the speech offered by the leaders and followers, but the message conveyed in the public media is also one of the subject of research concerns. Mass media analysis recently is also conducted not in the way of quantitative research but as a content analysis based on the meaning implied in the text (Rucht and Ohlemacher, 1992; Gamson, 1988). Employing textual analysis of news reporting on the debatable issue of disability allowances in Netherlands, Klandermans and Goslinga empirically found the emergence of a particular set of collective action frames in media developed over time, which helped to shape different mobilization levels (Klandermans and Goslinga, 1996).

The contest on the ‘definition’ of the collective identity frames of public housing protests in public has its bearing on the success or failure of the mobilization effort. The media contests of the issue are demonstrated well in the past in a number of issues concerning the Housing Authority and the public housing tenants. As mentioned previously, collective identity construction happens not only within movement, but also with the broader social level. And media is one of these environments in the broader culture and its effect is impressive, especially in the modern societies like Hong Kong where information means a lot. As a result, coverage of and attitudes towards the public housing policies remain to be the indicators for grievance expression, legitimization and mobilization. The analysis of media discourse as a cultural text can be a fruitful method for understanding the process on public identity claims’ struggle in this research.
4. **A Mixed Analytical Method:**

In short, collective identity can be a product of social interaction manifested in various domains in the forms of talks, narratives, vocabularies of motives, physical setting, collective events and mass media materials. All of the above analytical methods may be useful in their own, but best accomplished with participant observations of the personal and interpersonal primary group process because there are the sites where meaning is negotiated and consciousness developed. In my opinion, it is the direct observation in this field site that can integrate the various analytical methods together and triangulate different sources of information. More importantly, the in-depth interviews and documentary analysis supplemented with participation may be more completed, since the subjective identity account of participants must also be understood from their own perspective in a contextual and situational way.

To conclude, the present research data will be collected from various sources in the fieldwork settings, be summarized as the product (thematic topics) and process (the three composing axes) of identity construction and finally be analyzed as a discourse process in mobilizing collective actions.

II. **Selection of Targets of Study**

I shall employ case study method for this study, while the primary concern is on the reconstruction or improvement of existing collective identity theory, rather than only a verification and generalization of theory on empirical level (Yin, 1994: 50
Burawoy, 1991). Accordingly, the cases selected should be the 'abnormal cases', which can enrich the explanatory power of the present theories.

The primary targets of study are focused on three task-oriented community groups, which are included into a community development project. The cases chosen are about a Mark IV to VI redeveloping public housing estate built in 1972-1975, situated in the Ho Man Tin Estate, where a Neighborhood Level Community Development Project (NLCDP) was run by the Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service--Hong Kong (ELCSS). The focus will be concentrated on the identity construction process and product in the group’s daily organizational activities. The duration of fieldwork, the events concerned and the informants identified are subject to cautious screening process based on their respective theoretical and empirical importance.

1. the selection of cases

The present study is a kind of place-based popular movement, which has involved multiple groups of community residents, developed intensive struggles on their very identities over a long history, and been important in numbers as well as action types among the public housing protests. The place-based nature of conflicts has provided the natural setting for observing the whole process and product in generating different types of mobilizing collective identities among the public housing residents. In consideration of the objectives of the present research, three community task groups within one of the public redeveloping housing estates is
selected for a number of reasons.

First of all, studying community mobilizations rather than other identity-based movements empirically is aimed at shedding more lights on the general implications of the identity issues. On the one hand, this kind of collective action involves practical material gain (contrast with the identity-based movements) in terms of better relocation arrangement for the tenants, lower rent, etc. On the other hand, it also stands for a kind of symbolic power struggle towards the state-bureaucratic rule at their immediate neighborhood (contrast with the class-based movements) in terms of the assertion of the use values of housing settlement. In fact, they are the most representative cases that the ordinary citizens organize for defending local interests, resisting felt oppression and asserting perceived social right.

Secondly, these kinds of 'middle age' public housing estates have accommodated multiple types of residents with various social backgrounds and income levels. They were granted flats because of different reasons and therefore were not necessarily working class people. "The variation of income levels among the residents living in these older estates is impressive. " We summarized that the various inhabitant background and income levels of the residents had a great challenge to the organizers in the construction of a kind of 'unitary identity' among the public housing residents. The long history of all those estates hints us that the residents living there may have developed a dense community networks among themselves. They may be very familiar with their communities, more experienced in
living within public rental housing and thus the construction of a kind of ‘collective identity’ may be more possible than other newly built ones.

Thirdly, the housing conflicts actually developed in these redeveloping estates are significant in terms of the coverage of issues, length of period and even militancy of social action. (Lau and Lui, 1992; Luk, 1994) The redeveloping issues have long been the most acute conflicts between the authority and the residents from the very beginning of the redevelopment programs since the 1970’s (HKCSS, 1976). The radical actions taken in these redeveloping estates in the early 1990’s were even caused finally by the arrest of protesters in some cases, which had rarely happened in Hong Kong (Mok and Yu, 1996). In this case, the community protests upheld in redeveloping estates should be quite representative among the general public housing protests in Hong Kong.

Last but not least, the case selected should also allow our observations on the complex dynamics both inside and outside the SMO at both the community and societal levels. As a result, we selected the three community groups, which actively mobilized its constituents and were involved in conflicts with the authority. This kind of locality-based conflicts have all involved the joint efforts of both the paid and volunteer activists in contests with a well-identified ‘bureaucratic’ Housing Department at various levels ranging from group, inter-groups to societal ones. *

To summarize, the specific conflicts derived from the three community tasks groups within a redeveloping estate are important to be study among the general
public housing protests and insightful for studying the identity contests between the various social actors in different organizational levels.

2. The duration of field work

The fieldwork commenced at on 26th September 1998, the time of formal announcement of redevelopment of the Ho Man Tin Estate by the Housing Department (HD). It is assumed that the awareness of the residents towards the upcoming of the redevelopment project would be stronger after that date as the official registration procedure would begin since then. It is also the time span that would guide the interpretations of all the actors involved, including the residents, the social workers, the government officials and even the mass media, as the interactions and conflicts between them became more intense.

The field study ended at the end of May 1999 when the first group of residents (mostly 2-person elderly households) began to move to their new homes, the Sheung Lok Estate. The resettlement of one particular group of residents was finished and it was also the time limit of the researcher himself to leave.

3. The events concerned

In order to limit the scope of investigation, we only focus those community issues that led to the mobilization of the residents in the estate. It is assumed that collective action frames are much more likely and easily to be generated and activated in time of intensive political encounter situations, though some elements of collective action frames may also prevail in people’s daily life (Gamson, Fireman
and Rytina, 1982; Fantasia, 1988; Gamson, 1992). We investigate the topics under study through contested issues, as they may trigger off the dynamics of the identity fields involving the construction of the temporal and multiple ‘collective identity’ of residents affected by redevelopment.

The issues selected may best be falling within the study period and the constant concerns of the residents as verbally expressed by them. In other words, the issues will mostly concern the relocation arrangements or other related matters. The observed issues are supposed to be arenas within which interpersonal interaction between members is facilitated and the public image of the residents is contested. Other events, including the daily interaction patterns of the residents, their informal personal networks and their concerns with other social issues, may also be observed as complementary information.

4. The unit of analysis

The primary unit of analysis is the small group level operating at the estate level, namely the Ho Man Tin Estate Redevelopment Concern Group (RCG), the Ho Man Tin Estate Tenure Concern Group (TCG) and the Happy Hour--Singleton and Cohabitant Senior Citizen Group (SCSCG). This analytical level is understood as linking both the micro-individual and meso-organizational levels in the sense that these community groups have provided the organizational basis for subsequent mobilization of individual members.

This conceptualization helps us to treat the actor’s response as the strategic
choice in identity construction and group process as the staging ground for the emergent collective identity. Accordingly, the individual perception, response and understanding can be understood as a constitutive part of the collective whole of the group. We assume that these small informal groups which met mostly once a week would generate group consciousness in various ways between the members themselves and the mobilizing agents.

5. The identification of key informants

A key informant of the local community can help us to gain access to the field, especially when the research is time-bound. The staff of the Neighborhood Level Community Development Project (NLCDP) was selected as the key informant as it was the most significant social service agent familiar with and involved in mobilizing those housing protests in the community. The researcher also built up connections with the community workers who were more sympathetic to mobilization study.

The encouragement of voluntary participation and the client-centered values of social workers make it convenient for us to investigate the dynamic role of the workers and the active involvement of the residents. Such a kind of contextual setting cannot be easily found in other types of community organizations, such as the local office of political parties, community organizations or other social welfare agencies. The selection criteria of the target project have also been included the willingness and frequency of the community work team in launching social protests.
III. Methods of Data Collection

The framing perspective upheld in the research requires the researcher to conduct the study in an unstructured environment of the actor’s daily interaction. Only in this way can we observe the meaning making process and the situational definition of the residents towards themselves, others and the opposing parties in daily interaction. Considering this, I have adopted the following foci of concern in the data collection methods that are also informed by the current movement literature related to the ‘social construction of social protests’ (Gamson, 1992b). As mentioned above, the ‘collective identity frame’ resulted can be a discursive practice or rhetorical devise via talks, narratives, and vocabularies of motives (Benford and Hunt, 1994; Polletta, 1998 and Benford, 1993b). In this study, we then adopted multiple strategies investigating the daily activities between different social actors that happened at various organizational levels.

With regards to the stages of data collection, the group observations were conducted first, while the individual interviews were conducted in the last stage. The gathering of community information and media materials proceeded throughout the whole study period. Owing to the principle of anonymity, all the names of the respondents and the other characters have been replaced by pseudonym.

To conclude, the data gathered by the present research in the study period have come from the following sources:

-the field notes, process recordings and summary recordings on the
organizational meetings and activities of the tenant’s groups through participant observation

-the unstructured interviews conducted and the informal conservation made between the social workers and the core group members of the tenants groups

-the archival source available and the relevant internal documents of both the NLCDP team and the tenant’s groups

-pamphlets and newsletters delivered by all other community parties including the various political powers and the government departments

-the media reporting materials on relevant community and redevelopment issues

In short, this research has utilized four kinds of data collection methods, namely the participant observations, the unstructured interviews, the internal documents and media record.

1. Participant Observation:

First of all, the participation observation method is adopted in this study. This method is suggested to be particularly suitable for identifying the processual form of ‘collective identity’, because it is activity-oriented and situation-specific in nature. In the daily organizational work, the ‘collective identity’ is confirmed, reconfirmed and transformed in different kinds of activities, ranging from individual talks, group discussions and decision making, to recruitment meetings and encounters with the opponents. With this consideration, only when we enter the day to day interactions
between the organizing agent and the organized over the study period can the
effectiveness of the identity framing strategies and the generation of different
collective identity frames be realized. 10

Concerning the ways of gaining access to the field site, steps started from
initial information gathering from the front-line social workers in the selected estates
through researchers' personal network. And then, the operating agencies of the
community work team were asked for permission to start and discuss about the scope
and focus of the study. Two agencies rejected the researcher's proposal, while
another two welcomed the study. At the end, the researcher selected one of them in
view of the location and the redevelopment stage of the project. Then the researcher
further visited the targeted teams and groups, discussed the rough schedule and
details of the study period and invited their help. It was hoped that the lesser
constraints and freer entry to the site could be obtained through building trustful
relationship with the informants and the respondents at the very beginning.

In this way, the researcher gained permission to participate in most of the
group activities. 11 All the phenomena would then be studied with direct
observations, which are well informed beforehand. In the observation conducted in
the first six months, the researchers took process-recordings in hand in the due
course as far as the situation was possible. These rough handouts would be
transcribed and converted into typewritten records as soon as possible. In turn, the
researcher also offered advice on some issues occasionally and released his personal
background in organizing tenants protests in the nearby estates. The focus of observation was made on the ‘emergent’, ‘strategic’ and ‘interactive’ process of identity construction among the social workers and the residents in relation to the opponents or the third parties.

The social settings and occasions of observations thus have included:

- informal sharing, home visits, personal conversations and daily interactions between the residents

- small group meetings, mass meetings, inter-estate meetings of the residents as well as mass-functions and various social service activities

- preparation and staging of protest actions like demonstration, petition, media appeal action, etc.

- negotiations with government officials, mass media or Legislative Council members

- daily organizational work and communication among the social workers including informal meetings, task group evaluation, team meetings, evaluation and planning meetings, etc.

2. Unstructured Interviews and Informal Conversation:

The study was supplemented by a number of in-depth unstructured interviews and informal conversation on individual basis as a complementary data. Unstructured interviews, or even casual conversation may have the advantages of making clear the subjective way of understanding of respondents, instead of the observation made by
the researcher himself alone. There were the opportunities for the researcher to communicate with the research subjects to adjust the previous interpretation and propositions (Burgess, 1984).

The targeted interviewees were the tenants in the groups and social workers in the team. They were asked two sets of similar questions separately. The tenants were asked about their housing history, daily community life, enrollment and participation process, opinions towards the roles of social workers and efficacy of collective action, etc. The questions for the social workers were related to the history of development and original design of the structure and objectives of the groups, the evaluation of the strategies adopted and the future planning of the team.

The interviews were conducted in a causal manner and were made use of as platforms to exchange views with the interviewees. All of the interviewers were encouraged to modify whatever questions they wanted as they wished. In the process, they were challenged about their decisions and asked to comment back on the researcher's temporal findings in a reciprocal way in order to enrich the interpretations of the data collected. The answers of this small sample gave us a brief to and closer look at the individual backgrounds and interpretations of the activities taking place in group's contexts. However, as a collectivity is never the simply sum of the total, the individual data gathered should be read and understood against the group contexts in a triangulated way.

The persons targeted of interviews thus included: 14
- the active members of the tenants groups entering in the earlier and later stages
- the present front line social workers directly responsible for developing the groups

The duration of the interviews fell into the range of one to one and a half-hour. There were all together 15 interviewees of the members of the group (5 residents of each of the three groups) and 3 social workers. Many more other residents in the groups and social workers in the teams were invited to discuss with in causal conversations. All the process of those semi-structured interviews was tape-recorded and transcribed. The places of the interviews conducted could be the conference rooms of the two NLCDP offices, the respondents’ home or even some restaurants in the estates. The respondents made the decision on the place for interview, where they felt comfortable and easy. All in all, the interviewed were conducted in a way felt comfortable and private from the views of the respondents.

3. Internal Document

To understand how a community and the community issues break out requires a comprehensive search for other documentary information as background. As the NLCDP team was identified as the key informants, some of the information was gathered from the internal document of the team, such as the community study reports, the team meeting records, group proposals and periodic team evaluation results.

At the small group level, all the send-in and send-out letters as well as the
recordings of negotiations and encounters, especially those with the government departments were collected. The pamphlets delivered in the community by various parties, including the team, the residents’ groups, the District Board Councilors and other political parties were also gathered. The texts were useful to understanding the tactics of recruitment and persuasion of respective parties. The history of redevelopment, the community’s profile and the past history of conflicts with the authority and between various parties were collected, too. The information on different kinds of policies that affecting the community and relating to redevelopment was also analyzed before starting the in-depth groups’ observations and individual interviews.

The documentary information made available for content analysis came from:

- the send-in and send-out letters as well as all other internal documents of the task groups (including meeting minutes and records, etc which is stored with the help of the team)

- the pamphlets, newsletters, poster and public notice of the task groups and various parties

- the internal documents of the team and the newsletters delivered in the community

4. Media Records:

With regard to the debates of public discursive level, the media reports concerning the present organizational work were also kept for analysis. One of the
difficulties on accessing the importance of media discourse towards mobilization is how to access and confine the effects of media materials on organizing process. As a result, we decided to select the issues related to the ones that happened in field observation that were more directly related to the ‘identity frame’ of the public housing tenants in general and their redevelopment identity in particular. We focused on the kinds of explicit discourses in public arena, because we could be more easy to identity the active and conscious meaning construction effort of different parties in telling their own ‘stories’. Studying the discussions on the media material can help to know more about the interactive identity construction process at the movement-societal level.

The community workers in this team used to utilize such media materials in the group process to achieve different purposes, such as learning skills on contacting media, gaining a sense of political efficacy, and arising interests for further discussions. The team had its own newspaper clipping system and used to tape-recorded most of the media reports related to their daily organizing activities. The media forms included then should mainly be those that had once been utilized in organizing the residents. During the process of mobilization, all the discussions of the strategies, the appeals and the evaluations were important.

As a result, the media material collected included: ¹⁵

the transcripts of tape-recorded T.V. programs and the newspaper-clippings stored by the team
To sum up, in view of the dynamic and ever-changing environments during the mobilization of social protests as well as the fluid nature of the notion of 'collective identity', combined use of participant observation, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis may be found more suitable in detecting the meaning construction process.
Notes:

1. The focus can first be concentrated on what the actors identify, or articulate themselves implicitly and explicitly under various situations and towards various audiences, then come to ask how the actors reinforce this articulation/ these articulations in a process in turn.

2. They highlighted the methodological position that all kinds of impression management work must go through individual comprehension, mutual interaction with other social actors and reinforcement of the societal institution so as to make it real and accountable.

3. One of the examples may be the meeting place of a particular group, where member finds sense of belonging. The symbolic meaning of physical place and space is particular relevant when we are studying locality-based movement. The physical setting of a community can be more open or closed, private or public, concentrated or dispersed, so affecting the understanding of the identities of the participants. In this way, it can act as a material for later framing work.

4. Observant-participant role can be a way to guide us to feel what the respondents feel. Emotions may disperse among members of a collective to make them feel in an ‘appropriate’ way in various situations so achieving a sense of ‘we-feelings’. As a result, the identification of the emotions implied in social actions and speech utterances in the fields may be another way in detecting the identity claims of the collective under research.

5. It is a practical wisdom of the organizers here to rely on the support of media, which can in effect exert certain pressures on the publicity of the government. The persuasions of public attitudes towards social policies by the various parties can be best illustrated by the collision of different ‘identity frames’ in the dynamic identity fields that have existed.

6. The four main ways of entering into public rental housing are: resettlement caused by clearance in different places, allocation through the waiting list of various size of households, marginal benefits of the junior civil servants and the compassionate re-housing owing to natural disasters.

7. The residents are ranging from the welfare dependents (the Comprehensive Social Security Allowance recipients), the ordinary tenants, the double-rent tenants and even the market-rent tenants who may have their private properties in the market already.

8. The contradictory roles of the community workers in facilitating the redevelopment process and voicing the resident’s demands have brought difficult extra dilemmas for them to handle. Besides, the dominating attitude of the government and the lasting resistance of the residents in struggling for the definition of the nature of public redevelopment programs have provided another site for observation.

9. In Gerhards and Rucht’s words, the concept of ‘micro-mobilization should be given further distinction i.e. the ‘mobilizing actors’ and the ‘mobilizing context’. In this case, the social workers organizing the protests are identified as the ‘mobilizing actors’, while the group environment is the ‘micro-mobilization contexts’ (Gerhards and Rucht, 1992:558).

10. On the one hand, the speech utterance (both in verbal and written form) which is implicit or explicitly expressed through the language of the actors in the group setting is engaged in an ongoing ‘identity framing process’ of a collective self. On the other hand, through the observation of the physical setting, talking manner and body gesture of the actors, we can also reveal the ‘identity frames’ which is kept silent most of the time.

11. The researcher was introduced as a M. Phil student studying ‘collective identity issues’ from the college and conducting his field work placement. In effect, staffers and service recipients in the fieldwork setting received the researcher as more or less a ‘student social worker’, since it was the ‘group of people’ they are more used to work with in the past.
It is no doubt that the dual role as a researcher and a former social worker may cause some dilemmas in between. But if it could be handled in balance, the result might be fruitful as the researcher was also identified as one of the member and stood on the side of the residents. In short, it is hoped that the participant observer role or even the observant-participant role on some occasions would help the researcher to involve more deeply in the subjective understandings of the residents during their daily organizing activities.

There were altogether 47 small group meetings' observations (some of them are inter-estate wide). Among them there were 30 meetings and 7 negotiations with process transcripts. Researcher was also involved in their recreational gatherings, picnics, home visits and even chatting in mass meetings.

There were altogether 18 individual interviews made with the residents in the three community groups. Among them, three of them were not qualified for analysis. There were also another three social workers being interviewed twice in the period. The first one was simpler, while the second one was more detail and tape-recorded.

There were altogether pieces of media reports, transcripts of 3 T. V. program and several protest action video
Chapter 4:
The Field Work Settings

The complex construction work of identity can be articulated in a concrete social situation. In this chapter, I shall present the details of the fieldwork settings that are conceptualized as the most immediate sites and contextual backgrounds for the identity construction work in this study. Five aspects of the selected field work settings will be examined in further details, including the history and profile of the community, the socio-economic status of the general residents, the redevelopment arrangement in the estate, the specific policy affecting the community groups and the community work services in the estate.

The community history, nature, facilities and political environment have provided the basic infrastructure for developing a practical sense of 'communal membership' for the residents. The similar socio-economic status can also easily give the residents a sense of belonging to a working class community. The redevelopment program and the relocation arrangements have further provided the raw materials for the residents to interpret their subsequent interest and claims on various issues. Besides, the specific housing policy leading to the emergence of the community groups will be examined, too. Lastly, the community workers who served in the estate will also be introduced briefly as the organizing agent actively shaping the 'multiple identities' of the residents.
I. The Community History and Profile

Ho Man Tin estate is one of the many existing Public Housing Estates (PHEs) under redevelopment in Hong Kong. The entire physical layouts, community facilities and services as well as political dynamics, etc. constitute the day to day community life. In this sense, community identity is always a function of the commonalties, mobility and boundary of a particular community.

1. Physical Layout

The estate is located in Ho Man Tin district and built in 1972-1975. In the eyes of the local people, ‘Ho Man Tin District’ was made up of ‘3 estates and 1 HOS’: namely the Valley Roads Estate, the Oi Man Estate, the Ho Man Tin Estate as well as the Chung Man Court. The people living there are closed to one another and shared the same public transport and community facilities. The estate is also surrounded by private housings built in the Ho Man Tin Hill area. At the opposite side is situated the Headquarters of the Housing Authority (HA) where it is the most popular venue for voicing claims among the public housing tenants over the years (Lau and Wan, 1997). The residents might find it familiar to see people demonstrating against the HA for different policies (See Plates 1-3). The geographical boundary of the estate bounded by four streets: Fat Kwong Street, Sheung Shing Street, Sheung Lok Street and Sheung Fu Street. (Please see Map 1)

The Ho Man Tin Estate consists of 8 blocks, which belonged to the Government Low Cost Housing. The community can be further divided into three
areas the Block 1, 2, 7, 8, Block 4, 5 and Block 6. Most of the blocks are high-rising buildings with lift service. All the buildings are linear in shape, while the doors of the flats are facing towards each other and separated by a corridor lying in the middle. It was found that physical design of an estate can influence the conception of space, which helps to enhance the communication and life experience of the residents living there (Kwok and Siu, 1998). The physical configurations were significant in various identity formations in community issues.  

In general, the estate under study is somewhat an enclosed and self-contained environment where the residents might be easy to identify the physical and symbolic boundaries of the estate both geographically and socially. One can also identify the residents’ unique living experiences in the community, like their catchword used.  

In this sense, residents are deeply embedded in a physical environment from where they acquire sense of identification of the place in which they lived.

2. The Community Facilities and Environment

Within the physical boundary, the estate is composed of 1 sheltered market, 2 primary schools, 3 open-air car parks, and 3 playgrounds. Various kinds of community and commercial facilities can be found there including the kindergarten, bank, post office, clinic, barber, laundry, gas station, stationery, bakery, restaurants, food stalls, etc.  

As the estate has gone through its various cycles of development and is coming to be redeveloped, some of these facilities have closed down already (please refer to Plates 7-9). The estate is also equipped with standard social service
provisions within its boundary or in the nearby area. Among them and except the community work team are elderly center with home help team, youth center (removed recently), reading room, children center and library, community nurse, marital counseling center as well as community center. Housing Department (HD) Estate Office (EO) is situated at Block 8, while the Redevelopment Unit (RU) is in Block 3. At the edge of the community are some churches and f secondary schools.

Although the community services are self-contained nowadays, they were much more ill equipped in the past. The estate was built in the urban periphery with primitive facilities in those days. Many of the residents could remember well the poor situation in terms of commercial, social and transport facilities when they moved into the estates. The bitter history helps formulate the collective memories and common experience of the tenants living there. As revealed by many residents, the transport and shopping facilities were very inadequate and caused much inconvenience in the early days of the estate.

"the transport service was not so convenient... When you want to go to San Po Kong.. since there were no bus no 17 those day....you had to walk to the Kowloon Hospital in the early morning and just found that there were so many people waiting there!"

The community environment is essential for providing a daily life context for generating a 'practical consciousness' of community and belongings. In other words, the residents are living their life and having activities in numerous familiar environment and service settings over the years. We are sure that living in the same estate for 27 years has given them collective experience and memory as a basis for
subsequent identity articulation, as the residents make known to each other by day to
day chatting at the corridor, working for the same employer in contract-out work,
gathering in the open area, waiting in the lift lobby, or shopping in the market, etc. 5

3. Political Dynamics

Not only did its physical layout, history and background as well as community
facilities and services, but also the invisible political dynamics characterize the estate.
The District Board (D.B.) member, Mr. Wang, who had won his seat four times and
had a harmonious relation with many local government officials. Reflected in the
times of election and daily activities, he was also thought to be in alliance with all the
7 Mutual Aid Committees (MAC) in the estate most of the time. 6 On the other side
of the political arena lies the 'democratic' Legislative Council (Legco) member, Mr.
Liu who had just beaten Mr. Wang in the past Legco election in 1998. From then on,
Mr. Liu however turned out to be less active in the community affairs in the eyes of
the residents. There were also other members of political parties organizing their
activities in the estate in the hope of winning the support of the residents in the
coming elections.

The comparative newly established community work teams could be
considered as the third power in the community. As I shall explore later, the team had
set up different tenants' groups, which were fighting for their immediate concerns. In
principle, the team and the tenants' groups were impartial towards political elections.
They were conscious to be neutral and not interested intensively with any parties.
But in fact, it was very difficult for them to avoid conflicts and side with any one of them when dealing with community issues. For instance, the team once received complaints from the D.B. member and MACs on the roles and way they organized the residents.

The daily management services of the estate were provided and monitored by the EO while the redevelopment issue were managed by the sub-office of the RU of the HD set up in the estate recently. They were the two most concerned and targeted government departments in the community, especially on housing issues. Other welfare agencies, including the community work team, were invited occasionally to join various committees in the community, like the Area committee and the Ad hoc Group on Elderly Removal.

The ongoing political dynamics between the parties remained to be relatively stable, but became more acute again along with the issues of redevelopment. This dynamic was fluid and ever changing. It was at this political level that the tenants' groups reinforced their sense of identity within group and with other parties, so forming different identity fields in later construction.

To sum up, the community physical layout, history and background, community facilities and services, as well as the political dynamics all can be perceived as various bases for establishing the conception of 'community' among the tenants. In this sense, the residents may understand themselves individually as a 'community member' in terms of the same physical settings, living environment.
II. The Demographic Characteristics and the Inhabitants Background

Ho Man Tin estate had accommodated more than 3,615 households with 13,200 persons as at the early 1999. The number of 1-person and 2-person elderly families was 165 and 216 respectively. The number of congested families who demanded larger flats were only 10, while the number of households paying extra rents under the present policies was 779, which amounted to 21.6% of the total in the estate. These figures were ever changing along the progress of redevelopment. Even though the exact variation of the inhabitant’s backgrounds is not known, they can be perceived to be homogenous to a certain extent in terms of their common housing history, socio-economic situation and tenancy.

In the present study, the community has been an artificial and well-planned settlement by the government to house particular groups of people according to certain criteria from the past till now. From the interview data, the tenants are composed of several categories of people just as indicated in the cases of other public housing estates (Li and Yu, 1990). Many of them were living in low quality private housings, squatters or government provided hostels at an earlier time. Some of the residents moved in block and got their personal network before being they moved into the estate, especially for those affected by public clearance.

There were households of various socio-economic levels, ranging from different kinds of ‘well-off tenants’ to ordinary residents and welfare recipients. The
uneven distribution of poor and more wealthy families in those middle-aged estates was marked especially before the implementation of the 'Double Rent Policy' in 1987 (Lau, 1996). However, the situation has changed in recent years. Approaching redevelopment, more and more well off tenants had removed at accelerating rate because of the 'stick & carrot 'policy'. There left only those who were really unable to buy a flat for themselves. In this case, their economic situations before redevelopment might be quite similar to those as reflected in the fact that they were more or less the same lower income group (nearly 80% households were paying normal rents), though more detail information was unavailable.

More importantly, the residents shared the same kind of tenancy. They were of public rental status regardless of the way they got their flats. The common land owner was the HA and the same estate manager was HD. This situation rendered the collective interest 'objective' in the sense that the government was their only antagonists. The public rental status of all the residents in this case constituted the structural determinant of subsequent interests of the residents (Castells et. al, 1990). In this way, the similar housing history, tenancy and socio-economic background before or after entering the estate altogether posed a common ground for the articulation of the collective identity.

III. The Redevelopment and Resettlement Program

If the 'community' as such has laid down the underlying 'practical consciousness' of the identity of the residents, then the redevelopment of the estate
further emerged as an 'crisis'. That was important to the forging of identities and the 
reinforcement of the interaction among the various actors. The formal announcement 
of redevelopment legitimated further the distinction of the affected tenants among the 
general public housing residents. The policies consolidated the affected tenants 
who had disputed with the authority over the rationales and cost of PHE 
redevelopment as well as its substantial implementation.

It is well known that the massive launching of public housing has started since 
1953. The qualities of such temporary settlement built at that time, however, were 
severely inadequate in terms of building standard, living environment, and 
community facilities. Shortly after the set up of the newly formed Housing Authority 
(HA) in 1973, the largest single redevelopment scheme in the world was embarked. 

From then on, HA announced three successive stages of redevelopment program 
one after the other: the Mark I and II type Redevelopment Program from 1972-1990, 
the Extended Redevelopment Program from 1985-1990 and finally the 
Comprehensive Redevelopment Program (CRP) from 1987-2005, which we concern 
the most. (For more details, please see Appendix 1)

Studies over those programs have been particularly stressed on its spatial 
dimensions, or policy implementation, but much less on formulating them as a 
context for collective action (Tang, 1992; Lau and Suen, 1989; Yu 1995). I shall 
examine the redevelopment issues as a contested terrain for subsequent conflicts and 
investigate how the residents acquired their adversary understandings towards these
programs.

1. The Disputes over the Public Housing Redevelopment Programs

In connection with the motivations and rationales behind each redevelopment program, there were oppositional or even confrontational interpretations between the authority, the academics, and the contending groups. And these understandings affected directly the debate over the background of the programs that explained many of the later intense conflicts.

The HA has presented the redevelopment program as a genuine attempt to render better off residents living in those older estates. In this way, the redevelopment program is described more or less as a privilege to the affected residents, as this attach the highest priority to them over other applicants to rent or buy the new PHE flats with its standards comparable with those in the private market. The community environment has also improved so that it should be a ‘real big bargain’.

On the other side, the rival groups have offered alternative accounts about the same redevelopment programs since its start (HKSCC, 1976; Yu, 1997). In the eyes of the affected tenants, the redevelopment programs are only compensation for the poor building standards and living environment. It is the responsibility of the government to demolish the old and rebuild the new to keep up with the basic living standards nowadays. Besides, it is the will of the government to redevelop the estates only meanwhile it earns a lot for its own. The involuntary attitudes of the residents
was reflected in a survey conducted by the HD. Nearly half of the respondents (45.4%) were in fact satisfied with their present accommodation because of the 'convenient transport' and 'cheap rent' (HD, 1993).

To summarize, the stated reasons or objectives of the redevelopment programs from the authority and the general criticisms of the redevelopment programs can be many (Please see Appendix 2). The debates over the motives and background of redevelopment have been sustained along the years and have caused many conflicts. It is particularly the case in the process of policy implementation. There are a number of other policies and measures specially designed for the affected tenants (HD, 1998). Many of these special measures have helped to formulate the structural bases for residents to subdivide into smaller collectivity within the larger category of 'Redeveloped Residents' in the process of dealing with the authorities. The voice of the residents was often criticized as not being heard by the HD and HA.

2. The Redevelopment and Resettlement of Ho Man Tin Estate

Concerning the implementation of the CRP in particular, there are some internal criteria for setting the priorities for different estates. Among them, the availability of reception resources in the same district is most important because many of the residents tend not to leave the estate they are most familiar with. It becomes more difficult for the re-provisioning policy to be implemented in reality. The lesser and lesser availability to adopt the agreed upon resettlement policies has generated much mistrusts and many confrontations between the authorities and the
tenants. The disagreements were revealed in redeveloping Ho Man Tin Estate.

Ho Man Tin Estate was announced to be included into the CRP in May 1996. On 26th of September 1998, the estate had entered the phase of its last 18-24 months before clearance. The reception resources of the residents are mainly situated at Ho Man Tin South Phase 3 and Ho Man Tin Estate Phase 1 separately and shared with the residents of Valley Road Estate Phase 2 (Please refer to Plates 4 – 6 and Appendix 3). Both of them were planned to be completed in December 1999. As there were flats available in the newly built Sheung Lok Estate, the residents could also choose to move there under certain requirements. The tentative demolition date was set to be August 2000.

It was stated and restated by HD that the residents of Ho Man Tin Estate would all be given local district relocation. They residents themselves, however, disagreed with these arrangement, since there was still the threats of further selling part of the former rental flats by HD in the time left. The HD has already transferred two previously planned rental blocks in Ho Man Tin Phase 1 into ‘Kwan Fai Court’ for sale under the pilot Redevelopment Home Ownership Scheme (RHOS) (Please see Map 2). As the HD had conducted opinion survey in the estate to investigate the residents willingness to buy RHOS flats in future, there was also a rumor spreading in the community that more blocks at Ho Man Tin Phase 3 will be sold.

Comparatively speaking, the resettlement of Ho Man Tin estate is much better than other PHEs. But the ‘possible crisis’ of not enough relocation flats in the
original districts still heightened the possibility for building affected tenants as a
solidarity group. In fact, the concern on the possibility of resettlement in the original
district became one of the most common and important concerns of all the three
tenants groups under study, though they might have their specific concern. 21

In sum, if a practical sense of 'public housing residents' was established
among the tenants, they would further acquire another identity of 'redevelopment
tenants' in times of redevelopment and resettlement. The HA and the HD were
looked at as the resident's targets of blaming and request. The voluntary organizers
were then given the cultural resources in interpreting the cost and benefits of
redevelopment.

IV. The Policy the Three Community Groups Faced

The policies the members of the different concern groups faced were quite
different. These policies determined much the objective interests of the members,
though the actual interpretation was still not the same among the residents.

1. The Happy-time Singleton and Cohabitant Senior Citizens Group (SCSCG)

There were a number of public housing policies related to elderly families and
the resettlement policy for the elderly families was a bit different from that for other
types of families. The priority of the elderly families in selecting new flats is not
determined by the ballet held which results in determining the exact flats one is
relocated, but only by age. The elder one will get the highest priority. Most of the
time, the elderly families were also exempted from paying 'mud fees'. The standard
provision for 1-person and 2-person elderly families was the ‘small flat’ in harmony block (180ft.). But only the 2-person families with a younger family member (age under 60) was allowed to opt for the 1-bed room flat (370ft.) In addition, the singleton elderly was allowed to add one of his/her children under the age of 18 according to the existing tenancy policy.

The members of SCSCG were then very concerned about all the tenancy policy, the provisioning policy and the new rents. This various kinds of policies had the indirect effect on distinguishing the members of SCSCG within and affected the claims in the groups made then.

2. The Ho Man Tin Estate Tenancy Concern Group (TCG)

The HD had got a number of tenancy policies towards its tenants. Among them, only the children below the age of 18 were allowed to add to the tenancy, while the request on splitting families was not granted most of the time. The tenancy problem was also treated with the lowest priority among other work of the EO. Although the Housing Manager of every estate had a discretionary power over individual cases, they seldom promised to grant the resident such a right in ordinary situations. Most of the requests on tenancy problem were then either turned down or delayed.

The situation had changed only when the estate was included within the Five Year Rolling Plan for redevelopment. The announcement of the redevelopment program just gave the members an opportunity to put forward their demands, though the HD repeatedly stressed that the tenancy policy was general to all estates and
would not change despite redevelopment. In the eyes of the residents, however, the compulsory removal required by the HD indirectly increased the bargaining power of the residents to fight for their ‘tenancy rights.’

3. The Ho Man Tin Estate Redevelopment Concern Group (RCG)

The RCG had got the widest scope of concern among the three groups in the sense that it concerned all the matters related to redevelopment. But in fact, the members of RCG mostly concerned the adequacy of the provision of the relocated flats in the same district of residence. The HD officials promised that they would try their best to re-house the residents in the local district. But the members of RCG were worried about the further implementation of RHOS that would reduce the number of new flats available in the same district significantly.

There were also other members concerned much about the final matching between the size of households and the types of flats, as many of the even-numbers households (the 2,4,6 person households) wanted to be allocated larger flats. In short, the sufficiency of relocation flats actually means the availability of as many as possible newly built flats in the same districts of residence to settle the demands of various groups of residents.

V. The Ho Man Tin NLCDP and the Community Workers

Many different parties were involved in mobilizing the residents of Ho Man Tin Estate, but our researcher targets were organized under one specific institutional setting, the Neighborhood Level Community Development Project (NLCDP) in the
community. The NLCDP provided both the physical and organizational resources for the community task groups, ranging from borrowing meeting place, supplying organization manpower and giving financial support. It functioned as more than an advisory body behind all those groups. In order to investigate the mediating role of organizations in conflict situation, we have to understand the NLCDP team.

1. The NLCDP services in Redevelopment Estate

The NLCDP is one kind of services getting government subvention. It started from 1978 and adopted community work approach in service provision. To puruse the objective of ‘community building’, the Community Building Policy Committee endorsed the formation plan of the NLCDP service in 1978 aiming to provide packages of social services to needy area and foster community involvement sentiments. 23 It is implemented by the various voluntary agencies and the bases are to be situated in different transient communities that are defined with a set of criteria. 24 The specific criteria of selecting service area has an unintended effect on consolidating a particular group of vulnerable ‘service recipients’ who are mostly the urban poor and the neglected. 25 By now, there are all together 23 teams out of 46 working in those redeveloping public housing estates in Hong Kong.

Even though the government confirmed the achievements of the service in two previously government reviews in 1982 and 1989, the Executive Council has finally agreed upon the gradual termination of NLCDP service in 2005 when the CRP has been completed (Audit commission, 1997). Together with the professional
development in the social work field the community workers are under more and more regulation at present (Mok, 1999).

There has been a strong sense of identity developed among the community workers who are recognized to be the most active paid activists of many grassroots movements. The service gathered a distinctive group of social activists who had promoted community movements from the end of 70's onwards (Kam et al. 1995). They are distinguished from other social workers in a number of ways. For example, 68.7% of community worker's respondent have identified themselves as 'activist social workers', whereas the percentage of the respondents serving in other service setting were much lower (Wong, 1993).

The team in the Ho Man Tin Estate is one among the many Mark III to VI NLCDPs in Hong Kong, which have got its development history. The teams were entitled to setting up its base in the community after the estate had been included in 5-Year Rolling Plan of redevelopment, but the exact time of operation may be varied because of different reasons. The community workers have further built up their own intimate relationship with the residents of different estates through joining a number of inter-estate alliances, which were centered upon the public housing policies relating to redevelopment. They used to share experience, to gather information and to exchange views frequently on the issues concerning CRP. Their identity as both a social worker and a movement activist at the same time played their subsequent roles in organizing residents.
2. The Operating Agency and the NLCDP Team

The agency providing the community development service in the community was the Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service-Hong Kong found in 1979. The social service division has employed more than 100 professional workers and 250 other full time employees, operating more than 29 service units by now (ELCSS, 1998). And the Ho Man Tin NLCDP is only a sub-unit under the community development service sub-division. The integration of providing social service and evangelism work, which has been expressed explicitly, is one of the major missions of the agency in the years (ELCSS, 1997).

However, it is the team setting that offers the most immediate context for target's identity interpretation. The teams have operated under the standard provision from the 1996 onwards. The team had two working groups responsible for organizing housing issues and servicing functional groups. Therefore, it had two office bases, one at the ground floor of Block 2 situated in the center of the estate (just next to the wet market) and the other at Block 6, which was more remote and isolated. The office at block 2 was used as the conference room for meetings, while the one at Block 6 was a furnished and enclosed staff office. Even the physical settings of the office base could tell a lot about their own perceived particularities as shown in Plates 10-15.

Not only the meeting place, expertise, manpower in community organizing and the financial support provided are the necessary organization resources, but they also
constitute the settings for constructing commonality between the members. All the
group members served in the same service setting. The tasks of the team in the
period of study were various. They have been summarized in Appendix 4. 31 They
could be roughly divided into two main types: the service-oriented programs and the
problem-oriented task groups. We are only concerned with the task-oriented
organizational groups in this study in view of the focus on mobilization issues.

In the three task-oriented groups, the three workers were mainly responsible
for organizing housing issue groups in the community. They were the primary agents
in establishing the groups. In the daily practice, the workers had to first define for
themselves which categories of people should become their ‘principal clients’,
though disagreement between the staff members always occurred. 32 In effect, the
social workers have helped to formulate the identity frames among the residents
according to the needs of various situations and policy attempts. Emphases were also
given to the self-identity of the social workers as a profession. 33 The discrepancy
between the volunteer residents and paid social worker’s identities helped to explain
the strategies adopted and objectives set in the later mobilization process.

To conclude this chapter, the community characteristics, the inhabitant’s
background, the redevelopment program and the specific housing policies constituted
the meaning interpretation background of the general residents. The empirical
finding related to the three community groups will be presented in the three
subsequent chapters.
Notes:

1 I can easily illustrate with some examples about the significance of physical space in shaping community conflicts and resident's response. In the first case, one of the reception resources, the Ho Man Tin Estate Phase I was a block built on the center of the existing estate: the former playgrounds just attached to Block 4. Owing to the closeness of the construction site, a few wings of Block 2, 3, and 4 were much disturbed by the noise and air pollution during the initial construction period. As a result, there generated much discontent among the tenants affected. The NLCDP team selected the issue as an entry point for publicizing the teams and organizing the residents in 1996. Hence, an ad hoc concern group was formed at ease to bargain with the HD over the compensations it could make. In this case, the basis of the collective came only from the directly affected tenants (those flats' window facing straightly to the site) as the negative effects of the construction site were very selective. The physical setting of the estate confined the issue and determined much the identification of the involved tenants towards themselves. The ad hoc group picked up the issue as an environmental problem only for those directly affected and disbanded shortly after some concessions given from HD. The consequence of the community issue was limited in the sense that even the team had decided not to follow in order to avoid an enlargement of sectional interest between the affected tenants and the general residents.

In a second case, the two major reception estates were located closed to the existing tenants as adjacent to and in the middle of the present Ho Man Tin Estate. The residents living there could watch the process of construction day every day just out of the window of their flats.

"I eat my breakfast every day here, read the newspaper, like a watchman to keep an eye on them to dig the sand. I think in my mind that it must be built for us, so I have to watch how they build it." (Response given by a member of RCG in TV program at July, 1998)

The construction site is also temporarily named as 'Ho Man Tin South' and 'Ho Man Tin Estate' respectively, forming a further perception in the mind of the residents that the sites are specially marked for their own use. Some of the residents just could not agree on sharing the flats available to the residents of Valley Road Estate who would be relocated at the same estates with them. Even before the formal announcement, many of the Ho Man Tin residents had the confidence that the HD would allocate the two reception estates for them exclusively without any questions. This case demonstrated that the physical closeness and even the naming of the relocation site is also vital for developing a sense of belonging among the residents.

A third example concerns the unique living experience among the residents in the estate. As stated before, the lifts in the blocks can actually go to every three to four floors only. (For example, the G/F, the 9/F, and the 14/F). It is an unspoken consensus among the residents that if anyone press the buttons in the lift first, he has to press both the 9/F (the floor the one may want to go) and 14/F buttons (the floor the other may want to go) even not been told. This is different from the habit that you only press the button of the floor you want to go your own in most cases. The other persons will just not notice whether you do it or not. The researcher had once failed to do this and left the other man in the same lift missing his floor unintentionally. Even most people are living in such multi-storey buildings nowadays, the experience and norms of using the lift services can be so different.

2 For example, the residents used to call the meeting place next to the wet market, the 'Man Hang Yuen', the name of a nearby restaurants.


4 Abstracted from an interview made at 3/23/1999

5 To quote an example, through observation and informal conversations with the residents, we found there existed a 'submerged network' of housewives who gathered just before the front gates of the schools in the estate at every school day (Melucci, 1989). At time of waiting, they knew the sons and daughters as well as their parents of each other. They chatted casually and discussed community
problems they faced together. Although it was a loosely structured informal grouping, it functioned as an information network and even a ‘free space’ for forming political consciousness (Evans and Boyte, 1986).

6 The D.B. member and the MACs have got the recognition from the government as a formal and legitimate political channel for the residents to voice out their demands.

7 Mr. Wang once complained about the performance of the team in the Provisional Legislative Council and the various MACs also disagreed much with the work of the NLCDP team as reflected in the letter 31/8/1999

8 Letter from Ho Man Tin Estate Office dated 8/3/1999

9 Letter from Ho Man Tin Estate Office dated 30/6/1998

10 Among them are the people housed out of emergency from natural disasters, from the waiting list of public housing estates, affected by clearance and redevelopment programs and of civil servants in junior rank.

11 It is suspected that the perception of social rights may be much affected by those channels through which they are eligible for public housings. From the interview, there are some observations that the various incoming channels of the present residents may affect their conception of welfare rights about living in public housings. The people affected by public clearance and redevelopment project most perceive the flats offered as a 'compensation' for their previous settlements, while the people from the 'waiting list' may find the living environment in public housing particularly desirable and feel grateful towards the government.

12 It requires the household income exceeding the income limits of the waiting list of PHE to pay various extra rents.

13 The ‘well-off tenants’ are given priorities in purchasing HOS flats, or otherwise will be punished by paying the extra rent continuously even after they have removed to the new flats in future.

14 The exact income levels of all the present Ho Man Tin households are unable to get, as only the ‘well-off’ households have to submit income information to the HD for further checking. The residents just need to tell the approximate income levels of their families to the HD staff members in times of redevelopment registration. If we take out the small proportion of ‘well-off’ tenants who amounts to less than 10% of the total, most of the present households may be classified as the lower income class in our society.

15 The result of ‘being selected’ has stimulated a kind of ‘redevelopment tenants’ identity among the residents no matter what reasons caused it. They belong to a particular group of public housing tenants who have deserved particular concern and treatment.

16 Following the success of the pilot test in lower Wong Tai Sin Estate in 1968, the first redevelopment scheme was formally commenced at Shek Kip Mei Estate in October of 1972.

17 For example, the residents will be given priority to buy HOS flats and the rent level will be frozen after formal announcement of redevelopment.

18 According to the policy, in principle the residents can choose to relocate at any available empty flats of HD in the territory, if they so wish. If they choose the major reception estates, which are determined by a public ballot, they will be given first priority.
First, the Mark IV to VI public housing blocks are high-rise building themselves, meaning that the total population to be resettled are many more than the past. And secondly, the ratio between the rental and sale flats after redevelopment is ever changing to an ownership-biased tenure, making the number of re-provisioning rental flats decrease in absolute and relative amount.

According to HD reply, the number of new-built rental flats must be 'sufficient' as some of the residents may just choose to buy Home Ownership Scheme flats (HOS) or the newly implemented Redevelopment Home Ownership Scheme (RHOS) flats.

The danger of insufficient relocation flats has undoubtedly become the major concern of all the groups. The problem also affected the concern of other tenants groups, like the 2-person elderly families in particular. They must be re-housed in either the larger size small flats (220sq. ft.) or the 1-bedroom flats (370 sq.ft.), otherwise they would be relocated in the normal size small flats (180sq. ft.) which they could not accept. Another group of residents with tenure problems also found it necessary to have more relocation flats than the 'enough' amounts. As their priority in sharing those flats are low, the more the number of flats available, the greater the chance of satisfying their demands. The specific situation facing different groups of people has generated the structural base for subsequent identity mobilization work as shown in next few chapters.

It is the policy of HD that the even number families have got the right to choose for a larger size flats in redevelopment, provided that the relocation resources are enough. In practice, it means that the 2-person families can get the 1-bedroom flat (370 sq.), the 4-person families can get the 2-bedroom room flats, while the 6-person families can get the 3-bedroom flats.

The objectives identified during the 1982 review and is till applicable now on the NLCDP service are: (Committee on NLCDPs, 1993)

- to identify needs of the community
- to promote interaction among residents
- to cultivate 'we-feeling' among residents
- to develop leadership
- to involve residents in launching activities for the neighborhood; and
- to provide social services

These 'transient communities' are including the temporary housing, squatter areas (rural area), cottage areas, boat squatters and redevelopment public housing estates (affected by Mark I and II Type Redevelopment Program, ERP, and CRP).

The Committee on NLCDPs has identified project areas according to:

- a population between 3,000 and 15,000 
- the area would not be cleared within three years
- low income areas
- geographically isolated communities being remote from the town center and not accessible to welfare services
- new settlement with inadequate welfare services
- heterogeneous communities with groups of conflicting interests, different ethnic groups of social classes
- areas with long-standing environment/social problems

The first three are essential criteria, while the others are supplementary.

The estate entering the CRP five years before demolition is entitled to be providing NLCDP services. But the exact date will depend on the availability of NLCDP teams which are transferred from other previous redeveloped estates. As more and more NLCDP teams are available and less and less estate entering CRP, the entry date of the NLCDP has become earlier and earlier. At present, there even exists a surplus of NLCDP teams and causing a crisis of service cut then. This entry date has also become earlier and earlier in the recent years. The discretionary time available for the teams has made them able to intervene even in the planning stage of a specific redevelopment program, so changing
the nature of conflicting issues between the residents and the authority. They can intervene even in the planning stage to change the land use of nearby reception areas.

27 There even exists a organization called 'Type III to VI PRH Frontline Workers Platform', which was formed in 1987.

28 Accordingly, they have some common definition and working strategies towards their service-clients. Generally speaking, all the people living in the community are identified as potential clients of the project. The specific groups of residents are then identified as 'the principle clients' according to the different assessment of different teams and the self-expression of the tenants. They also aim at 'organize the clients to organize themselves'.

29 In other words, there should be six social workers, one clerical staff member and two part-time workmen together with 1/5 supervisor.

30 The office base at Block 2 was once used as the staff office temporarily during the renovation period of the office at Block 6. Since there was the lack of any partition between the staff office and the conference room, some of the staffs have complained about the noise and disturbance made when meeting individual clients and groups. However, some team members found the office at Block 2 which was situated just next to the wet market most favorable as the clients could meet with the workers causally and conveniently. The team members have discussed the pros and cons of whether using the office at Block 2 as the main office or not in the future. The team had finally decided to remove back to Block 6 as the staff office, which was well partitioned later. The decision could be perceived to be practical enough as the office at Block 6 had planned to be the main office in an earlier time and the office at Block 2 was found to be too small to accommodate both the staff office and the conference room. But it also signified the perceived distinctive perception of the agency staff towards themselves. The setting of the office at Block 6 was furnished with a reception counter avoiding a sudden drop-in of the residents. If the residents wanted to contact a worker, they had to ring the bell at the counter first and waited to be met. In this way, a resident had to experience a kind of detached relationship with the social workers. The residents seeking service were made known by the very physical setting that they and the social workers were just different in position: human professionals and service recipients.

31 As mentioned above, the work tasks of community work team were quite flexible and to a great extent depended on the team's own assessment. The order from the agency is much indirect and implicit, as revealed by the workers themselves.

32 In the eyes of the community workers, all the residents (not including the commercial tenants) in the community are defined as the potential 'service recipients', even many of the residents may not aware of this kind of social service provided in their neighborhood.
Chapter 5

Manifest and Latent Boundary Setting

--Happy Time: Singleton and Cohabitant Senior Citizen Group

Among the three main components of collective identity, boundary setting is the
most crucial factor that helps to define the membership of a collective in the first
place. To advance a claim, a group has to acquire this fundamental understanding as
the base to identify the various actors in its environment. Boundary setting helps
address the differences and commonalties between the in-group and the out-group,
assert relative claims and further suggest reaction and interaction upon the
established categorizations.

The boundary setting of a group is characterized by its multi-facet forms and
ever-changing development. In the first place, it is important to distinguish the three
primary identity fields, namely the protagonist, the antagonist and the bystanders.
Apart from this, the internal categorizations of the group are also important in
clarifying the sub-categorization with the 'us' itself, though it is always taken for
granted. These internal categorizations are constructed at the intra-organizational and
inter-organizational levels as well as formulated in a manifest and latent way. The
manifest boundary setting should be studied through the explicit and intended act of
the organizers, while the latent boundary setting can be identified by exploring the
silent boundary markers in the forms of physical settings and non-verbal behavior.

We maintain that boundary setting is an interaction accomplishment. The
planned boundary setting formulated by the organizers cannot be achieved single-handedly. It requires is a function of the interpretations and reactions of the constituents. The boundary of a collective is created and recreated along different ongoing situations quite flexibly, which should be articulated in terms of its persistence and maintenance as well as transformation and change. In the course of development, even unclear and blurred boundary sometimes appears. We are thus interested in the issue about the extent to which mobilization is determined by the degree of clearness of boundary. Arguably, the mobilization level of a group can be conceptualized as a function of monitoring the boundary setting over the salient fractions within the group.

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the fluid, flexible and ever changing boundary setting process of a community group, the Happy Time-- Singleton and Cohabitant Senior Citizen Group (SCSCG). This group is selected as an illustrative case because in the course of our investigation, we found that it adopted a flexible manner in establishing various competing boundaries and identities in different situations. In this analysis, we aimed at identifying the tactics and strategies utilized and manipulated by the members, organizers over the whole organizing process in the hope of achieving a unitary, situational, multiple and mobilizing identity for movement mobilization.

In the following sections, I shall examine the boundary construction made at the inter and intra-organizational level with reference to their configuration of
identity fields, the manifest and latent boundary as well as their interaction respectively after the presentation of the profile and development of the community group. The final section is to summarize the implications of boundary setting to movement mobilization.

I. The Profile and the Development of the Group

In this chapter, we shall examine the group SCSCG, which was formed in March 1998. The group was characterized by its complicated internal and external categorizations across intra- and inter-organizational level. Over the developmental process, SCSCG split into two new groups and joined an inter-estate coalition.

Social workers at the outset served as the founding members and decided that the membership of the group was confined to 1-person to 2-person singletons or cohabitant elderly people residing in the Ho Man Tin Estate. The group was characterized by its open membership on the voluntary basis. The social workers welcomed even those elderly people who had got more than 2 family members and the participation of the member’s friends and relatives.¹ Thus, the group’s boundary was quite loose and the only membership criterion rested on the age of the members.

The size of the group was small, though its total membership on the name list reached more than a hundred. Throughout the history of the SCSCG, only 40-60 members regularly attended meetings. Regular meeting was held in every Tuesday afternoon with only a few exceptions. The numbers of singletons and cohabitant as well as 1-person and 2-person families were more or less equal. Recruitment
opportunities were created by the social workers whose initial targets were the people affected by redevelopment policy and concerned for a better relocation arrangement in general. The social workers knew well that only the elderly people had enough time and patience in joining meetings in afternoon regularly.

The original rationale for organizing the group was that, as the relocation arrangement of the '1-2 person' families would be somewhat institutionally different from other ordinary families, they were made distinctive. This might result in difficulty in finding satisfactory re-housing arrangement for the elderly. The primary concern of the group then was to strike for better removal and re-housing arrangement in order to gain time for the elderly to adapt to the new living situation.

The social workers in particular focused more on creating the chance for the members to experience empowerment over the process of redevelopment. This objective was much different from that of the other elderly services provided by the same community work team in the estate, such as the 'Gathering in the Market' (GM), which was to provide educational and recreational services only. Instead, the members of SCSCG were likely to be encouraged to discuss their worries about redevelopment, suggest collective solutions, and voice out their opinions.

Shortly after the Housing Department formally announced the redevelopment, the SCSCG held four meetings with the Housing Manager (HM) and the Assistant Housing Manager (AHM) of Redevelopment Unit (RU) of the Housing Department (HD) from December 1998 to April 1999. The HM and the AHM were considered
developmental process of a collective. The three identity fields of the SCSCG in a more static view are presented as follows:

a) Protagonist Field:

The foremost concern of SCSCG was to draw up the line of membership. They had to motivate those potential adherents to ‘be with us’. Within the period of study, three groups of people were identified as ‘us’ in the eyes of the members. The first group was the members who were present in the regular meetings constantly. It was the most visible group that its members could get along with each other and were willing to take part in collective activities and actions. The second group was the elderly families living in the estate, or in the members’ own words, the ‘people living up there in the blocks’. Members knew well that there were other families in the estate similar to the situation and status of the participants. In this case, they were the potential adherents of the SCSCG. The third group of people was those members of the other community groups of the team and the general residents. Some core members of SCSCG did realize that the team had organized different resident’s groups though the team was not intentionally motivated to facilitate cooperation between them.

b) Antagonist Field:

It is important for social movement to identify the targets of action. In the case of SCSCG, the HD in general was then targeted as the primary opposing party in the sense that most of the demands of SCSCG were made on this government
to be the primary lobbying targets at the local community level. The social workers together with the members developed first a consensus on the agendas and demands among themselves in the regular meetings and then requested the government officials to meet and discuss with them when found necessary. At the meetings, they asked questions and pressed for demands related to the concerns of individual members or the SCSCG as a whole. The team also organized social gathering activities, like picnics and vegetarian feasts, for the members of SCSCG to facilitate internal communications and develop a stronger sense of belonging.

In April 1999, another group of 2-person elderly families, named ‘The Sheung Lok Estate 2-person Elderly Group’ (SL2EG), was gradually formed and then separated from the original SCSCG. Its members were confined to those 2-person elderly families who had moved into the Sheung Lok Estate since May 1999. Many of the former core members of SCSCG became the active participants in the new group after the campaign against the collection of ‘mud fee’. The newly established concern group planned to continue to keep an eye on their common concerns on the environmental and adjustment problems in the new estate thereafter.

The SCSCG also jointed an inter-estate coalition, the Joint-estate Elderly Redevelopment Concern Group (JERCG). It was composed of more than 10 neighborhood groups affected by redevelopment. The coalition aimed to build up a representative body at the territory-wide level. Although not many SCSCG members could participate in the inter-estate meetings and collective actions, the
social workers remained keen on reporting the progress, since they insisted that
information enabled the peripheral members to keep up with the development of the
cohesion.

II. The Boundary Setting at Intra-organizational Level

In the first place, the manifest boundary setting should be studied across intra-
organizational level. We maintained that the us-them relation was constructed
through the division between the HD and the residents affected by the redevelopment
policy. However, this general picture of the relationship between the collective and
its opponents is too simplistic and could not depict the complexity of a collective.
Instead, we maintain that the ‘us’ is also ever changing. This changing boundary of
the protagonists is said to be the product of the interplay between manifest and latent
boundary setting. We first examine the boundary setting at the configuration of
identity fields.

1. The Configurations of Identity Fields

In order to capture the dynamic and changing construction of manifest
boundary setting, I suggest delineate the transient and temporal boundaries of the
SCSCG. The first boundary setting task of a SMO is to identify the configuration of
three identity fields, namely the protagonist, antagonist and the bystanders. In other
words, they refer to the distinction between ‘us’, ‘them’ and the ‘others’ of a group
respectively. It is important to be noted that the distinction of the three basic fields of
identity is only a temporal concept, which means that they are changing along the
department. In the day to day practice, the members of SCSCG, however, learnt to further distinguish the HD into various units or divisions under the guidance of the social workers. And in the eyes of the members, they regarded the HA, the Redevelopment Unit (RU) and the Estate Office (EO) as the opponents, though they could not distinguish them in detail. In the eyes of the members of SCSCG, making adequate distinction between various targets was so important that they could direct their claims to the right target or the responsible persons.

The members learnt from the social workers that the members of HA constituted the center of decision-making with respect to the public housing policies. Nevertheless, through the developmental trajectory of the SCSCG, the members found it difficult to understand the roles of the HA members. They preferred to deal with the RU of HD that was seen as the most familiar division of the government, as they had met with the staff of the RU four times. The members perceived that the RU was the most immediate middleman between the residents and the HD over any issues arising from redevelopment. Though the decision power of the RU was in fact very limited, the members exerted constant pressure on it. Lastly, the EO in Ho Man Tin Estate was also identified as one of the targets of collective action. The residents tended to identify those staffs as the right persons to meet and negotiate with. As found in the campaign against collecting the ‘mud fee’, the members of SCSCG made representations to the RU instead of the EO, which should be held responsible for setting the criteria and deciding on the issue in the current practice.
c) Bystander Field:

In the present case, the bystander field refers to the third parties, which were not involved directly in the resettlement problem. They were the ‘outsiders’, such as D.B. members, the press and even the social workers helping the residents. It was important to acquire their support and isolate the others. The distinction of the actors involved in the identity fields, however, is the first step in making the boundaries. As we shall illustrate later in this chapter, such a constant configuration of identity fields can be changed and transformed greatly over various organizational levels, various situations and even in the course of collective actions.

2. The Manifest Boundary Setting

This section is devoted to the exploration of the fluidity of the ‘us’ in the case of the SCSCG. The building process conducted at the intra-organizational concerns the internal categorizations among the members within a social movement organization (SMO), while the construction made in the inter-organizational level refers to the external categorizations with other SMOs within the same social movement sector.

The initial boundary setting of the SCSCG was set up actively by the community workers responsible for the establishment of the group. The specific needs and particular institutional arrangement of the elderly families in redevelopment were considered to be akin and problematic. The social workers knew well that they had to make clear the boundary of the newly formed elderly group.
The social worker's initial idea was to recruit the elderly people who had much more discretion time to concern redevelopment issues. Accordingly, the social workers decided that the membership of the group was strictly confined to be the 1-person and 2-person elderly families who were concerned with the issues and motivated to take social actions. In order to recruit exactly those specific targets, even the name of the SCSCG was created under conscious considerations as described by the social worker:

"I felt that those 2-person families have got greater needs... but they may be puzzled on whether they should join the group or not. But I think most of them are suitable... they may face the problems some days later... as some of them may want to split their tenancy... So, we dare not to stress '2-person’ families specifically, if not in this way, the families which got more than 3-persons may just doubt, if they should join in?’. We have thought about this problem indeed."  

In this way, the membership of the SCSCG was set up with high flexibility.

As specified in name, the primary criterion of membership is put in the member's 'singleton and cohabitant' status of tenancy. This specific understanding of the status of tenancy laid down the planned boundary confining the membership of SCSCG and helped the social workers to recruit the right targets. Members then recruited through various social networks and personal connections. The initial attempt of the team was reflected in a poster that ran:

"There were so many news about redevelopment, I cannot listen to all of them.... There are so many singletons and cohabitant elderly in the community. I do not talk with all of them...... When we get nothing to do, we just have to sit in the garden. What can be done?... If you have the same kinds of thought and want to know more about the rehousing situation of the singletons and cohabitants, welcome to join our gathering. Sure! Besides issues about redevelopment, other things can be discussed and let’s play together!"
After several meetings, the solidarity of the group was developed initially and the members could attend the meetings without prior notice. However, the group members also developed distinctions and recognition among themselves over the process that was out of the control of the social workers. This boundary setting had its effect on the social worker’s designated boundary.

3. The Latent Boundary Setting

Apart from the manifest boundary, however, there emerged other sub-categorizations and even non-targeted members within the group, which were not intended and designed for such purpose at the beginning. Although the members were united under the same umbrella of the SCSCG, they recognized their individual differences. Many of these sub-categorizations could be identified through observing their internal communications and sophisticated distinctions made within the group.

Inside the SCSCG there existed other elderly members who belonged to neither 1-person nor 2-person families. And the broadest category of ‘singleton’ and ‘cohabitant’ elderly families could be further broken down into 8 sub-categories, including variations in the physical condition, family composition, dialectics used, preferred re-housing location, economic situation, number of family members, tenure status and entry background. Some sub-categories were more apparent and lasting, while the other such categories could not survive the organizing process. To a certain degree, some of these sub-divisions were associated with the policy arrangement of the HD, such as the tenure structure. There were other categorizations processed by
the residents themselves. These internal categories generated dynamic forces for making different identity claims. Owing to limited space, we shall illustrate the issue only with a few of the subcategories.

a) Dialects used

One of the members of SCSCG, Mr. Kwan was aware that only a few Shanghaiese in the SCSCG could speak Shanghai dialect. In some situations, he needed the help of his fellow townsmen to translate his speech to the other member. As a result, he dared not speak too much in public and used to sit near and talk with the Shanghaiese group members. Mr. Kwan seemed to treat himself as a sub-group within the SCSCG:

"You cannot tell a Shanghaiese from appearance, but you can just listen to his words...as the others will not understand my words, so I do not speak much...but I just know that there are still two more Shanghaiese..."*

The dialect fostered a language boundary between the members unconsciously.

In many situations, it was suppressed by the social workers, who spoke Cantonese, the 'official language' of the group themselves.

b) Economic Status

Different economic status also acted as an invisible boundary among the members. One of the economic statuses was pertinent to social welfare. In the SCSCG, some of the members received the Comprehensive Social Security Allowances (CSSA). To the non-CSSA recipients, they found it more difficult than the CSSA recipients to achieve a better living standard. As a member Madam Yip
insisted, the HD should reduce the rent in the new estate or she would be forced to choose the less desirable causal vacancy flats outside her original area of residence. For several times she raised her request in meetings but gained little support, because most of the members were CSSA recipients. The divisions between these two groups seemed to be divisive.

c) Non-targeted Members

There were also some ‘non-targeted members’ existing in the group. Mr Chan was from a 3-person elderly family. He had once targeted to split his family into two separated families, but the request was rejected. He did not withdraw from the group but remained active and willing to contribute his bit to the group. As he realized his position,

"It's right...there is no use to attend the meeting. They always talk about the re-housing of singleton...or even 2-person families, but never on 3-person families...so I just come here when I am free."

Many other members similar to Mr. Chan’s situation was allowed and welcomed to remain in the group by the organizers of the SCSCG. According to the organizers of the group, they were considered to be the potential clients in the future and their presence reflecting the informal network among the elderly, which should be preserved.

We have shown that though most of the members of the SCSCG could recognize that they belonged to the same elderly concern group, they were still aware of their internal variations among them. They tended to associate more with the ones
who were in similar situations, speaking the same dialectics or encountering the same problems. In other words, in the mobilization process a common identity to incorporate the wide range of sub-group identities was created. The case of the SCSCG shows that the boundaries constructed were loose rather than strict in an attempt to invite the participation of potential targets and to form a larger group of concerned residents. We are interested particularly in the interplay between the boundaries of these groups.

4. The Interaction between Manifest and Latent Boundaries

Such kinds of manifest and latent boundaries then have both pros and cons effect towards mobilization and can be manipulated by different parties. In some situations, the sub-categorizations can be unified as a whole and foster mobilization, while in other occasion, the variations among the concern of the subgroups can be disastrous for developing unity. More importantly, the interaction of those manifest and latent boundaries has formulated the extra dynamics, which determine much on the result of mobilization, either in the forms of demobilization or even the split of the group.

a) Effect on the Demobilization of SCSCG

Before meeting the HD officials, the team used to discuss with the group to arrive at a common agenda first. Those agendas were well designed to exhaust the demands of all the individual subgroups. The paid organizers then assigned different spokesmen to ask questions and express opinions on behalf of their subgroups. This
kind of division of labor helped to facilitate cooperation among them and develop a larger collective of SCSCG. The result reached would then be conveyed to the HD officials and seek for response. The negotiation process and results gave us many opportunities to observe the interaction between manifest and latent boundaries. We shall illustrate several examples illustrating the member’s utilizing the internal distinctions, the organizers’ efforts on suppressing or celebrating these differences and the authority tactics in manipulating the internal boundaries in return.

According to the existing arrangements of Ho Man Tin Estate, the 1-person families were allocated the ‘small unit’ flats (180sq.ft.) in Harmony Blocks, while the 2-person families were allocated the ‘extra size small unit’ flats (220sq.ft. for the families having two members both over 60 years old) or the 1 ‘bed-room’ flats (370sq.ft. for the families having one member less than 60 years old). It is argued that such kinds of formal arrangement were exactly the indirect result of the boundary setting utilized and manipulated by different parties involved.

At the first place, a group of 2-person families with one elderly and one child asked strongly in the beginning for reallocating of ‘1-bed room’ flat instead of the ‘small unit’ flat, which could allocate to all 2-person families in general according to the territorial-wide policy. They claimed that they should be treated specially among the other common 2-person families, as the child of the family would refuse living with their mother/father in so small a flat. In the same manner, another group of 2 person elderly families also claimed that they should be allocated at least to the
'extra-size small unit' flats instead of the 'small unit' flats as they had one person more than the 1-person families to accommodate. Finally, there left the last group of 1-person families who found no other alternatives but accepted unwillingly that they were the people who deserved to be allocated the most undesirable 'small unit' flats. In fact, some of the 1-person families once raised their demand but found little reactions from the members and the social workers.

Nevertheless, the authority was skillful enough to manipulate the differentiation within the SCSCG to hamper the group's solidarity. In a negotiation with the HD, the SHM wisely argued that the rejection to re-housing 2-person elderly families to the '1-bed room' unit was made out of the need in protecting the benefits of those 2-person families with a younger member. Answered in the same logic, the rejection to re-house 1-person families to the extra-size small units (220sq.ft.) was also claimed to be made only out of the need in protecting the benefits of the 2-person elderly families.\textsuperscript{12} Over the process, the team together with the members of SCSCG found no way to argue, and thus cancelled their relative demands and accepted the HD offer at the end.

It was found that the manifest boundary of 1-person and 2-person families upheld by the group were in fact sub-divided by the latent boundaries. Such boundaries were utilized by the individual sub-groups and manipulated by the authority. More importantly, the social workers who had accepted the role of resource distributor unconsciously did nothing and were unable to challenge the priority of
flat allocation set by the authority. In fact, they could hardly be identified with the identities of their clients, and thus they could not be recognized as ‘us’ with the members.

In short, the internal categorizations of a group can be articulated tactically. They can either be used as a justification for advancing individual claims or as a rationale for universal treatment. It is especially important for the organizers to recognize these divisions and manipulate them by suppressing the differences when mobilizing their own members or celebrating the differences when making claims towards the authority. Successful mobilization is also depended on the way various sub-groups have aggregated into a coherent unity, but still enough ‘breathing space’ for individual concerns at the same time should be allowed. However, such internal distinctions can also be manipulated by the authority to make them competing with each other and thus demobilizing them subsequently.

b) Effect on the Split of SCSCG

Besides effecting on demobilization, the interaction of manifest and latent boundaries in another cases can even effect on the split of the original organization. The boundary of SCSCG had also emerged along time.

In the present case, there generated another group called ‘Sheung Lok 2-person Elderly Group’ (SL2EG) within SCSCG, which was composed of the 2-person elderly families having lived in Sheung Lok Estate from May 1999 onwards. The development of a new kind of identity among the members of the SLSCG was
rather fast and out of the control of the community workers. The responsible worker once confirmed that it was not her initiation at first to develop another subgroup of Sheung Lok Estate tenants separately in so short a period. Over the progress, she even tried her best to suppress the internal divisions by restating other issues concerning Ho Man Tin South Estate, etc. But when there came the institutional arrangement, the collective events, and the strategic needs, the team found no choice but to develop a subgroup, which was much more relevant to the experience they shared and specific problems they faced at that time. The resulting relation between the two groups can then be strategically manipulated to achieve relative aims.

In the meeting at 9/12/1998, the HM confirmed the allocation of 166 small units in the Sheung Lok Estate, which was attached to Ho Man Tin Estate, as extra relocation resources for the 2-person elderly families whose members were all over 60 years old. 13 From then on, within the SCSCG there evolved gradually a group of eligible families who had got their own agendas on re-housing to Sheung Lok Estate, such as the adequacy of the provision. Approaching the completion date of the new estate, HD even released a list of the applicants on which their address and names were specified. This name list indirectly offered the immediate information for the team to cultivate the identity of a subgroup of 2-person families moving to the new estate. 14 The team decided to call the first meeting only for those potential tenants of Sheung Lok Estate. 15 Thereafter, the split between the SCSCG and the newly formed subgroup was made even more obvious and unable to revert.
The solidarity among the members of the new group was reinforced much by the concrete experience they gained over two issues: a campaign against the collection of 'mud fees' and the registration of preferred new flats. Firstly, the AHM announced the extra collection of $350 'mud fees' for all households moving to Sheung Lok Estate in a meeting with SCEG in March 1999. As some of the core members of SCSCG would move to Sheung Lok Estate themselves, they raised the issue, organized those affected tenants and shared their experience in organizing campaigns in the general meetings. Secondly, the selection of the new flats was another interaction site for deriving their uniqueness. The potential tenants of Sheung Lok Estate had to further indicate the new flats they preferred individually. All the registrations were conducted in the same estate office at Block 8 according to preset priorities. As the selection process was rather complicated and identical for all the applicants, they tended to share out the procedures and things to be concerned. They got the chance to meet and discuss with one another outside the waiting area within the estate office.

The SL2EG also emerged out of the team's strategic needs. The team was conscious to make use of all those opportunities to get in touch with the potential tenants, as it was the team's planning in maintaining follow-up contact with those tenants moving to Sheung Lok Estate in the future. The teams found the formulation of a new group essential for challenging the resettlement policies of the HD as shown in the case of collecting 'mud fee'. As a result, the team encouraged actively the
establishment of a new group rather than relied on the effort of the old one alone.

After that, there came the idea of gathering the mobilizing power of the existing SCSCG and the enthusiasm of the potential members of the newly established group in launching an united campaign. In other words, the team turned to develop an independent SL2EG separately in order to generate a united front among the old and new groups on the same issues. The identity of the new group was thus deviated from the original SCSCG unintentionally as reminded by P.

"Since some of them have participated in both groups... they thought that all should be concerned, as all of us are affected... And we once encouraged that as we are related... those who shall remove to Ho Man Tin South Phase 3 is also affected. If you do not speak, others would follow the present practice, so should we join together?... It is without reasons to separate between us and them, so we just let them go, to make them a leader..." 18

The emerging new group composed of many new members held meetings at different time at first to allow the participation of the previous members of SCSCG. But over the process, members chose to be present only at SL2EG meetings finally. Once the new group was formed, the identification of a specific identity of SL2EG within the larger identity of SCSCG facilitated the later dynamics between them.

Taking the campaign against 'mud fee' as an example again, the issue in principle concerned all the members of SL2EG and SCSCG. However, the distinction of two subgroups of people and the different interpretations among the two had generated their relative interests and status. 19 Finally, under the constant mediation of the community workers, the two groups were finally convinced that the cooperation would just do both sides well. Both of them should learn from the
previous lesson of other estates that someone must stand up first to safeguard the residents' interest, rather than depending on the effort of the others.  

To summarize, whether to persist in or change a boundary point to the strategic consideration of the necessity to mobilize support and recruit participation by drawing the line of membership as reflected in the case of demobilization or split mentioned above is a point in question. In the case of demobilization, the internal boundaries of the group can manipulate by the authority to offset the group's collective claims. In the case of split, a SMO can develop into another new group completely when necessary.

III. The Boundary Settings at the Inter-organizational Level

The formation of a group is not only governed by the internal categorization process constructed by its constituents, but also to a certain extent shaped by the interaction between SMOs at the inter-organizational level. More importantly, the identity construction works made at the intra and inter-estate level can facilitate each other in return, especially for those members who actively participated in the estate and inter-estate levels simultaneously.

In August 1998, the representatives of 10 elderly concern group came together first to set up the JERCG. The overall concern of the coalition was aimed to protect the rights of the 1 to 2-person elderly families affected by redevelopment. In this coalition level, the internal categorizations became less prevalent as those representatives of the local estates had already resolved the internal conflicts and
assumed to represent the opinion of the local elderly concern group as a whole. In this case, the distinctions of the opponents became more salient and necessary because the primary mission of this coalition was the change of resettlement policies affecting the elderly. The analysis below is based on the data obtained from the inter-estate actions organized by the coalition. 22

1. The Configuration of Identity Fields

Beside verbal utterance in talk and narratives, boundary construction can also be latent at episodes of collective actions. With regard to the boundary making process of the SCSCG, the 'us-them' distinction can also be constructed and deconstructed, subverted and reverted at times of overt conflicts and in terms of physical settings and non-verbal behaviors. Most of the time, the physical settings in times of collective action are fixed and predetermined, but at another time even these setting can be changed. 23 These configurations can occur and be changed over the course of collective actions in formulating emergent boundary markers between various fields of social actors, namely the protagonists, the antagonists and the bystanders.

A case about the inter-estate coalition JERCG shows the existence of boundary makers in the negotiation meetings. The representatives of the JERCG met with several officials of the HD to discuss a range of matters concerning redevelopment arrangement of the 1-2 person elderly families. Under the mediation of a Legislative Council (Legco) member Mr. Cheung, the coalition successfully invited the officials
of the HD from different units to discuss with 50 more representatives of the coalition. Nevertheless, we found that the configuration of identity fields was even manifested through physical settings.

As the meeting place was prepared by the HD in advance, the representatives had no choice but to accept the initial seating arrangement once they came into the conference room as shown in Figure 1.

![Diagram showing the physical setting in the conference room at the first stage](image)

Fig. 1 The physical setting in the conference room at the first stage

At that time, all the spokesmen were allowed to seated at the front row, while the other representatives sat behind. Since the shape of the conference room was narrow they had to use the microphones given by the HD to express their opinion one by one. The HD officials sat just opposite to those spokesmen. Between the two contention parties, there was a long table separating them. Social workers came from each estate then sat next to their spokesmen or representatives. The Legco members arrived late and sat at one end of the third row with the general representatives, while the researcher took his seat at that time with the members of the SCSCG. The news reporter were simply not allowed to enter the conference room.

This was quite a typical seating arrangement in the case of negotiation between
the HD officials and the residents. It involved two confronting parties (the officials of HD and the representatives of the Coalition) and two third parties (the Legco member and the social workers). The physical positions of every group of attendants in this conference-room could then be symbolized as the signifiers of the boundary between various parties.

In this scenario, the strategy of the HD could also be detected. From the physical setting in this initial stage, the seating arrangement could be considered as favorable to HD. On the one hand, the representatives behind could hardly listen to the dialogue between their spokesmen and the officials because of the distance and barriers they felt. On the other hand, the spokesman could not know exactly the response of their fellows sitting just behind them. The compelled use of microphones further constrained the free expression of the residents and kept them spoke orderly.

With regard to the positions of the Legco member and the social worker, they were kept much detached in this case.

The unfavorable situation of the residents had changed in the next stage when the organizers had come to realize the limitation of the physical setting in constraining their internal communication and external negotiation. Led by some organizers, more and more residents complained about the low voice of both the officials and their spokesmen during the beginning section. They interrupted the speech of the officials and said that they could hear nothing. They also refused to make use of the wireless microphones to start a speech.
When they had won the recognition of the others in this undesirable situation, some of them began to move their chairs voluntarily to the place where they thought they could listen better and talk freely. Once some leading spokesman moved their chairs, the others followed. The officials had no choice but let the residents settle down first. The meeting suspended for a while at that moment. Most of the residents, except the HD officials, moved their chairs much forward to encircle the officials. The Legco member caught the opportunity and moved to the left-hand side of the same row of the officials, while the social workers also moved closer to the officials. In this case, the physical setting in the conference had changed to that as shown in Figure 2.

Fig. 2  The physical setting in the conference room at the second stage

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 L  #  #  #  #  #
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(# HD officials  (L)Legco Member  (S)Social worker  (#)Spokesmen  (-)Representatives  (R)Researcher)

The scenario changed after that interruption. The Legco member Mr. Cheung who was reinforced by the position he had gained in the new situation took the place as the chairperson of the meeting. The social workers moved closer to the spokesmen and communicated with them more frequently and easily, while the spokesmen could get better eye contact with the other representatives. The general residents also
converted the situation by circumscribing the HD officials who had face new group
solidarity between the representatives and the spokesmen. From then on, the
negotiation was conducted in much more equal footings between the authority and
the contending parties.

In sum, the boundary setting process could be negotiated in various situations
not only through verbal discourse, but also in a non-discursive way. Most of the time,
the importance of physical setting in configuring various identity fields was
underestimated. It is particularly the case in collective action episodes because of the
ever-changing characters of various scenarios. Physical settings could be functioned
as boundary markers and condensing signals distinguishing the relative position of
various parties. This could be manipulated as tools to associate members or
disassociate counter-parts.

2. The Manifest Boundary Setting

The proportion of the elderly population and the problems generated in the
Mark III to VI Types redeveloping estates were quite common and developed
through the similar life cycle. The representatives of the coalition came from 10
elderly concern groups in 10 public housing estates. The residents in these estates
were affected by the redevelopment programs and to be re-housed in the same kinds
of flats in Harmony Blocks. The NLCDP teams similar to the social workers in the
Ho Man Tin Estate attempted to establish an inter-estate coalition of the elderly. To
the social workers, the standardized redevelopment programs and reallocation policy
had specified the enemy (the HD) of the inter-estate alliance. 29 No doubts, their common concerns provided the shared ground for the emergence of a kind of inter-estate identity. Of course, such an active articulation is not a straightforward process, instead it is mediated by an active construction fostered by the ‘local representatives’ in inter-estate meetings and social actions. The process could be summarized into many ways.

First of all, the local members and social workers were involved in the JERCG meetings. In the meetings, the participants were supposed to be sharing a common ground and facing the same unjust situation. As revealed by a core member of both the SCSCG and the JERCG, Mr. Law,

“I can tell the people attending the meetings come from other estates at the first sight, as I have never seen them before…. It is clear that there is not just Ho Man Tin Estate that is under redevelopment. There are other social workers working in other redeveloping estates as told by my relatives living there.” 30

Sharing common situations and problems they faced further supported the members’ belief in their common fate and their solidarity was closely related to their efforts. 31 This inter-estate consciousness was further reinforced when they encountered a common enemy (e.g. the SHM of HD) or negotiated with the third party (e.g. the Legislative Council members).

Secondly, the report-back mechanism provided the other channel for the members to strengthen the inter-estate boundary. The coalition tended to collect opinions from, and assign mobilization tasks for, the ‘representatives’ of each estate in their home estate between the intervals of every inter-estate meeting. Those report-
back sections held in the estate ensured that even the peripheral members could understand the relevance of the struggles of the coalition with those of the individual estates. Only in this way would the boundary of individual estates and the inter-estate coalition be converged together and fostered the subsequent mobilization.

More significantly, the sense of belonging on a unitary identity of ‘inter-estate’ residents was also developed via the emergence of some cultural resonant frames over the organizing process. There was an example utilizing the ‘match-box’ metaphor to depict the desirable size of the new flats for the 2-person elderly families. According to the allocation policy, the HD could re-house 2-person elderly families (both the members exceed 60 years old) to the small units of Harmony Blocks which was approximately 180 sq. ft in size. The elderly in the coalition found the size of the flat severely unacceptable. 32 As one of the member of SCSCG commented that:

"The present living space for the elderly is only around 7 x 12 feet. When the children come home, they even get nowhere to stand. It only drives them not to visit their mothers and fathers. It is strictly contradictory to what government ever encourages the children to take care of their parents. ...It is so poor that the old men/ women have to be trapped in the house where he/she could not even walk around. The size of the new flats is only closed to a march-box!" 33

This kind of perception was well resonant with the viewpoints among all other representatives in the coalition as we witnessed in the estate level meetings. The members began to perceive the problems as common to all estates. Such a condensing symbols functioned as a conceptual link between a single estate and different estates.

All in all, through the inter-estate meetings and activities, the report-back
sections, and the construction of culturally resonant frames, there emerged a larger ‘collective’, which brought together the representatives from the different estates affected by redevelopment. This successful attribution of a specific identity of ‘1-2 person elderly families affected by public redevelopment program’ could then be appropriated and used to justify claims for policy change.

3. The Latent Boundary Setting

The latent boundaries implicit in the coalition was mostly duplicated the ones identified in the local estate level. As said before, the internal categorizations were suppressed much as the coalition was perceived to be the united platform of elderly concern groups over the whole territory. The representatives from every estates had to try their best to represent individual estate’s views in the less frequent meetings and collective actions of the coalition.

4. The Interaction of Manifest and Latent Boundaries

Beside the manifest and latent boundary construction just described, the members of JERCG also learnt how to seek for their relative interests actively and strategically through the similar or different situations between local estates. There was the interaction of the manifest and latent boundaries actually effecting on mobilization. In other words, the various actors including the authority, the paid organizers and the third parties knew well how to adopt a kind of politics of difference and similarity in various occasions under the same inter-estate platform. M

As in the reallocation policy of 2-person elderly families mentioned above, the
policy of the HD officially covered territory-wide estate. But the actual practice varied according to the availability of extra relocation resources for local estates. The members of the JERCG asserted their local claims on the basis of quite contradictory logic and tactics. ¹³ We could illustrate with two examples below.

In the first example as revealed by the residents of Yuen Chu Estate, the 2-person elderly families of Ho Man Tin Estate was given a substitution to relocate on the ‘extra-size small units’ in Sheung Lok Estate (220 sq.fts), while they did not get this ‘luck’. As there was no ‘extra size small units’ built nearby, their 2-person elderly families were forced to accept the small units. Without other alternatives, they in return requested the HD to re-house them to the 1-bed room flats (370 sq. ft) in the new estate, which were in principle allocated to those 2-person families with high possibility of increasing members only. In this case, the different situations of other estates were utilized as an additional basis for asking for an equal and fair treatment among the others.

In the second example at the same meeting, the 2 person families of Valley Road Estate Phrase 2 also asked for having ‘extra size small units’ but for different reasons. They maintained that as the Valley Road Estate Phrase 1 (VREP1) families had been granted the right to live in the ‘extra-size small units’ already and as they lived in the same estate of the families in VREP1, their relative requests should be considered to be more reasonable and justifiable than the others. Though the treatments among every individual estate should be equal, they should be treated
more equal than the others as they had an additional rationale.

In the first scenario, the relative deprivations on the re-housing arrangement offered the residents an excuse to generate grievance, request equal treatment and justify further actions. In the second scenario, the residents attempted strongly for the separate treatment by emphasizing the peculiarities of every individual estate. Differences between members of the coalition were much celebrated as a rationale for advancing individual demands. In this way, the members of JERCG could legitimate and assert claims according to the specific needs and relative advantage in utilizing a politics of difference or similarity in different situations. However, we should also be cautious not to exaggerate the independence of the coalition. 36

In summing up, in order to strengthen the mobilizing power in particular issue, both the organizers and the members would tend to develop or suppress the development of internal subgroups in the inter-organizational levels quite flexibly and contextually. In some cases, even when the coverage of the issue is general for all obviously, someone’s claims can still be identified as just more legitimated and justifiable, thus fostering mobilizations. As a result, the mobilization level need not be considered higher when the identity of the local estate and the inter-estate coalition are converged together. In other cases, the issues may be specific in nature and circumstances but still re-framed as general for all. Accordingly, the mobilization level can be considered higher when individual subgroups asserted a ‘general’ and ‘fair’ treatment.
V. Discussion on Tactics and Strategies

To sum up, boundary setting of a group can be formulated in both the intra-organizational and inter-organizational levels as well as both in a manifest and latent way. Boundary setting helps to constitute first the configurations of identity fields, then the internal boundaries of the group. Manifest boundary setting of forms transforms along the active organizational process, while latent boundary setting emerges and is reinforced over the physical setting and non-verbal in episodes of collective action. The boundary setting process can be studied accurately and adequately only through investigating all those dimensions at the same time. The greatest lesson we can draw from the empirical case of SCSCG is that boundary making can be highly flexible and ever changing depending on different situations and specific objectives that want to achieve.

Thus, the 'boundary setting' is not a reified concept defined internally or imposed outside, but rather a fluid one that emerges in concrete social contexts. Identity building has also been embedded in the daily organizational activities not only in discursive ways, but also in non-discursive ways. It contains multi-layer properties, forms and transforms, persists and changes over time and various organizational levels. If that is the case, there is no ground to presume the objective existence of a presumed and static way of social categorizations. And the making process should be viewed as an interaction accomplishment, since it always requires both the conscious construction of the organizers and the active recognition of the
members.

With regard to its significance on mobilization, boundary settings as a framing process of collective identity is important first in identifying the various actors involved in the identity fields, including the antagonist, protagonist and bystander (Snow, Benford and Hunt, 1994). Through boundary setting, members of SCSCG can situate the others as their targets of strategic action.

Secondly, the organizers of SCSCG also seek for the integration of the member’s identities with the group and inter-group level organizations. In this way, the convergence of identities between individual, organizational and inter-organizational help foster mobilization (Stoecker, 1995).

Thirdly, the organizers can also specify particular concerns among the totalizing identities of 1-2 person elderly families quite flexibly according to various situations, thus granting more ‘breathing space’ for individual concerns (Pulido, 1996). The in-group/out-group distinction of SCSCG can also be made in the ways of either celebrating or suppressing differences (Bernstein, 1997). In the case of SCSCG, a new group SL2EG was formulated to tackle the specific needs of launching the campaign against collecting ‘mud fees’.

Last but not least, boundary setting of a group is also constituted by the diverse content assigned for each specific category so formed and the dynamics of various actors both internal and external to SMO. In this case, boundary setting facilitates the mobilization of a group only indirectly. These socially constructed categories of
identities then allowed the members of SCSCG assigning meaning, interpreting grievances and making claims tactically. This problem concerns the other two main components of collective identity that I am going to explore in the next two chapters: the consciousness raising and the negotiation making process.
Notes:
1 In practice, it means that one would be considered to be a member once he/she presented in the regular meetings and registered on the name list.

2 For instance, elderly people's priority in choosing the new flats, which is inadequate most of the time, is not determined by random ballot but depends on the age of the tenants. The elder the age of the tenant, the higher the priority they get in selecting the flat.

3 In those negotiation meetings, the members were mostly concerned about the progress and arrangement of redevelopment, especially on the registration procedure, the adequacy of relocating flats, the amount of removal allowance, the rent level of the new estates, and the size of flats for 2-person elderly families, etc.

4 For example, the alliance once negotiated with the Senior Housing Manager of the Redevelopment Unit of HD and held demonstration towards the Head of the Hong Kong SAR Tung Chee-wah and appealed to the Legislative Councilors. The overall mobilization level of these activities was normally higher than the individual estate.

5 There was a misunderstanding that the HM of RU would show up in the regular meeting at 1/12/1998. Individual members of other community task group were present at the regular meeting under the suggestion of the team members hoping that their problems could be discussed, too.

6 Abstracted from the interview made at 28/4/1999

7 According to the team information, there was case up to 5 individual persons (not family members) living together in the same flats. One of my interviewee was a 'singleton' who had lived with other 3 singletons in the same flat. The 4 singletons living in the same flat really got the intention to split into two households of '2-person' families, though the HD had rejected their request. Another interviewee told me that he was a three-person family who once wanted to split into 2 new family and asked the team for help. And since the largest proportion of 1 and 2 person family is elderly, there comes a common perception that those living alone or living with only one family member in the same flats are mostly old people.

8 Abstracted from a poster posed at 19/5/1998

9 Abstracted from an interview made at 17/3/1999

10 Abstracted from an interview made at 12/4/1999

11 The four times negotiation meeting with the HD officials were held as at 9/12/1998, 9/2/1999, 23/3/1999, and 20/4/1999 respectively.

12 The size of the small unit in Harmony Blocks is around 180sq.ft, while the larger size small unit is 220sq.ft. The 1-person families of Valley Road Estate Phase I have given the relocation to the larger size small unit in the blocks of Ho Man Tin Phase I, which means that 1-person families are allowed to be housed in flats of 220sq.ft. But in the case of Ho Man Tin Estate, HD claimed that all the 1-person families could not apply for the extra size small unit even when there were surplus of flats. Some of the 1-person families tried to express their views on the unequal treatment. HD answered the request just by asserting the needs to safeguard the privilege of the 2-person families first. The officials also claimed that their case was different from Valley Road Estate.

13 Those eligible families could indicate their preference just by returning back a reply slip to the HD. From then on, there witnessed first an increase in the proportion of discussing matters concerning Sheung Lok Estate in the general meetings every week and in the 3 subsequent negotiations with the AIM of HD.

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The team members were keen on visiting all the applicants on the list to discuss matters arising from the removal. The team members even accompanied some of the eligible families to visit the new built flats without the consent of HD.

The meeting received very good response and many 2-person families which had never shown up before had come for the first time and discussed with the others. Shortly after they understood the commonality of their situation, they showed great concern over their future relocation by asking frequent questions, pushing the team for taking actions and even establishing an ad hoc concern group of Sheung Lok Estate, though the time left at that moment was very short indeed.

The AHM explained that fees must be paid for those transporting those mud and garbage after renovation of the new flats. HD claimed that it had been a policy developed for a long time in the past and adopted in various places already, including Ho Man Tin South Phrase 1. Only the one who was ‘not renovated at all’ would be refunded after 3 months of occupancy. The decision would be subject to the interpretation of the private Management Corporation. HD, in the name of the Management Corporation, would collect the fees at the times of signing tenancy contract. The residents argued that there were cases in other estates that the elderly families needed not pay. They were not confident of the HD to refund afterwards, since the definition of ‘not renovated at all’ was up to HD’s explanation. They were united to call off the fees for the elderly, but diverged at how to do it and how to charge those who had really renovated. The AHM had tried his best to explain the rationale behind, but all of the members still rejected collecting such a fee especially for the elderly.

With the help of the team, the ‘potentially affected’ tenants then gathered three times separately, held a signature campaign, and attempted to seek support from District Board members and marched to the Redevelopment Unit Office of HD to voice out their disagreement. They finally succeeded in forcing the HD to exert pressure on the private Management Corporation of the new estate in canceling the charges on all elderly families.

Abstracted from an interview made at 28/4/1999

From the perspectives held by the general members of SCSCG, the internal differentiation of those people moving to Sheung Lok Estate could help to identify the most affected persons. They raised that it should be the responsibility of those people moving to Sheung Lok Estate in the near future to stand up first to resist HD policy, since they would be affected and benefited first accordingly. As a result, they were the most legitimate persons to express the grievance. As said by Madam Lau, “If the ones move to Sheung Lok Estate not to speak up first, how can we the people move two years later complain about the collection of ‘mud fee’? We have not yet moved!” On the contrary, the new members of the new group tended to identify the former SCSCG in return as a pool for mobilization. They counter-argued that the issue concerned not only those moving to the Sheung Lok Estate lately, but could be viewed as a precedent case for all the late comers. The former platform of SCSCG was recognized to be suitable to be appropriated as the right one to advance claims. As addressed in a letter to the HD, the invitation for a meeting with the AHM was made in the name of the SCSCG rather than the SL2EG, as indicated in the SCSCG Letter to the HD dated 31/3/1999.

Since there was no objection to the collection of mud fee from the residents of Valley Road Estate, the private Management Corporation had operated the policy in Ho Man Tin South Phrase 1 already at the beginning of 1999.

The coalition was participated by residents from Shek Kip Mei, Shek Lui, Yuen Long, Yuen Chu Street, Shek Yam, Lui Man Sheu, Lam Tin, Wong Tai Sin Estate. Among them, the two NLCDP of Ho Man Tin and Valley Road Estate had kept special close contact, exchanged information and cooperated in launching collective action all along the redevelopment process, since the reception resources of the residents of the two estates were nearly the same. The 2 teams joined hand in forming an inter-estate redevelopment concern group and participating in another inter-estate coalition on elderly families.
22 The two social actions happened on 26/10/1998 and 21/11/1998 respectively. The first one was a negotiation between the coalition and one Senior Housing Manager of Redevelopment Unit of HD. And the second one was a follow-up action to appeal to the Secretary of Legislative Council seeking for support from the Legco. member to take action.

23 As mentioned in Chapter 4, the physical setting and the interior design of the NLCDP office bases have got the unintended effect of creating distinctions among the members of various residents' groups and the social workers.

24 The representatives came from the 8 estates' concern groups under the coalition. Spokesmen were selected from each estate to present different problems, request solutions and answers. All the spokesmen had done much preparation before the meeting, such as collecting local opinions, studying details of policies and learning skills of negotiation. The meeting was held at the conference room of the Community Hall of Oi Man Estate under the upholding of Typhoon No.3. The researcher was allowed to take part in making field observations over the whole process.

25 First of all, the setting had the unintended effect of distinguishing all the various parties involved in this negotiation. The officials of the HD seated in line facing directly the spokesmen of the coalition at the opposite side, figuring out the contention between the protagonist and antagonist parties. As the role of mediator and bystanders, the Legco member and the social workers were just seated next to the residents, and not in the first row.

26 Though there was no strong guidance of the sitting arrangement, the participants in the situation just knew very well where to sit without any hints. They were seated with the camps they thought they belonged to or supported with.

27 It was more favorable to the officials who were the minority in number and more skillful in handling one to one conversations. As a result, the physical setting prepared by the HD successfully blocked and dissociated the mutual support among the residents.

28 They were only the ones accompanying the residents to meet with the officials. In this situation, Legco member Mr. Cheung was discontented with such an unfavorable position where his role was not so outstanding, while the social workers were quite satisfied with this position as it paralleled their self-restricted facilitator role in launching collective action.

29 The issues they concerned together in the study period included the unacceptable size of the small units of Harmony Blocks for 2-person elderly families, the unbearable 3-4 times high rents in the new estates, the undesirable internal facilities and unfair treatment of addition/split of tenancy, etc.

30 Abstacted from a informal conversation made at 21/11/1998

31 Beside, they also made known with the residents and social workers from each estate through a number of other inter-estate activities, like protest actions, inter-estate seminars and X's gatherings, etc.

32 It was criticized that the balcony/bedroom was too small to accommodate two beds, while the installation of double-deck bed was unthinkable for the elderly, as they were physically unable to climb the ladder up to the upper deck. The inadequate size of the small units was even nicknamed the 'march-box' which did not allow the children of the elderly to stay longer and visit them often.

33 Abstacted from a meeting held at 21/11/1998

34 In the appeal section held at 24/11/1998, the social workers were keen on presenting the general problems faced by the elderly families so as to effect entire policy change, while the Legco members
struck for case treatment in view of the short term result that could be achieved. As revealed in the negotiation with HD at 26/10/1998, the authority in return was also very skillful in blocking the support of the social workers and suppressing the individual request of each estate by emphasizing that the meeting would deal with general policy issues over the territory only.

35 The reallocation policy of HD was not only commented to be in lack of considerations to the specific needs of the elderly in the redevelopment estates, but the implementation also created unfairness. The resolution of the problem however was distributed unevenly among the various estates.

36 Firstly, the connection between the residents of different estates was still depended much on the paid social workers, which were responsible for all the secretary and liaison works. Second, the variation in the stages of redevelopment of every individual estate had laid down the divergent emphasis of each elderly concern group. As a result, the united platform of the coalition was also handicapped to handle those particular problems faced by individual estate.
Chapter 6:

The Cognitive and Emotive Consciousness Raising
--Ho Man Tin Estate Tenancy Concern Group

This chapter is to study the 'consciousness raising' process of a social movement. This process is associated with the attribution of a collective identity. The contents provide a common interpretative framework between members and social movement organizers to build up consensus accordingly.

With regard to the mobilization of collective action, the constituents will be motivated to act and participate only when a situation is interpreted as unjust, getting way of improvement, having chances of success and capturing the right time. Throughout the process, a SMO has also to align the 'world views' of the organizations with its adherents. We suggest two dimensions of this consciousness-raising process namely the cognitive and emotive dimensions.

The cognitive dimension can be further distinguished into four core framing tasks: including the diagnostic, prognostic, motivational and urgency framing. Among them, the diagnostic framing is the most important in the sense that SMO must develop revival explanations towards the external injustice. The specific way SMO appropriate different cultural themes functions at encountering the hegemonic discourse and motivating member's participation in a symbolic way. This manufactured consensus can also be appropriated in a more specific 'collective identity frame', which is formulated from a pool of available cultural frames. They
help to determine the content of the established boundaries and effect the modes of action. Such a kind of cultural reconstruction work is in a flexible and strategic manner, which serves as a basis for promoting group solidarity, and suggesting goals and action tactics.

Besides, all these meaning assigning activities embrace another emotive dimension, which is neglected by most of the students of social movement. The identities of a collective are also related to the emotional expression in collective activities, which is integral to the framing process and latent within the various identity frames. The adherents align with their SMO not only cognitively, but also emotionally.

In this chapter, the target of study is shifted to another community task-group, the Ho Man Tin Estate Tenancy Concern Group (TCG) in view of its salient cultural production process. The group was not marked by its static boundaries constructed, but by its alternative interpretation of reality and high level of mobilization. In this specific case, such a politicization process is more an emerging property arising in small group interaction than an alignment strategy attempted by the organizers of their own, as the social worker in this group tended to step backward and allow more voluntary action of their clients.

The meaning giving process mentioned above will be explored in three separate sections respectively. Following the next section on the profile of the TCG, we shall demonstrate first the strategic process in constructing the identities of a
collective with reference to the meaning assigning process in diagnosing unjust situation, proposing collective solutions, motivating as well as creating urgency for collective action. Then, the production and appropriation process of different types of identity frames will be explored. Thirdly, the emotional dimension implicit in identity framing will be discussed in detail. Finally, we shall conclude the lessons learnt from this case with particular attention on the strategic implications to SMO.

I. The General Profile and Development of the Group

After the official registration of the tenants affected by the redevelopment policy, the social workers and some residents were aware of the urgency of taking collective action in order to criticize the re-housing process. The TCG was formed in July 1998 under a strategic consideration. The composition of the members of the group was somewhat diversified, in which most of the members were elderly people, and the rest were housewives, blue-collar workers and young people. The group members participated on voluntary basis. The TCG members formed good relationships among themselves and knew each other’s case quite well. In both the formal meetings and informal gatherings they used to share their problems.

The participation rate of the TCG was quite high. There were 20-40 members involved in regular meetings held at every Thursday night. Members were also very willing to take up assignments, like staging demonstration and organizing media appeals. The group members’ enthusiasm was shown in the fact that they even pooled up small amount of money to support the group’s activities.
Although the TCG had a social worker who was assigned to be the leader, in the mobilizing process some core members acted independently in decision making and organizing activities. The core members of the TCG were frustrated at the result of their mobilization efforts. They were keen on serving as the representatives of the residents who encountered tenancy problems, like the issues of adding members to the household members’ list, splitting families, transfer of tenancy and the problems of ‘black tenants’ (i.e. unauthorized tenancy), etc.  

The progress of development can be divided roughly into three phases throughout the period of study, namely the consolidating period from July to November 1998, the confrontation period from December 1998 to February 1999, and the reconsolidating period from March to May 1999.

In the first phrase, the social workers found that the residents were unknown to each other and had little knowledge about their own rights and existing policies. The social workers organized sharing sessions and home visits to make acquaintance with the tenants. To the tenants, the social workers were newcomers, since most TCG members used to ask for support from the elected D.B. councilors and the Legislative Councilors.  In this phrase, the major task of the social worker was to persuade the tenants to take collective action on housing problems and begin to learn how to bargain with the authorities. They also invited a former voluntary activist of Kwai Chung Estate to share his experience in organizing the residents with tenancy problem.
In the second phrase, there were direct encounters and intense conflicts with the authorities. The core members of the TCG at that time identified the estate management office as the primary target. The members concentrated their effort meeting with Mrs. Kwok, the Housing Manager (HM) of the estate. Owing to the failure of winning consent from the rigid character of the HM in the meeting, TCG planned to appeal to the higher officials of the Housing Department (HD) and the members of the Housing Authority (HA). They protested outside the front door of the Headquarters of HA and the estate office in Ho Man Tin Estate in the Chinese New Year Holidays. Some of them took disruptive actions to embarrass the manager even though the result was very disappointing. In this stage, the interesting question is about the identification of the right target. We would like to know how the TCG members determined the person on whom they should levy their pressure.

The third stage was about how the TCG members rallied more support from the third party. At the beginning of the third stage, some members had lost faith in group’s activities gradually. They found it necessary to invite others to help out. They appealed to the Secretary Office of the Legislative Council, the Social Welfare Department, and the mass media seeking for help. The result was not rewarding and internal conflicts happened occasionally. Here a question is raised as to how the social workers strengthened the confidence and motivation of the TCG members. In the next section, we shall move on to examine the extent to which consciousness raising in these three stages affected the level and forms of mobilizations.
II. The Cognitive Consciousness Raising

Identifying the enemy, action is related to three aspects of interpretation: regarding a situation as unjust, and pointing out the necessity to take action. We then focus on the consciousness raising of the TCG in this chapter. Being a member within a constructed boundary does not lead to collective action automatically. The willingness of the members of a collective to take action is needed.

As a collective, the members have to reach a consensus over the concrete origins of the undesirable situations, the ways of improvement, the chance of success and the urgency of action. Given that an alleged ‘unjust’ situation would be interpreted as reasonable by the existing hegemonic discourse. A SMO has to offer alternative understandings in a cohesive and innovative way in order to establish counter-hegemonic political discourse and to motivate the potential participants to join social action.

Not only must the worldviews of the individual participants align with the SMO, but there a radical change from converting those attitudes into behavior is also further required. This needs a cognitive process through which resistance action is formulated. We maintain that this interpretative process could be divided analytically into four core framing tasks that a SMO has to perform namely, the diagnostic, the prognostic, the motivational and the urgency framing.

Among these four core framing tasks, the diagnostic one is the most crucial. It is important in focusing and identifying the injustice out there. In our views, such a
meaning assigning process is characterized by the appropriation of various types of ‘collective identity frames’, which deserve to be discussed in great length. The following data also confirm that the framing tasks are much more related to the narrative work as well as the discursive effort between the members and the SMO.

1. Diagnostic Framing:

The diagnostic framing task of a SMO concerns suggesting a way to explain the rise of unjust situation. The social workers in the TCG did not impose a diagnostic frame on the members and aimed at organizational recruitment only. And the members of TCG in meetings and informal social gatherings discussed their unpleasant experience in the past, identified the common enemies at present and more importantly, narrating the injustice through the articulation of various ‘collective identity frames’. The small group met every week at which it created the micro-mobilization context for generating critical consciousness. Through achieving several forms of narration, TCG succeed in formulating a social movement collective with its members sharing common oppositional identities.

a) Narrating the past

The members of TCG shared in the meetings their similar stories on dealing with the HD staff about their tenancy problems before joining the group. The social workers devoted much time to encouraging everyone to tell his/her own story in the group. It seems that group meetings were therapeutic since many members said that their sense of uncertainty was reduced.
At the meetings, their sharing started from the individual’s experience in meeting with the HD for matters relating to addition, splitting or change of tenancy, etc. Their disappointment came from the HD officials’ rejection or unexplained delay. The members were very annoyed, angry, disappointed and even frustrated. These sorts of reactions were common among the TCG members. Although some of them had taken further action to seek help from political parties, no changes had taken place whatsoever in this regard. Seemingly, the TCG was the only method available to them. At the meetings, the TCG members recognized that their experience were common to most of the residents. Their failure to apply was due to the indifference of the HD frontline officers of course. The social workers did help members to understand that they were granted the rights to re-housing satisfactorily. After that, the targets to attack were the HD officials and the re-housing policy. This narration has provided the first ideational basis for the subsequent diagnosis of their problems.

b) Identifying the enemy

As Mrs. Chan pointed out, the HD officers were unreliable. Her cohabitant once phoned to the HD estate office to find the HM. One of the staff members replied that the HM was having a meeting. But when Mrs. Chan phoned again immediately, another staff member told her that the HM had just gone out. Such instance of inconsistency of the HD gave her a very bad impression. This kind of accidents was in fact common in the stories told by the other members of TCG.

It was somewhat common for the TCG members to personalize their source of
their grievances. Their common enemy was Mrs. Kwok, the HM of Ho Man Tin Estate. The other junior staff members of the estate management office were not rated highly, but still they were seen not as evil as Mrs. Kwok. This attitude was expressed in one slogan that appeared in demonstration, ‘The Housing Officers suppressed the elderly, while the Housing Manager denied and deceived us all together!’. But it was true that not many members of TCG met her before. They heard about the stories about Mrs. Kwok. Anyhow, the members compared the hearsay with their own personal experience. They came to the conclusion that Mrs. Kwok was described as a die-hard person who was lazy and reluctant to understand the sufferings of the residents. There were many stories related to the performance of Mrs. Kwok and the followings were just a few of them.

i) Mrs. Wang once visited Mrs. Kwok at the HD estate office, but was stopped by a security guard. The member was told that the HM had just gone out and did not know the exact time when she would come back. Just walking out of the office, Mrs. Wang saw clearly Mrs. Kwok sitting in her office. She shouted to Mrs. Kwok and asked her to meet her. But Mrs. Kwok refused. Mrs. Wang then had a strong view that Mrs. Kwok tried to avoid meeting with residents.

ii) There was a rumor that Mrs. Kwok had gone back on her words when acting as the HM of Hung Hum Estate before. She once met with a tenancy problem concern group and she impressed the representatives with her polite manner. The residents had felt secure on her promise and dispersed. However, in spite of the fact
that she had promised to help the protesters of the Hung Hum Estate residents, she did not offer any better re-housing arrangement. This another story told us that Mrs. Kwok was really unreliable.

We must point out that it is not important whether the stories told were true or unbiased. The significance of the result of these stories is that it created a negative impression on Mrs. Kwok. Her ‘laziness’, ‘impolite manner’ and ‘cunning personality’ were confirmed and reconfirmed in the discourses of the TCG members.

"Mrs. Kwok does not want to manage too many things… that means she did not want to do so much work… It will be better if no one has to be approved. She dared not say something serious. She will never solve your problems seriously…" 10

The final conclusion was reached that the personal problems of the TCG members were also associated with Mrs. Kwok’s bureaucratic manner and her reluctance to exercise discretion power. It was clear that the members of TCG could not verify their personal problems. But the stories helped them to attribute their problems to the HM. This blaming was intensified especially when the TCG members realized that there was small chance for succeed. The personalization of the policy problems gave a concrete target to be aimed at.

c) Appropriating Collective Identity Frames

Besides the general meaning giving process mentioned above, SMO can also give content to an established collective in a much more specific way in the form of offering an ‘identity frame’. An ‘identity frame’ is a precise, condensing and internally consistent cultural theme deriving from the particular articulation of group
identities in the abstract sense. The members then draw on those available sets of political discourses to interpret their daily experience. Such temporal product assists the provision of an internally coherent understanding on the diagnosis, prognosis, motivational and urgency frames of a collectives.

The particular identity frames articulated by a collective need not emerge on one-to-one basis, but can be several and multiple at the same time according to various audiences, constituents and purposes to achieve. In the case when organizing a group of female workers, the identity frames can be articulated on their class background and gender identity, or even both of them.

In the first place, acquiring an identity or a combined set of identities in one way or the other is highly significant for one to recognize even himself/herself, especially in participating in collective actions. Mr. Sung, who demanded to add him to his mother's tenancy, put his ridiculous and problematic situation in a lively example when explaining his inability to become an elector in the District Board election:

"I am not a elector till now. You may ask me why? It is because I even do not get an address. I even do not have a electronic bill... That day I wanted to go to vote. Then they told me you hadn't registered yet. Then I said, "Am I not qualified now?" They replied that it wasn't, but you had to be registered first. I asked them how could I register?... They said that you had to have an address first. But where could I register an address?... I even do not get one. Where can I get my identity. I am someone who do not process any identity all together." 11

Mr. Sung's case shows clearly that his identity as the 'person-to-be-added' has devaluated his own fundamental identity to be even an honorable person. The
applicant will be a 'no-person', if he has not been recognized to be an 'authorized tenant' of the HD. In this case, the active articulation and appropriation among a number of available identity frames reconstitute a fundamental identity for the actor himself/herself. It helps to sustain any other claims made further.

There were several interlocking identity frames, which could be identified in the various situations among the organizing process of the TCG, including the 'ordinary citizens', the 'government tenant', and the 'working class people'. In this way, the same group of adherents can be articulated by the SMO through an identity of the 'victims of bureaucratic rule', the 'neglected people in redevelopment', and the 'exploited economic class' respectively.

In this situation, based on the problematic situations of its members, TCG helped them to articulate their individual exploitation and repression experiences strategically from such a pool of available identity frames. This appropriation process can be made in highly flexible, situational and contingent way. Such a flexible combination at a particular moment and across different times was also a creative choice of the TCG. This set of identity frames then acted as a symbolic resource, which had helped the subsequent mobilizations. It was important to remind that such frames should be resonant with the culture prevailing in the wider culture, if they could mobilize the constituents successfully.

i) Ordinary Citizens

Over the time, the members of TCG as a whole began to consider themselves
not only the residents requesting the HD to solve their problems, but warranting their
own rights. They started to think that they belonged to a member of the respectful
ordinary citizens who deserved the particular concerns of the government. As in the
case previously mentioned, Mr. Sung came to a conclusion finally that he deserved
the right to be added properly, as he was the ordinary citizen in Hong Kong who had
paid taxes and contributed to Hong Kong throughout the years. The government was
'obligated' either to take up his responsibility to look after his mother, or to promise
his application to be added to his elder mother's tenancy.

Following the words given by Mr. Ho of Kwai Chung Estate, more and more
members of the TCG agreed that the HD should help realize the goal of the
government making Hong Kong a good home. Mrs. Yip also learnt to repeat the
words of Mr. Ho,

"The government should act consistently between its own words and behavior. As the HD
do not allow the addition of the adult children to the elderly tenancy, how come Hong
Kong become a good home for everyone?" 12

As a result, the TCG members reoriented their common identities in an entirely
new way. They were decent citizens of the government whose welfare should be
taken care of by the government. Given that the HD followed to do so, they regarded
themselves as suffering from maltreatment. Such a bureaucratic manner generated
the grievances of the children of a TCG member. As a daughter Ms. Yip also
expressed:

"What is one of the most disgusting things of the officials of the Hong Kong
Government? It is not the people who want to go to demonstration. It is not until the
people who are pushed to make things trouble, that you will review something. It is
useless to do this!. That means if you treat them well and tell them politely, they will not listen. They treat you as an idiot. It is not until we go on demonstration and voice out our grievance that they will come out and solve the problems.”

Occasionally, TCG would pose big poster inviting the cooperation and participation of the potential constituents:

"Over the period, we have tried our best to request the HD to solve our tenancy problems as early and actively as possible. However, our Estate Office just upheld their bureaucratic manner and refused to face the residents.”

In short, one’s impotence to possess such an ‘ordinary citizen’ identity can also be constraining for asserting his/her claims over the government as expressed by Mr. Yim in a T.V. news program,

"As I have not yet become a Hong Kong citizen... I am only a new immigrant. As the government policy is set to be such... I have got nothing to say... Am I right?”

His wording reaffirmed the significance of appropriating the selected identity frame but only from a negative angle.

Taken the experiences the members came across together, the problems of the members of TCG could be put into a battle over the recognition and denial of the very identities of themselves as a ‘ordinary citizen’ by the authority. When the members of TCG perceived themselves as the ‘ordinary citizens’ whose housing needs were suppressed, they could be ready to express their demands and locate their relationship with the government accordingly.

ii) Government Tenants

The collective identity of the TCG also meant much more than ‘residents with tenancy problem’ as implied superficially by the name of the group. It stood for a deeper and wider interpretation on the underlying problems. It was not only the
relationship between the owner and tenant, but this tenancy was also contracted between a government and an occupant. The members of TCG were not tenants in the free market economy, they were groups of ‘government tenants’ who were suppressed the needs and deprived of basic tenancy rights.

The TCG members were labeled and blamed implicitly as those kinds of people abusing the resources of public housing. They were even the scapegoats of HD in justifying the shortage of resources on public housing as illustrated in a HD replied letter:

"Based on the principle of reasonable distribution of public housing resources, it is a well-established policy of the government and HA that it has to distribute the limited public housing resources to people in urgent needs reasonably. In order to uphold this belief, at the times when Housing Department distributed limited resources, it must make a balance and be responsible in macro level. For instance, an effective mechanism is needed to prevent any person who made use of their relationship with the authorized occupants to seize public housing resources immediately, so causing the more needy people to wait for a longer time." 16

Members of TCG rejected strongly the views of HD on stressing the shortage of extra resources in providing sufficient accommodations to families with tenancy problem. They rejected such a negative label given by the authority in describing them as greedy people abusing the resources of public housing. They accused that HD should be the one responsible solely for the inadequacy of public housing resources as demonstrated by the Redevelopment Home Ownership Scheme.

In contrast, the members of TCG perceived themselves strongly as victims and sufferers of present tenancy policies of the HD. 17 In return, they condemned the government for converting the previous public rental blocks to HOS blocks, even
when it was known that there should be more reserves for the needy people. At the end, they wrote another letter to challenge the negative label imposed by the HD.

"We are not the kind of people seizing the public housing resources as said by them (HD). We are rather a group of people having authorized tenancy. What we demand is only to be treated properly after we have got more or less person in the families. On the contrary, we are the victims of redevelopment, which has wasted the public money. Such problems happened on the qualities of housing are caused by the mismanagement of the HD." 

They were not a group of greedy people abusing the resources of public housing. Rather they were groups of residents suppressed a long time for their most basic housing needs, such as to be accompanied and taken care of by their adult children, or to split with the strangers or relatives they could no longer tolerate, etc. It was the time for them to take back their own rights. As a result, the members negotiated then a new definition towards their identity as ‘residents with tenancy problem’ over the group process.

iii) Working Class People

In another occasion, the members of TCG also expressed their identity in a way related to their economic class position. They used the words, ‘the working class people’, to identify themselves as a group of social underclass which can just earn a living but difficult to solve their tenancy problem through individual methods.

Many respondents in the group told the researcher in different ways that the people participating in the group were only those unable to move out the estate owing to the lack of money. The tenancy problem simply did not cause a problem if they were rich enough to solve the problems by their own. They even knew well that
this was a kind of problem related to the whole economic disadvantage class. A younger member of TCG, Miss Leung once expressed this view clearly,

"But this kind of problem can best be elaborated as the common concerns of all those social underclass...those living in public housing estates. It is not a problem that belongs to our estate only." 18

In the eyes of local Hong Kong people, the group of 'lower class people' is equal to the grassroots in the society, whom should be taken care of if they cannot solve their problems by themselves.

Added together, there have emerged gradually adverse understandings towards the common identities of the members: the ordinary citizens, the government tenants the working class people who have long been suppressed their basic housing needs and welfare rights. Over the study period, such types of identity frames could be articulated quite flexibly across various situations or within a single meeting. These different frames had further provided the symbolic resources for the group members to facilitate mobilization in a precise and economic way. They came together to legitimate the respective claims and justify the action taken by the member of TCG.

2. Prognostic Framing:

The TCG had to propose alternative solutions and situations creatively so as to give their members a goal of social action. The TCG successfully suggested several innovative ideas to persuade the participation of the members by interpreting the redevelopment as a chance and pressing for the exercise of discretionary power from the HM. If not for the need of the HD to evacuate the flats, their applications would
have been held up just in the case of the past.

Firstly, some TCG members figured out the possibility of realizing the goal. This was supported by the stories told by the relatives and friends living in other estates that redevelopment was the only chance for them to put pressure on HD. The HD tended to neglect or reject residents’ request within the planned re-housing period. The HD would give in on some respects when it became urgent to evacuate the flats. A TCG member once expressed that splitting tenancy could be granted only when redevelopment process entered the last stage:

“If not for the redevelopment, the residents would get nothing to say about the split of tenancy. But as the existing government wants to redevelop the buildings actively, it is natural for the residents to raise their demands. If my request is not promised, I will not move. We, the residents, have got enough grounds to demand for reasonable re-housing.”

This instance shows that active residents took the chance of redevelopment to render other application successful. Mrs. Lam also put it directly:

Mrs. Lam: Many of us have made use of the redevelopment to force them (HD) to do it...

Researcher: If the estate is not redeveloped, what do you think about your chance of success?

Mr. Lam: If it is not redeveloped. Um... We do not think that it will be done, but we don’t know how to... what are the channels existed? That means... we do not know how we can write to Mr. Mike Hok-li (Head of Housing Department), or write to the HA. We do not know the way to do so. But only think for ourselves what is the way to get rid of our families, if it is not redeveloped...21

The TCG members came together seizing the favorable opportunities. The redevelopment of the estate then existed as a way out of their long last problem indirectly.
Secondly, the TCG members recognized that the HD officers at local estate level had got the discretion power in the examination of resident’s applications. 22 They learnt that if they continued to decline the HD’s offer till the date of clearance, they might have more chance to get favorable result. The members were motivated to continue their action since they believed that the HD officers would exercise their discretionary power finally. In this case, the TCG members were very opportunistic in grasping the fruits of redevelopment. All in all, the TCG members were reinforced owing to their belief in the increasing chances and the possibility for the HD officers to exercise discretionary power. Only put in this way, the TCG could act as a united actor in bargaining with the authority, which was much more powerful.

3. Motivational Framing:

The TCG members must be motivated to take action to change the unwanted situations. However, as the bargaining power of the grassroots was always considered to be minimal compared with the overwhelming strength of the authority, the sense of political efficacy of the TCG members was low to develop and sustain the motives of the members.

There was an important method to strengthen the TCG member’s confidence and motivation to take action, i.e. to establish beliefs in the chance of success. The first belief was the solidarity power constituted by the numeric strength of the group.

As Mr. Sung pointed out the strength of this kind of motivational framing:

Researcher: Do you mean that more people will press for more?
Mr. Sung: Yes.
Researcher: If you come alone?
Mr. Sung: You cannot argue with them. It is really the fact. I came with my wife, my mother once, but they just told me to apply for the waiting list of public housing. They even urged me to apply for the temporary stay, but it is useless, am I right? 23

Mr. Sung knew well that they were powerless. They were under-educated, busy for making a living, and totally ignorant about policies. But as he knew, when they came together, they could exchange information, learn more negotiation skills and get things change. He also recognized that the free riders had endangered the TCG. It was the belief of solidarity and collectivity of TCG that gave them the courage and the power.

The belief in the numeric strength and solidarity power was further supported by the common fate tied up the members together in the future. The responsible worker also spent much time at the very beginning of TCG in stressing the common fate of the residents with tenancy problems. He repeated again and again in the meetings that the fellows of TCG would be the only ‘friends’ who would leave in the same estate at the final stage before clearance, if the problems remained until that time. Such an emphasis on the future barriers gave us the impression that the fates of all the members of TCG were bound together. They were the people in the same boat left behind and delayed removal by the HD, though in fact the situations may be various across different cases. 24

Mr. Sung’s case may best show us the voluntary attitudes of the members in associating individual problem to the other members in the same group in practice. 25
Mr. Sung was required lately that he would be better leave or apply for a permit for 'temporary stay'. When asked his own idea in tackling the problem, Mr. Sung replied that since he was an unauthorized occupier under the existing policy of the HD, he would be in the same case as another member Mr. Yim, whose father died the year before. By that time, Mr. Yim had already been warned by the HD to leave or to evacuate from his flat by force in two months time as the authorized tenant in the flat had passed away. Mr. Sung knew too well that he would be kicked out at anytime when his only mother died some day just the same as the case of Mr. Yim as a 'black tenant' (unauthorized occupier) some day too.

Success stories are powerful. Two cases were said to be the evidence of collective power. The past experience of Kwai Chung self-help group was particularly encouraging. According to Mr. Ho of Kwai Chung Estate, they succeeded in meeting with high grade officials several times and broke up many established rules of HD, such as allocating brand new flats in the same district of residence to those residents after splitting of tenancy or adding adult children. Even though the success was exaggerated a little, the TCG members repeated by citing the Kwai Chung event as the evidence of a successful case. 26 This case seemed to give them a hope of success and the path to follow.

Another successful story was about a female member of TCG, who got help from the political parties and Legislative Councilors to successfully apply for separation from her male cohabitant. 27 This case was very popular and received
much concern among the group members. The members of TCG often cited this case as the evidence of the achievements of their group. It seems that one successful event was enough to reinforce the members’ participation. This showed through Ms. Leung’s response:

Researcher: Up till now, the successful case you get seems to be the only …
Ms Leung: ‘one’?  
Researcher: I dare not say so…
Ms Leung: But if it is without our effort, there will be even no ‘one’ case!

In the eyes of the members of TCG, it was not necessary to verify the real effect of the power of their own group. They used to perceive positive results as the proofs of the effectiveness of their struggle. In the case of TCG, members even tended not to seek the support from other third parties (at least in the first stage). This consensus on the power of TCG helped to explain the persistence of the faith and confidence among the members towards acting collectively for individual problems.

4. Urgency Framing

Collective action can also encourage by sharing a strong sense of urgency among the members. The TCG members tended to remind each other at the meetings that the time was running short. Such a sense of urgency sensitized many of the groups’ activities to their limited time for action. We found that both the organizer’s efforts and the participant’s worry manufactured this sense of urgency.

Firstly, the community workers often conveyed a message about the existing policy that TCG members would be left behind, once the other ordinary residents had selected their new flats in a ballet, which would be held around mid 1999 to early
2000. The group had to do something before that day otherwise it was too late to change their fate. According to the policy, the families who had not resolved its tenancy problems would not be allowed to attend the ballet to select the flat they wanted. In this case, TCG members could not choose the flats they want, even if they had settled down their tenancy problems finally. It was the first deadline the group felt they had to meet.

Secondly, the experience told by Mr. Ho of Kwai Chung Estate informed the TCG members that it was necessary to organize collective action early. Mrs. Lam recalled:

"Take it seriously, if it is not for Mr. Ho, I think I will not continue participating in attending meetings. Mr. Ho and the residents of his estate are really good to have such kind of solidarity. They are really consolidated, which means his presence has given a kind of encouragement to urge the kai-fong to take action... My... Buddy, they have carried out the struggle for more than three years, but we have to be demolished next year. The HD may hold the random ballet at the end of this year but... the buildings will be completed in a short period, except a few floors..."  

In this case, not only did the Kwai Chung experience bring hopes to TCG, but they also made them aware of the time limit. The TCG members recognized the issue of limited time. They set the deadline at mid 1999, that was the time the new blocks were completed. As a result, it was no surprise that many of the members were willing to meet every week voluntarily and devote so much time and energy to organize those collective actions to press for change.

In summary, the successful alignment between the individual members and the TCG as a whole was achieved by creating and recreating a universal view towards
diagnosing the problems, suggesting the solutions, motivating the actions and setting the time limit. We found that the resonance between the constituents and the SMO was achieved not by one-side persuasion of the social workers, but rather it emerged from the members’ lively and daily interaction with other members and the authority. The organizers of the TCG did play a less significant role than what is described in the Framing Theory in the past. The TCG remained a site for counter-culture production and articulating the individual’s daily experience in a collective and structural way. The accomplishment of the four major framing tasks helped to develop a sense of community among the individuals in the TCG.

III. The Emotive Consciousness Raising

Establishing collective identity frame is not only a cognitive activity, but also an active construction process involving emotional investment. Collective identity always embraces an emotional dimension, when the members are associated together as a unified collective. This affective expression, in the form of defense or reinforcement of established collective identities, in return helps to justify the cognitive account of the unjust situations out there. It further guides the actors to feel and act in appropriate and legitimate ways in accordance with those of the definition of the collective.

In the following examples, I shall investigate the various collective emotional experiences of the members of TCG in the sense of getting anger, solidarity and obligation, which can all be identified only implicitly among group discussions and
collective actions. Then, it is important to see how these kinds of emotional
expressions and interaction are related to the group’s mobilization.

1. Sense of Anger

As described above, the members of TCG delegated their blaming mainly
towards the sources of injustice which were identified most of the time at the
frontline staffers, the HM, the whole HD, the HA and the Hong Kong government
(with Mr. Tung Chee-wah as the Head of Special Administration Region). Such a
cognitive evaluation, however, was not done without affection involved. These
assessments in fact accompanied a sense of anger towards the concrete individuals
behind.

One of a vivid example, which could demonstrate such kinds of intensely
involved emotion, was once again found in the negotiation with the HM of Ho Man
Tin Estate, Mrs. Kwok. From the videotape recorded that night and the discussion
made afterwards, one could easily come to an impression that core members of TCG
were disappointed, annoyed or even furious towards Mrs. Kwok. Along the
meeting, more and more people shouted loudly in front of Mrs. Kwok that it was
totally a waste of time to discuss with her any more.

When Mrs. Kwok repeated again that she did not get the final say on matters
relating to tenancy problems, the anger of the masses had come to a peak. They
repeated Mrs. Kwok’s flat tones, stood up, encircled her and asked her for leaving.

The anger of the members of TCG expressed in this case visualized their strong
grievance towards their common target of enemy. As a member of TCG, the appropriate emotion was to personalize the problems on the HM.

2. Sense of Solidarity

The construction of a sense of ‘we-ness’ could emerge out of the expression of mutual support and moral righteousness as demonstrated in the following three situations.

The first example refers to the sharing of individual experience when facing the HD staff. Over the process, not only a common identity among the members emerged, but it also offered a platform for the members to give and take their support emotionally with each other. For example, since one of the members, Mrs. Law’s husband was using a wheelchair she asked HD a flat of larger size but was refused. The HD staff was condemned by the group as discriminating towards those disabled people. Members of TCG further showed great concern and empathy towards their unfortunate member. At the same time, they also concerned many other odd cases of single man or woman living together with other strangers under the same roof as mentioned before.

In the second case, the ‘sacrifice’ of two core members of TCG, Miss Koo and Mrs. Lam aroused the emotional response of the group members that had increased the solidarity of the unintentionally. In the contact with the high officials, they were told that their own cases could be considered individually and separately. In fact, it was an open practice of HD to co-opt the active members of the adversary
group by providing them individual benefits under the table. The reply and response given by Miss Koo and Mrs. Lam, however, had won the praise of their group members.

"I shall not promise the GHM and SHM that my case can be treated specially, or else you may find us betraying you all. I dare not bear a black mark of a 'betrayer'. You know... we are the one." 32

They even turned down the high official's suggestion on visiting their homes. In return, they expressed to them that if their individual demands could be accepted so easily, there were no reasons why the applications of the rest members of the group could not be approved in the same way. Out of what they had expected, the members had not questioned their loyalty towards the group after they had disclosed such secret conversations with the HD. On the contrary, the members thought that it would rather be a good thing if their individual requests were really approved because in this case the other could follow. While some others only delivered their special thanks to them, since they had once again not pursued their own interests selfishly. 33

As a result, the mutual recognition between the core and the other members reinforced the solidarity within the group unintentionally. In the minds of the Chinese people, such kind of faithful behavior towards one's collective was called 'yee-chi', which was particularly a kind of good virtue. In this case, a sense of collective emerged in an opposite way as the members could share a feeling among themselves that "since they do not betray us/ trust us as such, we are really the one".
There were also other negative examples that reflected the solidarity of the
group when someone could not share the common attitudes and feel in the same way
as others did towards the HD officials. As in the middle of the negotiation with Mrs.
Kwok, one of a resident (name unknown) jogged in that night and raised his support
towards the hard working of the staff of HD and tried to excuse for the fault of Mrs.
Kwok. The other stopped and criticized him as not knowing the facts immediately
and even suspected him as a spy from the HD as what expressed after the meeting. In
this case, he was considered to be out-group only because his expression was not
congruent with the unpleasant experiences, or even the sense of anger, shared by
most of the other participants at that moment.

3. Sense of Obligations

Most of the time, a voluntary group is bounded less on its written constitution,
but more on the internally felt obligations of its members. In fact, the social workers
often asked empathetically what the members felt when they were rejected and
turned down by the HD staffers. They were very sensitive towards what their clients
felt and reacted skillfully to encourage them to express their deep feelings by all
means in the group settings. The sense of obligations can be identified in two
opposite forms: condemning those refused to share the burdens of the whole and
reward those who took up the responsibilities by their own.

In the first case, the members of TCG tended to condemn the other members
who were not so loyal to the group, but only free ride on the achievement of the
group. As Mr. Sung complained about the behavior of some of the other participants in the negotiation with the HM,

"Since you are a group of people, you should leave at least after the end of the meeting, am I right? You talk about yourself and then leave, how can you be right? The meeting has not yet finished, you should at least... The group is only working for the individuals, is it? They should better leave after the meeting ended!... Yes, it should be that... If you win, you win; if you lose, it is another matter... You have tried your best!" 34

Mr. Sung went on to say that he would dare to take one day off and met with the Legislative Council member, if every one promised to participated. As he realized that all the member of TCG had rode on the same boat, they ‘should’ contribute their minimum effort. If everyone knew that his/her interest was tied up to the fate of the entire group, there should be no need to persuade the members’ participation in the group’s activities so hardly. The small size of the group also allowed the mutual observation of the participation level of each member and made the peers pressure valid and effective. The cohesion within the group was facilitated much by these kinds of emotional involvement, which was manifested in many other daily organizational activities.

In the opposite case, Miss Leung disclosed her own sense of obligation as she realized that she was one of the youngest members among the TCG.

"As I went there in the beginning, there are so many elderly men and women... That makes me felt that though I could not do much work. I was still the youngest... that means I felt that if you do not make it even you are young, how can you rely on the hard work of the elderly here and there... I do not know how to fight myself... or how to manage it... But I still hope that I can do as much as I can." 35

As she recognized that most of the members of TCG were elderly, she was
obligated to contribute her every effort even when this would not mean a lot. As one of the members, she was motivated by the inadequacy of the composition of the group. She was exactly the opposite people Mr. Sung just complained but never the odd case in the group. Other younger members of the group also shared such kind of obligation as they expressed in the interviews and at the group meetings. The solidarity of the TCG then was strengthened self-evidently in this way when many members had felt obligated to contribute his/her own efforts voluntarily.

As a result, a sense of obligation was developed along the course of collective activities in both negative and positive ways. As one member of TCG, one should do 'this' and not do 'that'. The emotional expression constituted the reinforcement of the collective identity of everyone as member as a group, which would lessen the free rider dilemmas imposed on the voluntary collective actions of the group.

IV. Discussions on Tactics and Strategies

To sum up, the lessons we can learn from this case are many. The ways of identifying the 'content' of a collective in one way or the other signified the specific understanding of the collective towards itself. Such a politicization process can be taken in both a cognitive and an emotive way. The organizers of TCG established collective action frames successfully through providing common diagnosis, prognosis, motivational and urgency frames towards the problems faced. More importantly, they also appropriated resonant cultural themes in the forms of various condensing identity frames. It is also found that the consciousness raising process is
not necessarily a conscious tactics of the organizers planned before hand, but can come from the interactions of the group members in a emerging process.

An 'oppositional consciousness' promoted by the SMO is important to provide an alternative understanding on the 'reality' under hegemonic discourse (Groch, 1994). The same categories of people negotiated a renew understanding on their very identities through inventing and reinventing their history and experience in a collective and innovative way. Stated in another way, the TCG re-framed their collective action as justified, purposeful, feasible and suitable in time. These cultural construction works were essential then for recruiting members, gaining political currency and fostering group solidarity.

Such a rise of political consciousness cannot be achieved by the active construction of the SMO only, but it can also be relevant to the individual member's experiences, which are multiple in nature. These consciousness can also be constructed in action (Fantasia, 1995). It is particularly the case in the social work setting as the social workers have tended to limit their leading roles over the organizational process. In this case, the participation of the group members was also very important and it explained the effective alignment with the SMO suggested frames.

Beside, a SMO need not recognize only one identity to its members, but it can offer multiple accounts for their identities for various purposes. The primitive group identity of TCG as 'tenants with tenancy problems' is given a new comprehension by
appropriating various types of 'identity frames'. These frames acting together function as instrumental tools to articulate the daily exploitation and repressive experience in a condensing, collective and symbolic way. They have offered a bridge between individual experience and structural causes as well as provided the counter discourse for the later claims (Platt and Fraser, 1998; Brush, 1999).

It is also found that cultural difference have effect on two main aspects. Firstly, the 'right frame' implicit in the collective action frame of many social movement in the western societies cannot be found easily in Hong Kong. The grassroots organizing lacks a related to the assertion of citizenship right. Instead, we found that the movement constructs their 'right frame' via the construction of the various types of 'collective identity frames'. Secondly, there is a tendency to personalize the external on several government officials rather than the whole system behind. It may due to the reluctance of the bureaucratic system to change and the popular reactions of the grassroots in the Hong Kong context.

Last but not least, such framing work mentioned above also embraces an emotional dimension, which constituted the meaning of the categories constructed. (Berbrier, 1998, Einwohner, 1999) The sense of anger, obligation, and solidarity are three types of central emotion attachment identified in the organizing process of TCG. Same as the other core framing tasks, such emotional work can also be framed tactically in various group situations to govern member's legitimate response and appropriate expression in line with the TCG as a whole. This various types of
emotional expressions then can act as an extra motivating force driving members to
take part in collective action.
Notes:

1 The formal announcement of redevelopment together with the registration procedure followed aroused much public concern on tenancy problems in the community from Sep 1998 onwards. It was because the time left at that time before clearance was rather short and the HD would start to handle the applications of the residents with tenancy request.

2 It was observed in the regular meetings that the members sharing the same kinds of problems tended to make friendship with each other. It was indicated by the various informal behaviors between them. They would exchange the telephone number of each other, and then phoned to ask the reason why one was absent in the last meetings. Many of such interactions were held without the notice of the responsible social workers.

3 In the case of negotiating with the HM at Jan 1999, there could even turn up to be over 100 residents attending.

4 As the team had provided all the money needed in organizing different activities, there was no need for any resident’s group to raise money for themselves. The active and innovative suggestion could be seen as a great step towards independence.

5 According to a registration of the tenancy problems held by a political party, the estimated number of potential constituents of TCG was around 300 households approximately.

6 After the formal announcement of redevelopment, community organizers of different political parties went to the estate to register the demands of residents with tenancy problems. They helped to write letters on behalf of the residents to the HD individually. But most of the time, their problems did not resolve much and then some of them decided to join TCG aiming at collective struggles.


8 Some core members of TCG tried their best to exert pressure on the HM. They appeared suddenly in front of the HM and said hello to her both before and after she came and left the office. This kind of action lasted for an entire week.

9 For instance, the sharing exposed the misconduct of HD in handling most of their applications. It was by the policy that the HD staff could not reject receiving any written request from the residents. But many elderly members complained that their letters were returned by the HD staff before them as there were simply not existing any policies about addition or splitting tenancy altogether.

10 Abstracted from an interview made on 22/4/1999

11 Abstracted from an interview made on 30/3/1999

12 Abstracted from an interview made on 20/3/1998

13 Abstracted from an interview made on 20/3/1999

14 Abstracted from a poster posed on 24/3/1999

15 Abstracted from TVB news on 19/2/1998

16 Abstracted from a HD Letter dated 9/2/1999
The members of TCG rejected such accusations strongly at the regular meetings. They argued that they were the victims of the past and present housing policies. Because of the harsh requirement of HD in the past, they tolerated a long time living with somebody they did not know, but only mixed together when entering public housing. They were also too old to live alone.

Abstracted from the letter to the Appeal Office of Legislative Council dated 27/3/1999

Abstracted from an interview made on 30/3/1999

Abstracted from a meeting held on 18/11/1998

Abstracted from an interview made on 24/3/1999

As in the case of splitting tenancy, the HD will consider the applications according to the individual situation of each case only.

Abstracted from an interview made on 30/3/1999

There were two groups of members in TCG. The first group of members was eligible to apply for according to the existing policy. Their applications would be approved as a matter of time. The situation of another group was much more difficult, as their cases were not qualified to be approved under the present policies. They risked the dangers of staying in the estate until the latest stage.

Mr. Sung came to Hong Kong ten years ago and since then had lived with his mother in Ho Man Tin Estate. As he was an adult above the age of 18 during that moment, he was rejected several times by the HD staff to add to the tenancy of his mother.

In fact, the Kwai Chung residents succeeded only at the last stage before clearance and in a situation that there were large surplus of new flats in the same district of residence. The Kwai Chung case was emphasized again by the HD as an exceptional case, which would not happen again in the future.

The applicant was a widow who had lived with another guy and her husband since they moved to HO Man Tin Estate in the earlier years. It was a policy of HD at that time to accommodate three unrelated persons under one roof. Few years ago, her husband passed away and left the applicant to live with the guy only from then on. She complained the situations to the estate office a lot but was kept on telling that the request was unacceptable even after redevelopment. Her request was finally approved just before the HM met TCG at Jan 1999, but the reasons and forces behind in fact were never known.

The ballot will be held shortly after the completion of the new blocks. Those families with unresolved tenancy problems then will be delegated the rest of the flats, which are assumed to be worse and unwanted by the others.

Abstracted from an interview made on 24/3/1999

When the meeting proceeded half the way, more and more participants refused to listen further what she was speaking. They came to a conclusion that Mrs. Kwok was reluctant to answer their request, though she had kept a polite and patient manner. The situation seemed that she came just under residents’ repeated pressures and instruction from the top. She just read out the exact words of the stated policy written in the handbook of redevelopment. She also refused to meet individual residents, to release the information and data related to tenure problems and even to make sure the progress of tenure investigation. At the end of the meeting, she even said that she was not in power to promise
anything from the residents and just told the residents to leave their address and correspondence.

31 They once represented the group to deal with the General Housing Manager (GHM) and the Senior Housing Manager (SHM) of the Estate Management Unit of HD on arranging a meeting with TCG. In the process, they got more familiar with the officials but the group's request was still delayed and rejected.

32 Abstracted from a meeting held on 7/1/1999

33 As mentioned previously, Mrs. Lam once expressed her anger towards the impolite manner of the HD staff when contacting elderly members. She even stated that if HD really wanted to play, all of us should refuse to move and waited to be pulled out of the home under the witness of our relatives and reporters. Her mistrust and grievance towards the HD staff spread well among the other members of TCG.

34 Abstracted from an interview made on 30/3/1999

35 Abstracted from an interview made on 30/3/1999
Chapter 7:

The Internal and External Negotiation Making
--Ho Man Tin Estate Redevelopment Concern Group

In this chapter, I shall go on to examine the last component in collective identity building, i.e. the negotiation making. The boundary and the content of a collective are not only determined and processed by the social movement organization (SMO) exclusively, but they are also constructed and reconstructed continuously with various targets of audience. In other words, they are interactive product of various groups of social actors. It is equally important to know the mutual perception of the audiences towards the movement and the response they make in return. They constitute the wider environment of a movement that a SMO has to take account of.

The underlying aim in this chapter is to reveal the internal and external negotiation processes in the construction of movement identity. The internal process refers to the interaction of three groups within a SMO, namely the voluntary activists, the paid activists and the general constituents, while the external process concerns the conflict between the SMO and the authority.

First of all, although it is commonly known that the identity dynamics between the voluntary participants and the paid activists within a SMO is perceived mostly as unproblematic and not deserving any further study. Our empirical case however shows that the internal disputes over the identity of these two internal parties were rather sophisticated and could effect on the mobilization and demobilization of the
movement. The performance of different kinds of roles would help align or divide the organizers with the members.

Moreover, the public collective identity of a SMO is always a result of the identity conflicts between the SMO and its competitors. One party can be dominant which it can exercise power over agenda setting and restrain its opponents' room for maneuver. The situation happens when one cannot offer a counter identity frame towards the contending issues compared with its enemy. The result of this discursive struggle on the public identity of the SMO then determines the political outcome of the social protests.

In this chapter we shall study another resident's resident group: the Ho Man Tin Estate Redevelopment Concern Group (RCG) which had held the broadest mandate. We found that this group had a fragile negotiation process with respect to both internal and external negotiation process. The relatively weak mobilization and problematic identity construction specially marked the group in the sense that strong boundaries existed between the social workers and the members and the group was unable to retain its alternative identities when facing authority.

Since the negotiation process between various parties is in fact generally across all the three groups, the information utilized in the following sessions need not be limited to the activities and members' response from the RCG only. The interviews on the social workers in the team are another kind of supplementary data. We shall first present the profile and development of the RCG, and then focus on the
negotiation process between groups of people who have got the most extensive interaction. We shall highlight the internal allies between the social workers and the external rivalries between the authorities. In the end, I shall tease out the implications of this empirical analysis to our understanding of movement mobilization.

I. The General Profile and Development of the Group

The RCG was one of the groups formed early and enjoyed a longer life expectancy than the other community groups of the community work team in Ho Man Tin Estate. It was set up in the early 1998 with the help of different social workers in various periods. The main objective of the task group was to deal with matters concerning relocation arrangement over the redevelopment process in general. The constituency of the RCG in principle concerned almost every one dweller living in the estate. They were expected to be those who participated intensively in group activities at various levels and extent, including attending the local meetings, representing the group, joint-distinct coalitions, mobilizing task and staging demonstration, etc. Over the study period, the core members attending the meetings were around 7-12, while the peripheral members’ around 12-20.

As in the case of other residents’ groups, the core members were given much autonomy in deciding the forms of actions and the distinction of the RCG. Although the role of the social workers was supposed to be restricted to giving information, managing daily secretarial work and teaching organizing skills, in practice, the
responsible workers were the most core central persons who had determined much
the direction of the group and followed up the decisions made. Even the interval and
the date of regular meetings were decided by the social workers, especially when
only a few members showed up at the meetings.

The development of the group went through its cycle along with the progress
of redevelopment that could be roughly divided into three main stages. They are the
formation stage from March 1997 to July 1997, the contraction stage from July
1997-December 1998, and the re-consolidation stage from December 1998-May
1999.

Shortly after the RCG was formed, they were concerned much with the mid-
term review of the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS). The members of the RCG
joined the other residents' groups in fighting against the termination of the
succession rights of the children of the sitting tenants and the 'Redevelopment Home
Ownership Scheme' (RHOS). The group was perceived to be in its heyday in July
1998, when the HA attempted to pass the decision on launching a pilot experiment
of RHOS in Ho Man Tin Phrase 1. The RCG was able to mobilize more than 70
tenants to stage a demonstration at the entrance of the Housing Authority (HA)
Headquarter. In that period, the group was also successful in arousing the concern of
the media.

From then on, however, the participation rate of the group members had
dropped gradually. During the period of study, the social worker was T who had
cooperated with various teammates. The attendance rates of core members remained
to be unsatisfactory and unstable both at the irregular meetings within the estate or
with the residents of the Valley Road Estate. At the same time, very few new
members joined the group. The frequency of meetings varied from once a month to
every two weeks. The number of participants in the group was less than 10, and no
social action had been taken in that period. The members discussed much about the
adequacy of re-housing flats after the formal announcement of redevelopment on
23rd September 1998. 5 They were keen on asking information from the HD first to
decide on any further claims and action. The lack of information and reply from the
HD reinforced the inaction of the group.

In view of the passivity of the members, the team started to reformulate the
group at the beginning of the third period. Intensive home visits were held by the
team to keep in touch with the members. 6 Unfortunately, the participation rate of
the members remained low. 7 It was not until April 1999 that the group members
had found the problems urgent once again. 8 At the end of the study period, the
responsible workers and the remaining members decided to hold mass meetings in
the open space so as to attract more new members in the future.

II. The Internal Negotiation Process

It is commonly perceived that there is no need to distinguish between the self-
identities of the organizers (including the paid and the volunteer activists) and the
participants, since they have already united into one entity when forming a collective.
However, the data collected in the fieldwork settings told us quite another story. The findings in Chapter 5 and 6 have already told us that internal boundary can be made within SMO and the political consciousness can be affected much by the organizers who appropriate various identities claims.

It is suggested that the identity of the organizers can be articulated by two contrasting roles performed by the organizers along a continuum, as a 'participant' in one end and as a 'leader' at the other. When fulfilling the former role, the organizers can be articulated as one of 'us' and try hard not to separate themselves from the residents as onlookers of the issues under organizing. While demonstrating the later role, they become the 'outsiders' and the leaders. These two roles suggest the polar understandings on the identities of the organizers in the eyes of the members.

But in reality, the identity of the organizer seldom attaches to these two extreme cases they usually fall somewhere between these two ends of the continuum. Between them, we find a 'facilitator role' in the middle, which is adopted by most of the social workers and can further distinguish into an attachment, a detachment and organizers. They see themselves as the sympathizers leading the ways the constituents can organize themselves. The organizers can be recognized as in-group or out-group alternatively across different periods of time as Figure 1.

![Figure 1: The Possible Identities of the Organizers along a Continuum](image)

The change from one role to another role has complicated the dynamics on the
relationship between the organizers as well as the members. The divergences and congruencies in identity alignments might derive and generate much mistrust or reinforcement for subsequent mobilizations. The issues can be illustrated in two groups of internal organizers: the indigenous leaders and the social workers.

The particular concerns of this chapter are three-folds in this session: the identity dynamics between the indigenous leaders and the group members, the dual roles performed by the social workers, and finally their subsequent effect on mobilizations. In general, we shall concentrate on exploring some issues related to the identity interaction with all the parties internal in the micro-mobilization process.

1. The Identity Dynamics with the Indigenous Leaders

In many cases, the identities of the voluntary organizers and the constituents are treated as messing together. But in fact, the voluntary organizers of RCG had acquired another identities in the sense that they acquired an additional 'leader role' than the other participants. The perception of the identities of the RCG as a whole could be realized in one of the letters sent to the HD clearly,

"We are a group of Ho Man Tin Estate residents affected by redevelopment. As we find that we are not sure about our re-housing rights, we come together voluntarily to follow up the progress and fight for the basic rights in redevelopment."

The felt obligations and mission of the ‘organizers’ were much different from the others. In the eyes of these volunteer organizers, the performance of other passive members and the general residents were criticized as unsatisfactorily. As commented by Mr. Cheung and Mr. Chan at the same time,
"The so called ‘Concern Group’ should behave like a ‘Concern Group’. But at present, the people do not act like that.... They almost say everything about the things they needed personally ....these are not those stuffs about the concern group.....for sure, I get a view.....a concern group should concern those things affected the entire estate at first." 10

"I sometimes think that the people talk too much about the personal matter. It will bring no obvious function. If you want to talk, why not talk about the matters concerning all of us, am I right? 11

In their views, there were pre-existing requirements to be a member of the RCG. They thought that the members of RCG should place individual interest below that of the group. But these perceptions were not much in line with the general participants who pragmatically joined the group. Other members just expected to get involved in the RCG and solve only their individual problems. The different understandings of the mission of the group between the indigenous leaders and the constituents frustrated the former and hampered mobilization in the long run.

2. The Identity Interaction with the Social Workers

Under the day to day observations made in the fieldwork, it was found that different social workers in the team identified themselves as ‘facilitator’ differently when they organized their service recipients. We shall first describe the possible identities of the social workers and then explain the opposing roles resulted and reinforced by the institutional factors and the working mentalities of the social work profession.

a) The Three Possible Roles of Social Workers

To illustrate the issue, we have further identified three possible roles, the
attachment, the detachment and the facilitator role among the social workers who
organized the three community groups respectively.

i) The Attachment Identity

On the one hand, there were some types of social workers that had found
themselves deeply involved in the process of organizing. The passion and emotions
deeply involved was considered to be rather favorable and avoidable. This view was
best expressed explicitly by P, a staff member in charge of the SCSCG,

"I really feel that I am part of them. That’s means I am very easy to involve in the
identity or the environment of them, the environment of the kai-fong. I always feel
that I have got some responsibilities on whether they can be successful in the struggle.
First of all, I am paid to do so. Secondly, I feel that...you really want to help them get
the things which are not got by them." 12

This role stressed that in order to mobilize and make empathetic with the
clients, the social workers had to side with the same as the residents. The insider role
of the social workers created a sense of commitment and affiliation with the service
clients, which would bring trust and unity. We name these kinds of performance as
fully attachment.

ii) The Detachment Identity

On the other hand, the social workers also used to repeat in daily meetings that
their position was very different from their fellow residents. As a result, they could
not be the ‘representatives’ of the groups or the ‘advocator’ of collective action. The
responsible worker of RCG, T, once stressed in an interview that he tended to bring
nothing to the residents in the meetings.
“What are our roles? It should be just a kind of contact...liaison only...but never encouragement...They have to decide whether to go on their own.”

He strongly believed that reducing the impact of the social worker to minimal was the best way to organize collective action, since such non-directive approach could let the residents to be themselves and act according to their ‘truly’ held concerns without worker’s guidance and bias. In contrast, the active involvement of the social workers would distort their original ideas and create dependence.

iii) The Organizer Identity

The two different views on the mission of the social worker exemplified the two types of role played by them most of the time. In actual practice, the two different roles in fact were not easy to be distinguished from one another, since they co-existed most of the time. As reminded by another social worker S of TCG, even he recognized the existence and possible dilemmas between the two roles, he tended to integrate them in different situations by his best effort:

“From understanding the problems they faced to planning and solving the problems together. I am part of them. When will I not belong to them? It is when I am speaking a fundamental positional problem. I shall tell them...that means to be self-independent as all those kind of traditional objectives.”

In this view, the tensions between the two roles would not be reduced by these distinctive interventions once and for all. They had to negotiate with the residents almost every time when asked. The flexibility in attaching or detaching with their principal clients was considered to be the most causal factor in effecting mobilization.

The bases of these different or even opposing self-understandings came from
the institutional and the ideological backgrounds. As mentioned previously, the social workers were first located within a social work service setting, the NLCDP team in the community. This institutional background had provided the specific and immediate environment that governed the parameters of the actions of the social workers. They were members of a professional community who were not living in the estate and sharing the problems the general residents faced. Since they did not belong to ‘us’ or share our interest, they were suspected easily, especially in times of acute conflicts with the authority.

Another root cause of these dual roles could be traced back to the fundamental principles in the social work profession. Recent social work practice requires the maximum self-determination of the clients so as to minimize the effect brought by the social workers. The profession treasures the distinction between the social worker and the clients. The iron law of client’s self-determination is held strongly by most of the social workers from the very beginning. They are in principle and in practice differentiated from their clients, thought they are also told to be empathic with the sufferings of their service clients. In that case, they are ‘insiders’ who have got their hidden agenda.

To conclude, the social workers can play three possible and different roles in the organizing process. The first role ‘attachment’ refers to the self-understanding of a social worker as one of the members involved in the issues, the second role ‘detachment’ stands for an assistant role helping the issues only, while the third one
'organizer' role refers to a flexible utilization of the former two. The relative domination of one of the three roles is subject to the immediate decision of the organizers at a particular moment. The three roles are often blurred together, especially in the community work setting.

The social workers bearing the three roles create subsequent identity dynamics when interacting with their principal clients. The social workers in return attribute the attitudes of the residents towards them at different occasions. The variations between the three roles then function as an invisible distinction and latent division between the social workers and their clients, though the social workers may not be aware of or intend for it.

b) The Identity Interaction with the General Residents

The discussion following will concentrate on the RCG only. As mentioned before, the responsible social worker T in principle tended to emphasis the ‘detachment’ role rather than the ‘attachment’ role. In actual practice, his self-understood role was unable to be recognized without the mutual perception from his clients, which was interacted in the daily organizational activities. The identity interactions between this social worker and the members were further complicated by the inconsistency of the roles of the team as a whole that were actively played in daily organizational activities or involvement in the community.

i) Interacting in Daily Organizational Activities

The identity dynamics between the social workers and the residents are first
manifested in concrete intervention practices. The different roles of social workers are not only founded in the process of organizing, but they also structure the subsequent intervention tactics and strategies unintentionally in daily organizational works. The unstated discrepancies between the social workers and the residents were notified even through the slightest body gestures. The residents were very conscious about the distinctive position of the social workers, as Mr. Cheung revealed in a meeting:

"The reason why there are so many residents presenting in this meeting is just because of the call of the social worker. Rethinking about the very beginning, we are only a handful of sand, not until we contact with the social workers. By now, we have learnt the right of our own and the effective steps to express our opinions. At this moment, the kai-fongs are sitting, while the social worker is standing only! There reflected the hardworking attitude of the social worker!" 

The intervention tactics and the strategies of the social worker performing ‘detachment’ role are further characterized by the usual practice that they are seldom leading, but facilitating even in the daily meetings. Even when they have got their own opinions towards a particular problem, they would hide it first and listen to the clients consciously. ‘What do you think?’ was the most frequent paraphrases spoken by the social workers. They were used to treating the matters being discussed in a ‘none-of-my-business’ manner. In contrary, the ‘attachment role’ was manifested when the social workers were willing to take part in the acute confrontation with the authority and used the same language and views of the residents.

ii) Inconsistency in Community Participation

The social worker tended to stay behind the residents in the daily organization
work. But on certain occasions, the team members would act upon their own agency regardless of the opinions of their clients or just kept them unknown.

As in the case of T, the responsible worker of RCG and the team leader of the NLCDP, he was assigned to be present at many semi-governmental meetings at the community level. A few examples were quoted including the Estate Management Advisory Committee of HD, the Inter-Departmental Meeting on Elderly Removal and the Community Service Coordinating Meeting of SWD, etc. 16 T would also write to HD on behalf of the team directly to acquire the information needed. 17

Besides, the team would not hesitate to take part in mobilizing the community by its own when considered necessary. The team once organized a series of 5 block meetings at open area without the prior notice of RCG to collect opinions and solicit response directly from the residents shortly after the formal announcement of redevelopment at Oct 1998. 18 The team also published and distributed a number of issues of ‘Bulletin on Redevelopment’ to every household in order to convey messages and information about the redevelopment process periodically and independently, even when the issues had taken up and concerned by RCG already. 19. One of the aims of those activities was direct recruitment. But the outcome was very disappointing.

The direct participation of the team in the community, no matter in the forms of joining local bodies, seeking information, organizing meetings and publishing newsletter, was allowed only on condition that the presence in those bodies would be
indispensable and for the ultimate good of the clients. Although the team had been involved in the community carefully, there were still certain cases that this kind of direct participation of the team at the local community level confused their client’s perception on their roles and identities in return unfortunately.

As carried forward by the TCG in March 1999, T had to explain his own roles and the things that happened when contacting the District Officer of Social Welfare Department (SWD) in front of the group’s members so as to regain their trust. This case shows clearly that the residents were quite ignorant about the independent activities and the controversial position of the team, and thus found it puzzling. And the team was quite difficult to explain their situation mediating between the residents and the SWD. The individual actions of the team behind the notice of RCG brought another dynamic between the team and the residents. The mistrust and misunderstanding thus derived could be difficult to settle down, especially when the antagonists were skillful enough to remind their incongruent identities.

c) Effect on Mobilization

Added together, the previous findings show that the social workers and the residents might have got their own agendas according to their relative position and interpretation of interest, which would not be resolved and reunited easily. From now on, we shall illustrate directly the result on mobilizations.

i) Development of mistrust and internal boundaries

It was not uncommon for the residents to be kept ignorant about the
background of the social workers. But once they realized the backgrounds of the team, they reacted in various ways. The responses of the residents were different. Some answered that they did not bother to know which stand social workers would take, while the others were confused and doubted about their underlying intention. The former group found it natural since they were not the owners of the problems, while the others found the sayings not necessarily satisfactory and even destructive for organizing the residents.

Firstly, there were some residents who did not think that the financial background of the social workers would cause their bias towards the government. Mr. Chan thought that he was clear about the financial support behind the NLCDP, but still found the social workers trust-worthy. He found no evidence for the team to speak for the government so far up to the time of study. So he admitted that he simply did not think about it as reflected in his reply:

"If you say that they are receiving money from the government, there are still many others paid by the government. Can you say that the people in RTHK (Radio and Television of Hong Kong) are not receiving wages from the government? But it (the government) just let you go and trust you. Do you find them speak up for the government? I don't think so!"  

But there were also another group of residents mistrusted and questioned the motivation of the team behind. They could not satisfy with the answers given by the social workers themselves easily. As revealed by Ms. Tsang:

"That’s why sometimes I felt I have been used... mum... they are doing the job and for the job, they will help us to do these things all the time. In fact, they are working for themselves and their own job. Then, I will think whether I am used by them?... that means, they do so many things to help us, what are the objectives behind? I will just think about this... if we do not do it... to attend the meeting when they ask me and do..."
not fight for so many things, will they lose their jobs?" 23

In this case, the residents could not associate the social workers as a unity in the process of organizing. They just knew that the social workers got other reasons, hidden agenda or even personal interest motivated the social workers. The necessity to take a balance between the two roles was further recognized by other members in the group. As an example, Mr. Cheung found that he understood the motives behind the usual sentence given by the social workers, he still commented that there should be different words for different people. As commented by Mr. Cheung,

"I ask myself once if it is only your business, why do you bother to find us to attend the meetings?" 24

He pointed out the distasteful answer given by the social worker when they were insisting their ‘detachment’ role. Instead, he went on to suggest a reversed phrasing of the same sentences just spoken by the social workers with an integration of the ‘participant role’.

"Although I am a volunteer (worker) of ELCSS, but I still stand on your side towards everything. I shall not try to escape my own responsibilities because I am receiving the money partly from the government." 25

The recommendation given by Mr. Cheung should not be taken only as a kind of revision on the wordings said, but it also clearly demonstrated that a balance between the two roles and appropriate positioning of the social workers was in urgent need. The artificial reminder of the unique role of the social workers themselves would just separate them from their supporters and develop another internal boundaries hampering the solidarity of the group.

Added together, even the words spoken in daily organizational process by the
social workers indicated the conscious distinction between the position of the residents and the social workers. This repeated distinction carried a by-product result exemplified by the unintended separation between the social worker agent and its constituents. In the case of TCG, mistrust and internal boundaries actually occurred with the social workers' detachment and inconsistency in organizing their clients. A balance between these two roles had to be struck so as to associate the support of the residents, while maintaining a distance for their own development.

ii) Demobilizing the members

Originally, the primary functions of the community work team were left on organizing the residents to fight for their benefits. But there was a few examples demonstrating that the social workers' understanding of the issue might be different from their clients. And if they did it actively, they were able to de-activate the mobilization of the residents.

The first examples related to the allocation of the small units in the nearby areas. After settling the two person elderly families of Ho Man Tin Estate, there were still some special size small units (220sq.ft) left in the Sheung Lok Estate and Ho Man Tin Phase 1, which in principle could accommodate some of the 1-person families of Ho Man Tin Estate. Considering the conflicts of interest between the 1 and 2-person families as well as the residents of Ho Man Tin estate and the Valley Road Estate, the social workers eventually determined not to organize and raise the issue even individual residents would be concerned about the matter. As a result,
the social workers acted as a gatekeeper or administrator themselves in determining the availability and scope of the issues under concern. Since fighting for the flats left in both cases were not considered to be the basic rights of the residents of Ho Man Tin Estate, the issues were just left behind in the process. The possibility of mobilizing the 'self-interest' of residents was discouraged by the interpretation of the social workers, especially when they had anticipated the possible conflict of interest between the various groups of residents.

A second example concerned the pattern of group work of the team. The members of the three community task groups mentioned had not recognized each other formally. It was the practice of the team to keep the activities of each task group working on its own agendas and progress without much coordination. The unintended result of such a separation fell on dividing the strength of the groups when uniting against the same antagonists: the Housing Department (HD). More importantly, the development of a holistic identity of 'Ho Man Tin Resident' was discouraged unintentionally by the strict division of labor between every individual task group. They could not be united into a stronger force, which aimed at striking for the general betterment of the whole estate. In these cases, the social workers were deprived of the possibility of mobilization all together at the onset and thus causing demobilization.

To sum up, the division between the social worker and the residents was not limited to the abstract and ideational levels. The discrepancies on the relative
viewpoints and positions between the paid activists and the members were reflected
both in the daily organizational work and the individual action of the team. The
identity dynamics brought about the development of mistrust and internal boundary
as well as the demobilization of the community tasks groups. The social workers and
the residents were simply two groups of people sharing different aspirations. The
identity dynamics between the voluntary and the paid activists were further
complicated by the fact that the paid activists in this case were professional social
workers. 

III. The External Negotiation Process

A key element of the contention between groups is conflict over prevailing
discourses through meaning and language. The collective identity of public housing
residents, especially those affected by redevelopment is always a negotiated
construct under the constant conflicts with the authority over the community and
policy level. In this section, we shall compare and contrast the discrepancies between
the identities protracted by the residents and constructed by the authority.

We are going to identify two main disputed areas in public housing policies
that could illustrate best the identity collision between the residents which were
represented by the members of RCG and the authority which was defined as the
Redevelopment Unit (RU) of the HD. The conflicts between the residents and the
authority are based on the different interpretations about the nature and functions of
public housing policies in general, and the intention and result of redevelopment
program in particular. Throughout the process, the RCG and the authority asserted their encountering understanding on the identities of PHE in order to legitimate their claims and enactment of different policies and measures. But neither party could monopolize the overall definitions of the very identities of Public Housing Estate (PHE) residents, which was situated in the public discourse level. Only by studying those contentious negotiations and renegotiations could the public identities of PHE residents be best articulated and grasped in an interactive and dynamic way.

The discrepancies between the understanding of RCG and HD were a good example to illustrate the identity interaction between contending actors. It was found that when the members of RCG were unable to offer an alternative account to the hegemonic discourse of the authority, the social workers were still reluctant to provide one because of their detached role in the organizing process. As a result, there occurred an internal split over the identities of the general residents, which was in fact a tactics utilized to preserve their positive identities at least partly in time of low mobilization.

1. Disputes on the Redevelopment of the Estate
   a) The Reasons and Motives of Redevelopment

   From the interviews conducted on the members of all the three groups under study, most of the members simply did not know the exact reasons behind PHE redevelopment. When they received the messages from the HD and the information from various community organizations and media a few years ago, they had not been
told the motives behind and asked the opinions towards redevelopment. They could just predict the reasons and motives of the program on their own and discuss with their family members or neighbors.

The most popular candidates remained to be the old age and poor quality of the buildings. But different from what the government explained, the residents pointed out the responsibility of the government on the deterioration of the buildings. It was argued that the normal life expectancy of a public housing building should last not less than forty years, rather than twenty or more years only as in the present situation. As remembered by Mr. Cheung with confidence,

"It is not just my guess! It is because when building this estate in those years water was in short supply. And the boss of the Construction Company was put into jail himself just because he had cheated in the process."

Many residents held this view that the unanticipated and unacceptable deterioration of the middle age estates was just caused by the corruption that happened in the construction period. Accordingly, the motives behind the redevelopment program were interpreted as the redemption of the faults done previously. In fact, the redevelopment of Ho Man Tin Estate was much related to the scandal of the ‘26- deteriorated PRH Blocks’ that happened in mid 80, which had received much publicity that time. The residents came to a conclusion that the redevelopment program was involuntary and they were those people who cooperated with the government. Here developed a ‘victim identity’, which was derived from the housing rights of the residents who long lived in the community.
The stated objective of the redevelopment program on improving the living environment in the estates was also not responded positively by the residents. It just helped them to remind the cost they bore and the sufferings they shared at the times when the residents had just moved into the remote area in the past. As the living condition in the squatters and private urban dwelling were so worse, they had no alternatives but to accept the offer from HD. The members remembered well the inconvenience of the traffic and the inadequacy of community facilities at that time. They said that they had sacrificed so much in the process, as symbolized by their association of their identities as an ‘ox cultivating on a wild land’.

Some even pointed out that the government decided to redevelop the estates only because it could generate much more profits in return as described by Ms. Yip:

"According to my view, the reasons of redevelopment fall on the location of this estate. When you go down a little bit, the price of the land is so high!"

The residents knew well that the smooth resettlement would just help the HD to resume the urban area for redevelopment, especially building blocks of Home Ownership Scheme (HOS), which could bring huge revenue for HA.

These oppositional understandings of the residents on the reasons behind the redevelopment had generated much their mistrust towards the government. The redevelopment program just reminded the sufferings and the unfairness they met in the past. In the process, they had narrated the identities towards themselves, which was resourceful for them to make claims in the later stage. As a result, the motives of the entire program were interpreted badly. The impression was further reinforced by
the assessment of the result and outcome of the redevelopment program as described below.

b) The Result and Outcome of Redevelopment

The members of RCG also disagreed much to the relocation arrangement of the Ho Man Tin Estate specifically. A strong sense of mistrust was established all along the redevelopment process. Shortly after the formal announcement of the redevelopment of the estate, the HD held two separate mass meetings automatically one after the other to explain the detail procedures and relocation arrangement of the affected residents. The replies of the HM of Redevelopment Unit of HD and the D.B. member were considered to be unsatisfactory. 32

As asked which side, the residents or the authority, would gain in redevelopment, most of the respondents replied that both should have gains and loss. 33 One of the most popular answers concentrated on the relief of the over-crowded situation of some households. However, not all the residents treasured the re-housing arrangement after redevelopment. As in the case of Mr. Chan, the size of his family had decreased much along the years and there was only he alone left at the moment. The reallocation of a new flat in the future would simply means a worse-off offer for him. More than that, he had to pay a much higher rent in the new flat in return. It seemed that the comparative standard of better or worse off could be varied among different families according to the concrete situation of the affected family at the moment.
The members of RCG further negotiated their identities with the authority through the resettlement policy over redevelopment. They claimed strongly that the residents of redevelopment must be re-housed in the same district of residence. They negotiated then a new definition towards their identity as ‘redevelopment residents’ over the group process, while perceiving themselves strongly as victims and sufferers of present redevelopment policies of the HD. As Mr. Cheung insisted,

“This is because I get this right. Sure if you demolish here and not give a flat back for me...don’t forget you get something to rebuild here... I shall accept this without hesitation only if you do not build anything here. While you declare the buildings here as dangerous, let’s move to other places.”

They negotiated their ‘privileged’ identities through the emergence of the boundary of other types of potential public housing residents, like the applicants on the waiting list, the new immigrants, the temporary housing residents. They did think that they deserved to be given a new rental flat after living for so many years in the deteriorated old flats. In this way, they justified their priorities to be re-sited in the original district of residence (Ho Man Tin area) successfully.

When asked further which side would get more, the answers fell mostly on the side of the authority. Although most of them did not deny their own gains, they tended to think that the government was obliged to pay back the residents and could make great return at the end. They further came to a conclusion that the benefits of the government was made on top of the suffering and sacrifice of the general residents living in the estate, as demonstrated well in the case of launching the RHOS. Compared the gains of the residents with the authority, most respondents
would even comment that the gain of the authority was unreasonable great compared
those with the residents. As Mrs. Lam and Mr. Sung commented:

"It is out of the question that most of the benefits fall on the government! Hey, buddy,
if anyone is injured or died because of these deteriorated buildings, you will get into
trouble, am I right?" 35

"The government will get more benefits of course! You should know that the land price
is very high and the buildings are so tall....how much can you image it will earn?" 36

In this way, the disputes between the residents and the authority were obvious
and the distance between the two parties was great. Mr. Cheung summarized the
conflicts between the residents and the authority as a conflict of interest on their
relative position, which could not be compromised easily. Accordingly, he viewed
the give and take between the two parties only as a bargaining process. The final
result of the contest would leave at the relative strength and the cohesive force of the
one another side. As he said,

"The better off want to get better, while those people get cheaper rent still want to be
cheaper. That is why there is a conflict." 37

Thus, the attitudes and response of the residents towards the result and the
outcome of redevelopment could be summarized into two main groups. The first
group of respondents really agreed to the gains and waited long for the
implementation of the redevelopment program, while the other did not like the
program and reemphasized the unequal treatment. Some interviewees of the second
group found their views towards redevelopment quite mixed up. 38 As in the case of
Ms. Tsang, she really wanted to move to a larger flat, but was still worried about the
high rent, the types of flats allocated and the exact location of resettlement.
To sum up, the residents disagreed with the interpretation of the government with regard to the motives and result of redevelopment of PHE as a whole. They negotiated an identity of ‘PHE residents’ in general and ‘redevelopment residents’ in particular through narrating a common past and different resettlement policy. From the resident’s side, the sufferings they experienced in the past legitimated many of their claims nowadays. In view of the gains of the government made in the long run, a satisfactory relocation arrangement was perceived as the basic ‘rights’ and the legitimated ‘share’ of the residents. From the side of the government, however, the PHE residents were the privileged group in the redevelopment process due to the improvements made in all aspects of internal and external environment in the estate after redevelopment. Both of the parties in fact interpreted and constructed the identity of public housing residents differently to serve their respective interests.

2. Disputes over the Extension of the RHOS

As mentioned above, the members of the RCG was deeply concerned about the relocation arrangement of their own estate. Among the various concerns, the adequacy (including those needs of the vulnerable groups of elderly families, families with tenancy problems, or the ‘even numbers’ families, etc.) of the numbers of new flats allocated to the residents was taken as the most important. The suggestion on the extension of the RHOS at the early 1999, had however, triggered off much the conflicts and created further mistrust between the RCG and the RU of HD. 39
a) The Disputes over the motives and result of RHOS

It was obvious that the possible extension of the RHOS had broken the promise made before, thus resistance anticipated. The residents held the perception that the HD had gone too far. The members of RCG clearly declared the very nature of PHE should remain to be rental at all times.

"For example, the public housing should not be sold. The public housing should be allocated to take care of those less able citizens. If you urge them to buy, that means you are irresponsible. The HOS flats should be sold, but not including the PHE flats..." 46

The public rental housing was assigned the function to accommodate the lower class people, who deserved to be protected from economic hardship. In this case, the people living in PRH just stood for the identity and the interest of the lower class people, while the extension of the RHOS was taken to be a re-housing scheme disregard of the well being of the lower class. They asserted their claims through narrating the welfare function of public housing. Such kinds of understanding could be further illustrated in the public media level as well,

Reporter: The number of newly built flats has not yet provided enough already, while the demolished ones are so many. (Ms Li who was a member of RCG and her friend walked around the construction site of Ho Man Tin South Phase 3 slowly) If more flats are turned to be HOS, they are afraid that those who do not buy HOS flats will have to move to other places.

Ms Li: It is heard that they will give us the renovated flats. (The facial expression was very worry) We have lived in these old flats for over twenty years, but we still have to live in those renovated flats which just means old flats!

At the opposite, HD presented a complete different picture on the intention of the RHOS. According to HD’s explanation, there were a lot of richer people occupying the scare resources of public rental housing. The RHOS scheme was just
an extra option for the well-off class to buy and an effective measure in encouraging
them to move, even this would mean beneficial to them in the short run.

"He (the rich) is living in the PHE. If he does not move to the RHOS, the taxpayer has
to pay a lot of subvention to them. But if they can own their flats, they pay for
themselves. That is why we must use a lot of methods to attract them to buy HOS flats.
It is just the main purpose behind!" 41

The message conveyed by the HD was rather simple. As the people living in
those redeveloping estates were rich but reluctant to move, they were the abusers of
the public resources. In this case, the government had no way but to grant them more
‘benefits’ so as to attract them to replace their ‘unjustified privilege’ enjoyed so
many years in the past. HD went on to encounter the arguments given by the
pressure groups fighting against the RHOS.

"There are some external pressure groups and media report saying much negative
comments towards us all the time. For example, they have said that we are squeezing
the money, or even cooperating with the commercial company and making profit, etc.
But it is simply not the fact. If we have made surplus really, they will put back to the
construction project. It is beneficial to both the Hong Kong society and the Hong Kong
people. It will be dangerous only when we do not know where to put the surplus" 42

Put it in this way, the HD fed back successfully the criticism given outside and
became the gatekeeper of the public housing resources immediately. The residents
who were rich indeed then were figured out as the greedy people seizing every
opportunity to maximize their own gains. Conceptualized in this way, the rejection
of RCG on the RHOS was not sound, but only reflected the selfish attempts of the
vested-interest parties in protecting their own interest. More importantly, the
remedial functions of public housing was justified and internalized in the minds of
the public successfully. In this critical moment, however, the professional social
workers were unable and reluctant to suggest an alternative accounts to counter these hegemonic discourse.

b) The Revitalization of Internal Boundaries

However, the residents did not just remain inaction thereafter. They still tried their best to encounter the seemingly dominating discourse offered by the HD. Here we observed that a strategy of the members of RCG distinguished the PRH residents within themselves into two groups: the richer and the poorer. In this way, they could agree with the HD views that RHOS would benefit for the residents, but only the well-off class. Under the new policy, the person who bought the RHOS flat was given the greatest priority to be resettled in the same district of residence indirectly. And it was commented that the richer (who occupy the least numbers) got more, while the poorer (who stand for the greatest numbers) got lesser. In this way, they were able to retain their previous emphasized welfare function of the PRH, while at the same time got rid of the negative 'labels' imposed by claiming the majority of the residents were still poor class people.

Accordingly, even when they found the purchase of flats unavoidable and accepted it finally, they still insisted that the original inhabitants had given the priority to be settled first. Only the surplus made after the settlement of every household in the original district of residence was allowed to sell to the people who came from other places. They would accept RHOS only on condition that the local inhabitants in any situations should be given the greatest priority to opt for renting.
those flats in the newly built estate.

"After it (the government) has got benefits, it still wants to sell the flats. When it sells the flats, it will further get the profits. There left no place for us. It will not matter, if you give back the places for us when I will be quiet....that means nearby.... and give back to us....which will make us satisfied.” 41

The quotation shows clearly that when the residents could not object to the launching of the RHOS, they still go their own strategies to retain their identities and their rights by distinguishing within themselves. They even accused that HD should be the one responsible solely for the inadequacy of public housing resources. HD converted some public rental blocks in HOS, so causing a shortage of housing resources. As a result, through the discursive competition at the public discursive level, the members of RCG negotiated their ‘divided’ identities with the authority in restoring a mobilization potential in the future.

Still under discussion up till now, members of the RCG and the staff members of HD competed intensively over the very definition of the public identity of PHE residents at both the community and public level. On one hand, RCG tried hard to establish a kind of ‘public housing residents’ identities among its constituents in order to legitimate their claims on restoring the rental nature of PHE flats and maintaining the priority to be resettled in the original district of residence. On the other hand, the HD portrayed an image of ‘vest-interested party’ among the residents living in the old public housing estates. Over the process, the social workers were self-limited by their detachment role adopted over the issues, thus not able to assist the mobilization.
Unable to provide an alternative account to the nature of public housing and lack of support from the social workers, RCG members found no way but to create an boundary internally to retain a positive identity towards themselves at least partly so as to preserve the last mobilizing potentials. Such a move, however, would bring only minor success in the discursive debate in the meantime but still bring adverse effects on mobilization in the long run.

IV. Discussion on Strategies and Tactics

The identity of a collective is not processed by it exclusively, but is always under the ongoing negotiations with its various target audiences (Einwohner, 1999). Most of the time, the study of identity framing is only focused on the SMO as a whole but less on the interaction within organization and the reconstruction from its counter-part. The present study has supplemented such a neglected area of study.

Internally, the identities of the organizers and the organized need not be united. The volunteer activists have acquired an extra 'leader' role in the organizing process separating them from the general constituents. The problem is made particularly acute when the organizers have been paid and come from an outside bodies supported by the establishment. Externally, the authority and the media can also construct their own counter-frame towards the challengers (Entman and Rojecki, 1993; Coles, 1998; Haydu, 1999). The winning party in the identity contests may dominate the discursive field via monopolizing the definitions over the very identities of the failed parties.
Internally, through daily interaction across meetings and other community activities, the social workers upheld the different roles in organizing the residents, namely as an attachment, detachment or a facilitator role. They brought knowledge and information to the framing process, while they also respected and incorporated the ones derived from the members (White, 1999). At one side the distinction has helped to maintain the independence of the residents, while at the other side the separation disassociated the residents from the social workers. The different positions and motives behind the social workers and the volunteer activists have affected much the interpretation of their respective interest and benefits. An adverse and unintended effect on mobilization is resulted when the identity of the social worker has utilized a detachment role and cannot be aligned with the residents. A flexible performance of a kind of ‘facilitator role’, rather than sticking to the ‘leader’ or ‘participant role’ is though to be most essential for mobilization.

Concerning the external conflicts with the authority, the SMO members are situated in an ongoing struggle to uphold their own identities. In one situation, the SMO is able to cultivate and develop their alternative or even opposing identities with the resources of their past history and living experiences. In other situation, a collective has just taken up the interpretation offered by the authority as its own resulting in inaction or even demobilization. It is even found that a SMO losing in the discourse competition may be motivated to distinguish itself internally so as to get rid of the negative images and retain its own identities. The manipulation of the
government and the resistance of the residents can be manifested across various spheres, including the mass media, the policy statement and face to face negotiation.
Notes:

1. The group was transformed and merged from two previous ad hoc groups: the 'Block 4 Football Field Concern Group' at early 1997 and the 'Against the Conversion of PHE flats to HOS flats Resident's Concern Group' in mid 1997 as well as some other tenants concerning redevelopment of the estate.

2. Since the group is a voluntary and open in nature, its membership can be as broadly defined as including all those residents living in the estate (not including the commercial tenants), or more specific in the eyes of the social workers, those tenants concerning the redevelopment of the residents.

3. Redevelopment Home Ownership Scheme (RHOS) stands for a new scheme of HA to convert the planned public rental blocks for sale. The priority of buying such flats was first among the sitting tenants of the redevelopment estate, then the residents in the same district of residence and finally to the Green Form applicants of HOS flats. It passed its experimental stage successfully in converting two rental blocks in the Ho Man Tin South Phase 1 to HOS for sale in August 1998 and further planned to extend to another block in Ho Man Tin South Phase 3 in July 1999.

4. There were several reports on the demonstration and some follow-up documentary program concerning the RHOS.

5. Even the Redevelopment Unit of the HD had promised the adequate amount of flats available again and again verbally and publicly in the community, the core members of the group still got worried about the exact numbers and size matching of the flats at the times of removal.

6. As more and more previous core members did not show up as anticipated, the consolidation of the group had thought to start again from the very beginning without any other alternatives.

7. Some of the core members confessed that most of the members had lost their enthusiasm towards the relocation arrangement than before. The reasons behind could be many and different for various persons. Some of them thought that the numbers of flats should be adequate at the end even without any struggle as disclosed by the HD staffs before. Others lost faith in taking further collective action in view of the failure experience in changing the stated policy of HA in the past. And there were still some who could not find out any new issues worth to be concerned any more. Many members just did not feel the solidarity and commitment in the group any more.

8. At that time, HD had conducted a second survey in the estate to consult the tenants' attitudes towards implementing RHOS in the Ho Man Tin South Phase 3. Rumors spread out in the community that HA had decided to convert certain remaining blocks of Ho Man Tin South Phase 3 into HOS flats, even noting the lack of interest and anticipation of resistance from the affected tenants.


10. Abstracted from an interview made on 24/3/1999.

11. Abstracted from an interview made on 25/3/1999

12. Abstracted from an interview made on 28/4/1999

13. Abstracted from an interview made on 3/5/1999

Abstracted from a meeting held on 18/11/1998

The Estate Management Advisory Committee is a semi-governmental platform mostly joined by the MAC, D.B. member and HD officials at the estate level and discussing issues mainly concerning estate management. The Inter-departmental Joint Meeting on Elderly Removal was joined by the staff of HD, SWD, MACs and the representatives of other welfare agencies in the community to exchange information and coordinate removal services for the elderly families. The Community Coordinating meeting of SWD is headed by the District Officer of SWD in the district to coordinate the social service units of youth, groups and community services in the same district. Tak was always invited and required to take part in those bodies to cooperate with other community organizations and government departments in delivering services to the community.

Abstracted from the letter written by the Ho Man Tin NLCDP team to the HD as on 12/11/1998 and 29/12/1999

The 5 block meetings were held separately from 13/10-30/10 of 1998. The block meetings were held on 20,23,26,27,30 of Oct 1998 respectively. The primary purposes of the meetings were set on delivering information, recruiting members and collecting opinion on redevelopment and relocation arrangement.

Abstracted from the 'Ho Man Tin Bulletin' various issues and the 'Ho Man Tin Redevelopment Bulletin' various issues. The publications are published without a fixed duration.

Tak was once asked the details about the activities of the TCG in a causal talk with the DO of SWD in the district and he just replied that he did not know much. However, the DO wrote back a letter to TCG then and said that their inquiries would be answered only after he had consulted Tak first. The members of TCG were puzzled towards the roles of the team and asked for a clarification from Tak in the regular meeting of the group. The details of the whole incidents could be reflected from the letter of TCG to SWD as at 23/3/1999.

The differences in the two roles were first associated with the motives and the intentions of the work of the team. Then, when the focus was shift on the financial background and the residents started to concern which side the social workers were supporting. In this case, the residents started to realize the conscious attempts behind the social workers.

Abstracted from an interview made on 25/3/1999

Abstracted from an interview made on 23/3/1999

Abstracted from an interview made on 24/3/1999

Abstracted from an interview made on 24/3/1999

After the settlement of all the 2-person elderly families of Ho Man Tin Estate and the 1-person families of Valley Road Estate Redevelopment Phase 1, there were still some special small units left (220sq.ft each) in Shing Lok Estate and the Ho Man Tin Phase 1 respectively. In the conversations and interviews with the responsible social workers, they determined not to pick up the issues in view of the possible conflicts of interest between the two estates, even though they recognized that the residents had got the right to fight for themselves.

The social workers did not come from within under the consent and will of the residents, but arrived from outside bearing their own hidden missions and motives behind. Though employed under an independent welfare agency, the social workers were indeed supported and relied on by the government, which was exactly the common antagonist of their service recipients. In the surface,
paradox lied just on the matter of financial sources, but in fact the dynamics were much reinforced by the work ethics held intrinsically by the profession. The employed activists aimed at working 'with' the people, rather than 'for' the people as in the cases of the organizers of other social movement organizations, such as trade unions.

Abstracted from an interview made on 24/3/1999

The residents showed the researcher that the interior of their own flat was repaired again and again, but still could not be fixed up well. There were also once several massive scale renovations held in the estate as a whole, including the rebuilt of the entire corridors and balcony at certain floors in some blocks.

According to the investigation of Wong, the contractor confessed in the court that corruption was involved in the construction of the 8 Blocks in Ho Man Tin Estate. However, the Ho Man Tin Estate was not included in the Extended Redevelopment Scheme, but was only planned to be redeveloped only after 10 years later under the Comprehensive Redevelopment Scheme. (Wong, 1999: 117)

Abstracted from an interview made at 20/3/1999

The first one was held on 26/9/1998 and the second on 6/10/1998, which was tape-recorded. The first one attracted nearly a thousand people, while the second one only five hundreds. Two members of RCG asked sharp and difficult questions one after the other over the sincerity of the HD is providing adequate rental flats for the residents. The HM of Redevelopment Unit and the D.B. member just replied that the residents should trust the planning of the authority but offered no further promise and substantial answers.

The gains of the residents fell mainly on the increase in the household size of the flats allocated after redevelopment. Then came the improvement of the living environment in the new estate, including the outdoors facilities and indoor amenities. The loss of the residents was considered to be the higher rent charged in the new flats. The new rent had increased in double or even triple amount. It was the most heaviest for those families which had paid double-rent tenants or market-rent tenants already, because they had to pay the increased amount of rent accordingly even when moving in the new estate.

Abstracted from an interview made on 23/3/1999

Abstracted from an interview made on 24/3/1999

Abstracted from an interview made on 30/3/1999

Abstracted from an interview made on 23/3/1999

For those who had waited long for redevelopment, many of them thought that both the residents and the government would be benefited because of the program. They agreed much to the narratives offered by the government that they were the vested interest party out of redevelopment. On the contrast, there was the second group of people, who found no alternatives but to accept redevelopment with much reservations and worry, stressing many of the negative impacts on their livelihood. Among them, some even rejected to move in view of the high rent and smaller household size in the future.

According to the objectives stated in the mid-term review of the LTHS, the government has aimed at increasing the overall rate of home ownership over the whole territory. Subsequently, the HD has attempted a number of methods, which can help the sitting tenants to become owner occupants. One of them is the RHOS scheme stated before. As the long held HOS scheme was not welcomed by the more 'well-off' sitting tenants in the redeveloping estates, HD decided to launch completely new RHOS, as a supplementary measure. As the pilot scheme in Ho Man Tin Phase I has received
success, a second survey towards the proposal on extending the RHOS was conducted on 23/2/1999.

40 Abstracted from an interview dated 23/3/1999

41 Abstracted from a TVB program shown on 6/9/1998

42 Abstracted from a TVB program shown on 6/9/1998

43 Abstracted from an interview made on 24/3/1999
Chapter 8:
Conclusion

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the identity construction of a collective is a fluid and emerging process that occurs within social contexts and its formations and transformations can be best articulated through an empirical study. We then applied the Framing Theory with the adoption of qualitative methods to study the construction of collective identity among the public housing residents living in a redeveloping estate. We focused on three main components of this process, namely the boundary setting, consciousness raising and the negotiation making.

The Framing Theory draws attention to the 'collective identity' that indeed acts upon the interpretations of political opportunities, the availability of resources and feasible strategies. In our study, the social workers and the voluntary participants made different attempts consciously and purposefully to build up the collective identity for mobilization. These mobilization tasks, of which some succeeded and some failed, were found to be highly associated with the boundary setting, consciousness raising and the negotiation process.

In this chapter, I shall summarize the major findings of this study and then discuss their implications to our understanding of the internal dynamics of social movement mobilization. The final section turns to the shortcomings in the research process and recommendations on future studies.
I. Summary of Findings

The formulation and transformation of the collective identity of the public housing residents were articulated through three main components, namely the boundary setting at the inter and intra-organizational levels, the cognitive and emotive consciousness raising in group process as well as the internal and external negotiations making between various parties.

Rather than studying the collective identities of the public housing residents in Hong Kong in general, we decided to do the fieldwork lasting for half a year, which was conducted on three community groups within a Neighborhood Level Community Development Project (NLCDP) in the Ho Man Tin Estate. The estate has designated to be redeveloped within 2 years. The targets of investigations were the three community task groups in this estate. Throughout the study period, the researcher took field notes, recorded group process, interviewed the relevant informants and analyzed documents. These qualitative data altogether was the source of information for this research.

The three community task groups were the Happy Hour--Singleton and Cohabitant Senior Citizen Group (SCSCG), the Ho Man Tin Estate Tenancy Concern Group (TCG) and the Ho Man Tin Estate Redevelopment Concern Group (RCG). The organizing process of these groups provided us with numerous occasions to observe the construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of the various components and strategic dimensions of the collective identity of the group members.
In principle, we should analyze the three components of each of these groups in order to show the degree of significance of these components. Nonetheless, our analysis led to the view that incidentally each of the three components was particularly significant to one of the community groups. The boundary setting was specifically prevalent to the SCSCG, the consciousness raising was to the TCG and the negotiation process to the RCG. In seeking to show the complexities of each of the components, we decided to focus on the three significant components of each community groups. The result of observations and lessons learnt in the field were many and the more detail summary of them is concluded in the following paragraphs.

We found that the SCSCG case revealed the process of boundary setting successfully. The forging of the boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’ was developed at two inter and intra-organizational levels as well as in a manifest and latent way. Secondly, besides developing consensus and critical interpretative framework, the social actors also developed their own identities throughout the emotional expression involved in collective action events. Thirdly, the temporal product of collective identity is also governed by an internal between the organizers and the participants and external interaction with its contending party.

In short, although the ever-changing boundary setting of a collective helps define the line of membership of a group at the very first place, it is the meaning giving process which transforms the ascribed identities politically. In return, such a
politicization process is also dependent on the group’s interaction with its internal allies and external enemies. The net result of all these efforts help to legitimate or constrain, innovate or identify the organizational strategies.

1. The SCSCG

Boundary setting helps to define the ‘us-them’ distinction of a collective. We suggest that boundary setting can be exercised and articulated across inter and intra-organizational levels in both a manifest and latent way. The boundary setting helps first to construct the configuration of identity fields and then the very definition of us. In the due course of collective action, boundary markers can be created and recreated in an emerging and ongoing way.

In Chapter 5, analysis of SCSCG shows first that the different boundaries can be framed along various fractions within SCSCG or elderly concern groups. The boundary making in the inter-organizational and intra-organizational level of SCSCG helped to distinguish its various significant parties and locate them orderly in various ‘identity fields’, namely the protagonists, the antagonists and the bystanders. The SCSCG could then act upon each party accordingly to its relationships with one another. Such boundary markers can emerge in a more latent way in the change of physical settings.

The manifest boundary was set by the social workers, but did not automatically indicate its effect on the SCSCG members. The SCSCG members were able to construct their collective identity on the basis of their daily experience. Moreover,
the social worker did not forcibly impose the collective identity on the participants as they pragmatically took the advantage of blurred boundary to allow more ‘ineligible’ residents to participate (ie. outside the scope of membership).

As a group of different individuals, the SCSCG itself was a socially constructed product which processed its own internal distinctions and sub-categorizations, such as the language used, the socio-economic status, and the policies affected, etc. These latent boundaries helped to identify subgroups within the SCSCG as a whole. These latent boundaries of SCSCG could also be extended into becoming a member of an inter-estate coalition so as to form a larger collective and to maximize their mobilization potential.

As a result, through a number of inclusion or exclusion exercises, the organizers can establish the scope of membership tactically to achieve relative aims. The strategic ways of the organizers in manipulating those salient markers can help to foster or hamper movement mobilization. In the case of SCSCG, the internal subgroups could effect on demobilization, and it also split into another new group over time to compete for the mobilization of its constituents in a dynamic way.

Different from the previous studies, the data found in the field shows that the organizers of a SMO were capable to develop a unitary but not totaling identity in a quite flexible manner according to the specific needs in various situations.

2. The TCG

A SMO does not stop at constructing its own boundaries, it is also significant
to define what lies and means within these boundaries. To transform the everyday practical consciousness of its members into widely shared grievances directing an outside enemy is another critical challenge. This consciousness raising process can be conducted in a cognitive and emotive way. Added together, the identification of the content with its cognitive dimension in the forms of offering diagnostic, prognostic, motivational and urgency frames together with the emotive dimension in the forms of anger, solidarity and obligation helps to explain the various politicization and articulations of SMO’s framing work.

Another community task group, the TCG, utilized the four important methods to develop a resonant interpretative schema over the content of the identity constructed. In general, the respective political definitions of the identities TCG related much to the understanding of the causes of unjust situations, the ways to overcome it, the success expectation and the time limit in taking action. There then developed the core framing tasks including the diagnostic, prognostic, motivational and urgency for the TCG. This politicization of collective identities further signified an important process developing from attitudes to actions.

Among the four core framing tasks, the diagnostic framing is the most important. The findings also tell us that the articulation of the movement identities could be abstracted from a reservoir of broader cultural themes, then appropriated as more condensed ‘collective identity frames’. We witnessed all together 3 main collective identity frames, namely the citizens frames, the public tenant frame, the
lower class people frames, which were adopted quite flexibly and mixed in various combinations. The final selection and combination of various identity frames could effect on the mobilization in later stage.

Over the research process, we are also convinced that the meaning assigning process in identity construction has also involved an emotional investment. The exact content of an identity is beyond its cognitive meaning in surface. The sense of anger, solidarity and obligation come together to help to provide the affective content of a specific social categorization, recognize the very existence of the collective actor and guide the emotional expression in various situations significantly.

The data put together support the view points that the only reinforcement identified in the local community work context is left mainly on establishing ‘solidarity incentive’ through identity building works (Ho, 1995). But different from the previous studies, the diagnostic of the problem was mainly concentrated on some particular persons and appropriated from various identity frames.

3. The RCG

Last but not least, identity building cannot be defined and manipulated by a collective itself exclusively, but is realized only with the relationship of other systems of ‘significant others’. This dynamic process of becoming can be negotiated and activated across various events, symbols and audiences in the group, community and societal levels. The targets of audiences can roughly be divided into two main groups: the internal allies and the opposing parties.
In the past, the tensions and dynamics between the internal allies within a SMO received little attention. But the present case shows that the united identities between the voluntary organizers/the paid social workers and the general members in RCG should not be taken for granted. Generally speaking, we identified a continuum from ‘leader’ role to ‘participant’ role, while having a ‘facilitator’ role in between.

Through the long period of participation, the voluntary organizers developed much different mission towards themselves, which may be incongruent with those of the general members and hamper further mobilization. Owing to the lack of formal institutional power of RCG, the residents also turned to seek the support of the social workers, who normally processed a ‘facilitator’ role. The professional missions, the financial support and the external networks of the paid social workers, however, can be quite different from those of their clients. These hidden dilemmas are manifested most in the words spoken, the daily organizational activities and the separated agendas of the community work team. The variance in the self-identities of the organizers and voluntary participants can effect on either mobilization or demobilization subject to the dynamics played in the end.

The negotiation result with the authority is the most decisive in determining the mobilization potential of a collective. The result of these identity conflicts may happen in different ways across various issues. The SMO can be either successful in developing a counter hegemonic discourse concerning its own identities through constructing symbols and history, or lost in adopting the identities offered by the
opposing parties. But there still remains a third way. The members of RCG demonstrated that they could take a further step to distinguish the identities of its constituents internally into two separated sectors (poorer and richer) so as to preserve the latter's identities at least partly, instead of just remaining inaction only as pointed out by Ho (Ho, 1999). In this way, an internal boundary re-emerges. The mobilization level of the SMO then may be different along the three scenarios from mobilization, demobilization to remobilization.

In sum, owing to the detached and self-limiting role in organizing, the social workers are unable to offer alternative accounts of the 'reality' when facing the dominant discourse upheld by the authority. In that case, the residents are left on their own to counter the authority. A further step in setting an extra internal boundary from within may result so as to preserve at least the mobilization potentials left.

4. Implications on movement strategic and tactics

In summary, a SMO is significant not only in gathering the resources needed, seizing the opportunities out there and establishing networks with supporters, but also in forging the very collective identity for the whole movement. Concerning the formulation and reformulation of the collective identity of a collective, the role of the organizers in a SMO is significant in many ways.

The formation of a collective identity for a SMO is related to three main dimensions: setting the scope of boundary, assigning meaning to the boundary made and negotiating the dynamics between various parties. The general rationales of these
tasks remain to be maximizing the commonalties and minimizing the difference so as to achieve group solidarity and subsequent mobilization. Put it more simply, a SMO has to develop a politically affiliated group against an external enemy.

Our study found that the strategies and tactics adopted in constructing identities can be quite flexible, fluid and ever changing. The social conditions, though are the preliminary parameter on which the organizers draw its line of membership, yet they never dictate the direction of the identity building process. With innovative areas, the social workers and the indigenous leaders are able to manipulate the rhetorical process to design specific identities for the building up identities resonant with the internal members and the external audiences. For example, the social workers accepted blurred boundaries rather than clear, which can allow more space for advancing individual concerns of different subgroups within the community groups.

More importantly, the self-identities of the organizers themselves can be different from its constituents within the same organization in some occasions, resulting in a discrepancy between the two parties in respect to their common goals, legitimated tactics and understanding of interests. It will be more salient for the paid organizers who come from outside. The complex dynamics of these internal allies, if not handled cautiously enough, could result in problems that are harmful to mobilizing tasks.

Lastly, we should be aware that the intervention of the organizers in the
construction of collective identity can be made not only through verbal and
cognitively means in daily organizational activities, but also through non-verbally
and emotionally in collective action events. The distinction between the organizers
and the members as well as the group and its contending parties can be formulated in
the forms of physical settings and emotive expression. Such silent boundary makers
can also be utilized in a tactical manner so as to achieve mobilization ends.

II. Research Difficulties and Limitations

Throughout the research process, we encountered many difficulties and
limitations that should be overcome in the future.

First of all, the study was much restricted to the micro-level of analysis. The
observations were made mainly on the dynamics and interaction between the
individuals and the local organizations. Since the scope of study was confined to the
micro-mobilization of the identity building only, we had little efforts put on the
identity contests and interaction at the macro level. Thus the contest and the disputes
in the public sphere were overlooked. We summarized that identity building went
beyond active organizational intervention and in this way, it was difficult to
comprehend deeply the interactions between group members and social workers
outside formal organizational setting.

Secondly, owing to limited time, this study only concentrated on the identity
construction process in the group setting that occurred after the set up of the
community task groups and ended at the time the researcher had to leave the field.
We had no idea about whether the negotiation of an 'community identity' existed
long before the announcement of the redevelopment plan for the estates in questions.
In that case, the identity making process can be detected only in a cross-sectional
way. The concentration on the development of the community task group within an
artificially imposed time period may determine the longitudinal study of the identity
construction process on contested issues along the trajectory of the movement.

Thirdly, the separate treatment of core dimensions of collective identity may
give us a wrong perception about the relationship between them. Because of our
peculiar findings, we had to focus on the most significant component among the
three core dimensions of collective identity construction process in each case. It may
be misleading that other components are less important. We need to put emphasis on
the claims that the three components are intertwined together but are split
analytically for our presentations only.

Fourthly, there was few discussion on the perception and interpretation of the
authority. We concentrated only on the residents and the community work team
without taking note of the counter-perception of the opponent side (like the authority)
and the by-standers (like the media) was left less unexamined. Besides, there were
non-attendants and thus their own inaction were unexplored. Anyway, we should
point out that the present research is just an attempt to examine the identity
construction theory and the other research should be extended to other situations
theoretically.
III. Further Research Suggestions

We suggest the foregoing research can be improved and later studies can be inspired by the suggestions in the following areas. These include investigating the views of various parties involving in the identity fields, extending the time frames and complexity of concerns and elaborating the levels of analysis.

In the future, the interpretations and the views of the power holders and the bystanders (such as media) should also be studied to further clarify the identity contesting process in the multi-organizational fields across different organizational levels. The strategic and tactical considerations of the power holder to maintain a hegemonic manipulation of the social reality is found to be equally problematic but understudied much in the past. The active roles played by the media in particular in formulating the ‘collective action frame’ at public discourse level are impressive. The message conveyed through mass media on public housing residents is also best understood through a content analysis method to reveal the underlying identity frames adopted.

With regard to the level of analysis, the present case study can be extended to studying various dimensions within a single group and various kinds of popular movement and across time. To study all the three main components of collective identity within one group can help better illustrate the mutual dynamics between them. The voluntary nature of participation in public housing movements would also be found on other citizenship movements, especially on those struggles of under-
privileged groups, like the welfare recipient, the disabled and the worker movements. For these kinds of movements, the organizations must also employ different strategies to compete for a positive 'mobilizing identity' for the concerned groups. The way they set boundary, raise consciousness and make negotiation on their 'collective identity' within their constituents, with the opponents or with the wider public can also be studied under the present framework.

The study of the macro level can further be transformed on the development along the continuance and cycle of protest of public housing movements in different historical periods. It can be illustrated by analyzing the change of the 'master identity frames' adopted and cultivated by the protesters in various stages. They are the elaborated frames generated as the boarder kinds of cultural resources influencing not only one but clusters of movements at the same time. As Lui illustrated, a kind of 'anti-imperial' and 'anti-capitalism' ideological complex has been identified among different types of popular movements in the late 70's in Hong Kong, thus magnifying the individual concern of a single movement to a symbol of anti-governmental rule (Lui, 1994). The possibility on developing a new kind of 'master frames' across the community movements after 1997 should be further studied.

IV. Concluding Remarks

To conclude, the discussions on identity formation and transformation are relevant and applicable to other types of popular protests beside the identity-based movements. Studying the multiple process of identity construction explains the very
existence of the ‘collective actor’ and deepens our understanding towards the cultural dimensions of social movement. In certain occasions, the various understanding of collective identity can really transform the organizational goals, tactics, individual objective interest and thus effecting mobilizations. This assertion is not intended to neglect the constraining effect of external structure and to exaggerate organizational determinism, but it only serves to remind us that the mediating effect of collective identity formation should also be stressed.

For the practitioners of social movement, the identification of the rhetorical nature and narrative characteristics of collective identity bring both bad and good news for them. On the one hand, identity formation process is highly restricted by the prevailing structure of cultural force. A SMO has to keep in line with the prevailing action repertoire. On the other hand, there are still plenty of rooms to maneuver if one can appropriate innovative ‘identity frames’ from a larger reservoir of cultural themes. The art of keeping a balance between cultivating the cultural traditions and creating new ideas may be a real and promising challenge to all social movement activists. Nevertheless, the recognition of the importance of the ‘identity issues’ can help the movement organizers to decide on the subsequent tactics and strategies adopted.
Appendix 1

The Characteristics of the
Three Phases of Public Housing Redevelopment Programs
(Sources: Lau and Shun, 1989:11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items/Types</th>
<th>Mark I-II</th>
<th>Extended</th>
<th>Comprehensive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forms</td>
<td>Conversion/Clearance</td>
<td>Clearance</td>
<td>Clearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Blocks</td>
<td>Mark I and II</td>
<td>Low Cost Housing Mark IV and VI</td>
<td>Low Cost Housing Mark III-VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Estates</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Blocks</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Person</td>
<td>520,600</td>
<td>73,475</td>
<td>145,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Households</td>
<td>84,000</td>
<td>16,644</td>
<td>720,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressed Reasons</td>
<td>- environmental improvement - lack of community facilities - overcrowding</td>
<td>- substandard buildings - cost effectiveness</td>
<td>- adjust the ratio between public rental flats and home ownership flats - cost effectiveness - overcrowded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 2

The Opposing Views of Government and Residents towards Public Housing Redevelopment Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official Views</th>
<th>Residents' Views</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Improving the structural conditions of the older housing estates, where the flats are considered to be obsolescent. They were mostly the case for those sub-standard flats included in the ERP.</td>
<td>1. Covering up the scandals of the ‘26 obsolete public housing blocks’. A review of the structural condition of the HA housing block in 1980 had revealed serious construction defects of the middle-aged estates built from early 70’s, which were originally meant to be maintained for a period of 40 years. The special treatment for those affected residents was only seen as a compensation for their inconvenience and sufferings. (Wong, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Upgrading the quality of the living environment of the residents, including the relief of overcrowded families, building self-contained internal and community facilities, achieving better hygiene and social order.</td>
<td>2. Segregating the PHEs between well-off and poor people. As noted by some scholars, the redevelopment process is also a gentrification process (Yu, 1997) From a political point of view, the over-concentration of the urban poor may increase their belongings and facilitate the development of local pressure groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Increasing the economic efficiency of public resource allocation. As the cost of managing older public housing estates is so high, it is only a financial burden of the HA and the public. Higher revenue can be obtained by demolishing the older blocks and renting or selling the new flats.</td>
<td>3. Generating a filtering up process in public housing estates. Increasing revenue through the selling of Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) flats, the Option to Buy or Rent Scheme (BRS), etc. have made on the cost of screening the poor. The public housing may risk the problem of becoming urban slums in the future, leaving the poorer people and the social welfare dependent in the redeveloped estates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Restructuring the pattern of land use in the urban areas, such as improvement of the community facilities, or economic use of land by building high-rise blocks, or the mass transit railway stations, etc.</td>
<td>4. Creating more unwanted problems after redevelopment. Among them, the high rent in new estates and the remote resettlement arrangement are the two hindrances causing the most grievances and reluctance to move. The lower class families living in the inner urban area are thought to be more place-bounded in considering their educational, social and occupational ties to the former community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Realizing newly risen social aspirations within a changing economic environment, especially for satisfying the home ownership desire of the public housing residents after years of settlement.</td>
<td>5. Re-approprating the scarce and valuable land use in the metropolitan area. The ‘welfare’ nature of the public rental flats has replaced by the emphasizing the ‘exchange value’ rather than the ‘use value’ of public rental flats. The residents have suffered much in the earlier date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>家庭人口</td>
<td>1人</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>山谷道村 (二期)</td>
<td>566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>何文田村 (二至四期)</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

需求總數 | 1858 | 2303 | 約 945 | 約 171 | | | | | | 5277 |

單位供應
小型單位 (約 16 平方米) | 946 | 1909 | 1263 | 636 | | | | | | 4754 |
一睡房單位 (約 34 平方米) | | | | | | | | | | |
二睡房單位 (約 43 平方米) | | | | | | | | | | |
三睡房單位 (約 49 平方米) | | | | | | | | | | |

單位類別
| 何文田重建一期 (四座 محض) | | | | | | | | | | |
| 何文田南 三期 | 787 | 1589 | 1103 | 476 | | | | | | 3955 |

單位供應與需求的差額 | 欠 912 | 欠 394 | 多 318 | 多 465 | | | | | | 總欠 523 |

注：
①以上資料及數字為房屋署重建組提供；
②當中數字尚未扣除常樂村供何文田村居民提早調遷的 166 戶六十歲或以上的 2 人家庭與 44 戶 5 至 6 人家庭(共 210 戶)，以及 450 個何文田村的單位供山谷道村二期重建提早調遷的數字；
③在房屋署回覆兩村關注組的信件中曾提及兩村現時有「約超過 300 戶家庭購買居屋單位等候遷出，此外亦有 100 戶家庭選購了冠暉苑」的講法，當中的數字在上表尚未扣除；
④但以上資料尚未包括房屋署會否繼續推出部份安置單位出售，以及預留多少百份比的單位供政府公務員輪候上樓之用。
## Appendix 4

The Major Tasks of the Community Work Team from 10/1998 to 5/1999

(Sources: Ho Man Tin NLCDP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Service</th>
<th>Name of the Groups/Activities/ Programs</th>
<th>Format/ Nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Services</td>
<td>1. Elderly Body Check</td>
<td>Body Check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Household Cleaning Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Families in Ho Man Tin - Elderly Removal and Adaptation Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Consultation Service</td>
<td>Personal Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Programs</td>
<td>1. 'Gathering in the Market'</td>
<td>Recreational Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. 'Know more about Redevelopment'</td>
<td>Block Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. 'Redevelopment Consultation Station'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. 'Opinion on CSSA'</td>
<td>Broad Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. 'Ho Man Tin Bulletin'</td>
<td>Open Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pamphlet/ Publication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Youth Volunteer Groups</td>
<td>Youth Volunteer Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. 'The Chief/Chef in the Family'</td>
<td>Woman Supportive Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Housing Issues Concern Groups</td>
<td>1. Ho Man Tin Estate Redevelopment Concern Group (RCG)</td>
<td>Task Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Ho Man Tin Estate Tenancy Concern Group (TCG)</td>
<td>Task Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Happy Hour: Singleton or Cohabitant Senior Citizens Group (SCSCCG)</td>
<td>Task Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Inter-estate Concern Groups</td>
<td>4. Inter-estate Redevelopment Concern Group of Valley Road Estate and Ho Man Tin Estate</td>
<td>Inter-estate Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-estate Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coalition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map 1:

The Floor Plan of Ho Man Tin Estate and the Nearby Areas
Map 2

The Locations of Kwun-Fai Court, Sheung Lok Estate
and the Proposed Kwun-Hei Court
Plates

Plate 1: Ho Man Tin South Phase 1/Fat Kwong Street/Housing Authority/Valley road Estate in the far end.

Plate 2: Block 8/Sheung Fu Street/Ho Man Tin South Phase 3/Fat Kwong Street at forefront.

Plate 3: Traffic Terminals and Organization's Show Boards.
Plate 4: New flats for Elderly Cohabitant in Sheung Lok House.

Plate 5: Block 2/ Block 7/ Block 8 Ho Man Tin South Phase 3 at far end.

Plate 6: Construction Site of Ho Man Tin Estate Phase 1.
Plate 7: Block 3/Market.

Plate 8: Meeting Place near Block 1.

Plate 9: Gathering of Parents outside Primary School.
Plate 10: Front door of Block 6 Office.

Plate 11: Front door of Staff Office/Ring Bell

Plate 12: Looking Out from staff office to the reception counter.
Plate 13: The Wet Market and the Block 2 Office

Plate 14: The Interior Design of Block 2 Office

Plate 15: The Interior Design of Block 2 Office
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