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Elite-Mass Relationship in Hong Kong

A Look into the Perception of Local Level Political Representatives

Ernest Wing-tak Chui

Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies

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HK\$30.00
ISBN 962-441-024-0

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Acknowledgements

The author would like to express gratitude to the Centre of Urban Planning and Environmental Management, University of Hong Kong, for funding the research on which the present paper is based.

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ISBN 962-441-024-0

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Abstract

The very basis of modern representative democracy is the viable relationship between the masses and their political representatives, in the true reflection and articulation of the public will. Hong Kong presents a peculiar case whereby career bureaucrats dominate the government administration, and the political representatives are not vested with the political authority comparable to their western counterparts'. In the final analysis, the "elite group" in the local context is constituted by the career bureaucrats and the political representatives who are in the ascendancy.

The present study, by employing survey research, attempts to explore the perception of the political representatives at the local district and municipal levels of the government consultative machinery, on the issue of elite-mass relationship. It was found that these "representatives" were generally having a negative evaluation of citizens' competency. They tended to adopt an elitist orientation in their role-perception. Yet, they also experienced a sense of incompetence relative to the government officials, which aptly reflects the political reality of Hong Kong. There also appeared to be a significant divergence of opinion on a number of issues between the elected and non-elected representatives. Nonetheless, these representatives could still manage to maintain contact with the citizens. Those who were relatively younger, who had political group affiliations, and who intended to stand for re-election in the 1991 elections, were more prone to have better performance in the aspect of elite-mass contact.

The paper raises a number of issues for further investigation. In view of building up representative democratic system in the local context, a re-orientation of the political elites' perception is warranted to substantiate a more viable elite-mass relationship. Civic competence on the part of the citizens should be enhanced. However, the repercussion of the development of representative democracy, that of the possible frustration of civil service morale, should also be attended to. Furthermore, the possible role of the emerging political groups can aid in the process of building up elite-mass linkage. Finally, the issue of institutional reconfiguration should deserve special attention, in order to provide the elite-mass relationship with a solid foundation.

Introduction

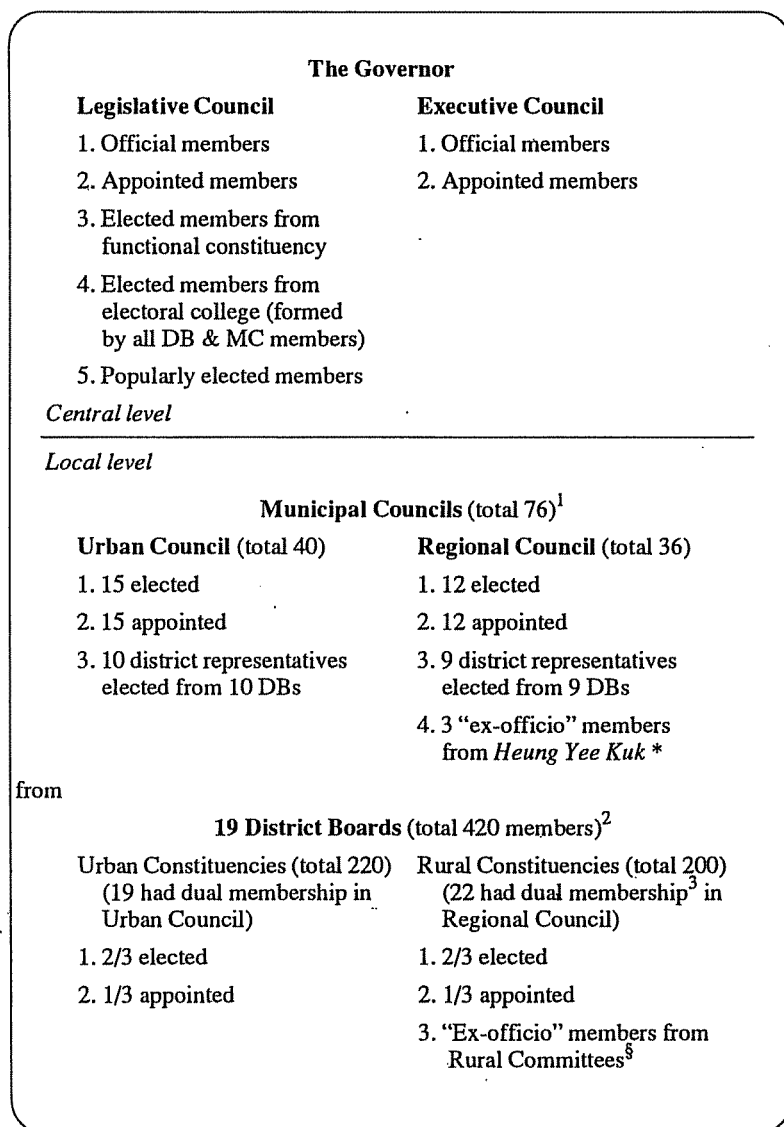
Throughout the decade of the 1980s, Hong Kong witnessed a tremendously hastened pace of political development. The British-Hong Kong administration started to lay the foundation for developing representative democracy in transition to the eventual turnover of sovereignty. Although the territory had been under British rule for one and a half century, it had not been gifted with the development of parliamentary democracy which had flourished in the British polity. In actuality, it has been Britain's colonial policy of preserving the indigenous political order intact in view of minimizing possible political instability. The collaboration between local indigenous leaders and the administration has been a deliberate attempt to accommodate political challenges from amongst the ruled. The British-Hong Kong government had thus repeatedly frustrated attempts to bring in democratic elements in the territory's political system.¹ The local Chinese community had never been familiar with such political concepts as political representation, parliamentary politics, and many other western political ideologies. Thus, it is no surprise to find that the local people had been mainly attuned to traditional Chinese orientations towards politics.² Nevertheless, as this "last colony" is destined to have self-governance with a high level of autonomy, as stipulated in an agreement reached by the out-going British and in-coming Chinese sovereign states,³ it has to enter a new era of political development. The road towards representative democracy is by and large paved for the territory. However, are the local people prepared and equipped to pursue such a destiny? Is the basis for political representation solidly established? What is the elite-mass relationship in sustaining such political representation? These are all critical issues to be tackled in search of Hong Kong's future. The present paper is an attempt to analyze a crucial aspect of sustaining representative democracy — that of political representation of the masses by the elites — in the context of Hong Kong's political development since the 1980s.

The major thrust of the paper builds upon the postulate that political elites at the local level of the territory's political machinery are found to be largely having elitist orientation towards

such an elite-mass relationship. The presence of a group of non-elected political elites further accentuates the situation, as they are not accountable to the masses. Furthermore, administrative dominance by career bureaucrats seems to have rendered the political elites relatively inefficacious. However, given the local people's increasing awareness of their civic rights in holding political leaders responsive to their demands, these elites have to maintain viable contact with their respective constituencies as a form of elite mobilization. It is further postulated that, based upon such a preliminary foundation of sustaining elite-mass linkage, the further development of representative democracy in Hong Kong hinges upon a number of critical issues which have to be addressed seriously by all parties concerned.

Method of Study

The present study is essentially a survey research on the views of local level political elites in Hong Kong. By "local level," we refer to the level of the Hong Kong's government machinery which is not at the central policy-making core but is concerned with district and municipal affairs. The attached diagram can help illustrate the structure of the political system, as well as the respective types of incumbent political leaders at various levels.

Figure 1 Political Structure of Hong Kong (before 1991)**Figure 1** (Continued)

Notes:

(1+2) Grand total of DB and MC members 496.

(3) 41 having dual membership at two levels.

(1+2)-(3)= 455 eligible respondents of the present study.

* *Heung Yee Kuk* (Rural Council) is an assembly of Rural Representatives elected by indigenous rural villagers in the territory. The British Hong Kong administration recognizes its political role as the legitimate representative of indigenous interest. The chairman and two vice-chairmen of the *Kuk* are "ex-officio" members of the Regional Council.

§ The Rural Committees are elected by Village Representatives of indigenous villages. The chairmen of these Committees are "ex-officio" members of rural District Boards.

The study employed survey research by means of mailed, self-administered questionnaires to collect information from all the District Board members and Municipal Councillors. The structured questionnaire was used to explore three major areas. In the first instance, the pattern of elite-mass linkage was mapped out. The respondents were probed to reveal their ways of maintaining contact with their respective constituencies, and the intensity of such contacts. Secondly, the respondents' subjective perception of the elite-mass relationship was examined. In this section, a number of value-laden statements were presented to the respondents for their degree of agreement. More specifically, the statements were concerned with such issues as how they, either elected or not elected political representatives, perceived the masses, appraised the dynamics of the representative machinery, and conceived their interrelationship with the career bureaucrats whom they came into contact in the respective government institutions. Lastly, the respondents' background in terms of socio-demographic characteristics, as well as their political affiliation, were examined. A total of 197 successful returns were analyzed, constituting 44% of the entire population of 455 political representa-

tives, elected, appointed, and ex-officio members at the two levels of the representative machinery.

Political Development and Political Elites in Hong Kong

In the discussion of elites in Hong Kong's context, it is of prime importance to delineate the boundary of the elite group. In Hong Kong, the government is essentially not constituted by popular election, and is basically a colonial government in nature. Effective rule is not based upon popular consent through the institutional mechanism of elections but upon the domination of career bureaucrats with their collaborators among leaders in the economic and social circles. Such a feature has well been documented by King⁴ and Harris,⁵ who coined the benchmark notions of "administrative absorption of politics" and "administrative state" respectively. As revealed aptly by Leung's⁶ examination of the composition of the Executive and Legislative Councils, which are the two uppermost power echelons in Hong Kong's political structure, the ruling elites are basically comprising senior civil servants and business leaders. Such a collaboration between the business interest and the career bureaucrats has been running the society rather smoothly, preserving a stable environment for capital accumulation in Hong Kong's capitalist social order. Being guaranteed secure positions at the apex of the territory's policy-making bodies, the business elites have remained dormant, not organizing into any visible political platform. The senior civil servants, not subjected to obvious challenges from both the economic elites and the masses, are actually playing the dual roles of policy formulators and interest articulators, as observed by Cheung.⁷ Such an "administrative class"⁸ has enjoyed exclusive prerogative in policy formulation. Mushkat's analysis of such an administrative class revealed that they were largely achievers on the social ladder, remote from the ordinary people in terms of educational attainment as well as income.⁹ Thus, it can safely be asserted that the political elites in Hong Kong's context are largely

composed of bureaucrats and business leaders who are distant socially and politically from the citizens.

The relative efficacy of the administration in preserving economic prosperity has kept the local people from resorting to political activism. There has apparently been no ground for the blossoming and growth of activist political groups. Furthermore, the administration has been cautious in curbing the development of political groups, given the territory's peculiar political situation of having subtle linkages with both the "left" and "right" factions of Chinese politics.¹⁰ The non-existence of such political groups, thereby, has provided no fertile soil for political leaders from outside the establishment to anchor their foothold.

Thus in the final analysis, administrative dominance, coupled with the absence of visible political groups, has resulted in what Lau has called the "poverty of political leaders"¹¹ both within and without the establishment in Hong Kong. It is therefore not surprising to see from Lau's 1985 finding that 47.8% of his respondents had no leader in mind to trust.¹²

However, the social uprisings in the 1970s gave rise to a new group of non-ruling, social leaders who were actually social activists and opinion leaders striving for parochial interests of specific communities. They resorted to unconventional tactics of mass mobilizations in confrontation with the administration in the pursuit of tangible concessions in the social policy domains. Their success, though intermittent and sporadic at large, aroused people's attention and eventual acceptance. Thus, while the prestigious political-cum-economic ruling elites had been remote from the ordinary masses, social activists from amongst the grassroots seemed to have gradually responded to people's aspiration for furthering their interests. In Lau's same survey, 45.6% opined that political leaders outside the establishment better reflected public opinion than the Executive and Legislative Councillors.¹³ These grassroots leaders eventually constituted the local level non-ruling elites for the people, as distinct from the central level ruling elites.¹⁴

The administration, in response to such possible threat to stability from the grassroots albeit feeble and sporadic, resorted once again to the strategy of absorption, but this time the target turned up to be this group of grassroots leaders. The District

Administration Scheme¹⁵ in the beginning of the 1980s marked the very first step whereby the administration attempted to accommodate bottom-up political demands. Incidentally, the 1997-Future-of-Hong-Kong issue and the subsequent political repercussions it stirred up fueled the hastened politicization of the territory at large. Unprecedented pace of development of a representative government took off during the decade. In actuality, from the 1980s onwards as some of the activists succeeded in entering the legitimate official channels of the representative institutions of the District Boards (DB) and Municipal Councils (MC)¹⁶ through elections, activists ascended to become figures of new political elites for the people. Their affinity to the masses was grounded upon their having similar social backgrounds, having worked with the grassroots throughout the 1970s, and having a positive outlook and liberal-democratic orientations. Furthermore, those among them who were elected DB and MC members made a deliberate effort to secure their positions by maintaining close liaison and connection with their respective constituents. It is such a new group of social and political leaders who resorted to "double-barrelled approach of using conventional and unconventional channels of political influence,"¹⁷ who succeeded in capturing the new hope and aspiration of the masses to advance citizens' interest. Thus, the masses began to have new political elites in whom they could vest their hopes and aspirations. All in all, the overall composition of the elite groups in the territory began to be reshuffled. It is based upon such observations that the present study chooses to focus solely upon the local-level political elites.

Political Representation and Elite-Mass Linkage

As the present paper tackles the issue of political representation, it is warranted to briefly discuss the related concepts at first.

Political representation is essentially founded upon the representative's acting in place and on behalf of the represented, providing a genuine and real reflection of the latter's interest. The "elitist" perspective expounded by such scholars as Pareto and Mosca, Michel, Miliband and Mills is grounded upon presump-

tions about the preeminence of the representatives having a conviction to serve public interests and in being gifted with superior talents. Such a position reckons the futility of maintaining a viable elite-mass linkage, given that the masses are generally inferior to the elites.¹⁸ However, the "populist" alternative queries such assumptions and is skeptical about the representativeness of modern democracies in the realization of political representation.¹⁹ One of such deficiencies concerns the widening gap between the political representatives and the constituents, which results from a lack of access, a blockage of information flow and evasive performance on the part of the politicians. More significant still, the trend of excessive reliance upon career bureaucrats in the various aspects of the policy processes — namely policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation — has alarmed political analysts who see the possible threat of the usurpation of power of the representatives by the bureaucrats.²⁰ Thence, scholars like Barber,²¹ Weisberg,²² and Hansen,²³ based upon their faith in the masses' capacity and political right in political representation, equivocally advocate a cogent elite-mass linkage in order to ensure viable representation.

Political representation aptly hinges upon viable elite-mass linkage. People have to get in touch with their political representatives to express their political demands, in view to assure the latter's faithful reflection within the relevant political mechanisms. In addition, the general public has to rely upon the political leaders to transmit back political messages which are under normal circumstances inaccessible to the ordinary people. As for the leaders, as Putnam puts it, elites have to solicit mass support for legitimation purpose.²⁴ Specifically, political leaders have to mobilize constituent support during elections. Furthermore, such leaders have also to influence public opinion so as to strengthen their position relative to other opponents. Thus, Nettl coined the vivid notion of "stalactite" mobilization, implying the elites' top-down influence upon the masses.²⁵ Hence, political representatives have to sustain viable linkages with their respective constituents. Such linkages may take various forms ranging from mass mobilization activities to organizational mediation by parties or intermediate groups or direct individualized contact with constituents. In general, these constituency services serve the cru-

cial function of making the representative "visible," endeavouring to be responsive and responsible to the masses.

Crewe has suggested a number of factors affecting elite-mass linkage, which include party strength, affiliation of both politicians and citizens to parties, electoral system, availability of substitutes for handling citizen grievances, and the like.²⁶ Nonetheless, the search for better political representation relies upon institutional structures as well as appropriate perception by the actors concerned, i.e. the elites and the masses, of the interrelationship between themselves.

Thus, the present study attempts both to figure out the actual pattern of interaction sustaining such elite-mass linkage in Hong Kong's context and the elites' perception of such a linkage.

Accomplishment of Political Elites in Sustaining Linkages with the Masses

As a measure of the actual performance of political representatives' linkage with their respective constituencies, a number of indicators were used to reflect the level of contact between the two. These include (1) the distribution of leaflets or printed material; (2) erecting display boards or notice boards; (3) organizing public forum or seminar; (4) paying visits to local organizations; (5) conducting opinion surveys; (6) holding "meet-the-public" sessions; and (7) establishing a Board Member's/Councillor's Office. A brief introduction of the community profile should suffice to provide a background context in which such elite-mass contact takes place.

The small territory of Hong Kong is marked by its dense population, especially in the public housing estates. Since the introduction of the District Administration Scheme in 1981 and its first popular election in 1982, it has been observed that public housing estates generally constitute battlegrounds for fierce electoral competitions.²⁷ Thus, it is the usual practice for incumbent politicians as well as intending contesters to launch publicity activities and constituency services in these areas. Furthermore, in 1973 the administration launched its "Mutual Aid Committee"

(MAC) programme²⁸ in order to create an image of harmonious cooperation between the government and its people. By such a scheme, the MACs which were formed with full support of the government, began to mushroom. They essentially contributed to the emergence of numerous local organizations within the local communities, explaining the wide range of activities that are utilized by the political representatives at the local level to maintain contact with the people.

In the present study, it was found that the majority of the respondents had maintained considerable level of contact with their constituents. For instance, 65.0% had distributed publicity leaflets in their districts to inform the citizens about their work progress. In addition, 61.7% had made use of the estate facility of public notice boards erected by the Housing Department. Furthermore, these respondents were found to be rather active in soliciting views from their constituents, in addition to disseminating information unilaterally. Specifically, 76.1% alleged to have held public forums or seminars, 75.6% had resorted to conducting community surveys to collect people's opinions. Moreover, in view of paying due respect to the existing community organizations which might already have formed some community power networks, the great majority (91.8%) of the respondents had paid visits to such organizations. Finally, most of the respondents (77.9%) had operated their own independent offices which served to receive complaints, enquiries and simply to propagate the image of being accessible to the people. In relation to this, the political representatives could operate "meet-the-public" sessions either monthly or quarterly or use direct contact or telephone hotlines, to come into contact with the people. A great majority (96.4%) of the respondents alleged to have operated such constituency services.

Thus, it can generally be concluded that through the present study, it was found that the majority of the responding political elites at the local level could manage to maintain considerable linkages with the masses.

However, a close and critical examination is needed of the above pattern of elite-mass linkage sustained by local level politicians in Hong Kong. It should be noted that though the variety of such contact appeared to be satisfactory, there was room for im-

provement in terms of intensity. For instance, though a majority of the respondents distributed leaflets to keep the citizens informed, they performed it rather sporadically: 49.2% of those having distributed leaflets did it on a yearly basis; and 21.9% on a quarterly basis. For those who held public forums or seminars, most (45.3%) could merely afford to organize them once every year, while only 7.3% held it quarterly or monthly. With respect to paying visits to local organizations, 27.2% visited on a monthly basis and 25.0% on a yearly basis, the remaining merely did so intermittently. The democratic ideal of sustaining viable interaction between the elites and the masses has to be substantiated by genuine and timely reflection of the public will. That be the case, the level of contact between the local level politicians and the citizens as depicted by the present study, can hardly be regarded as sufficient.

The study further pursues to examine the possible relationship between the level of elite-mass linkage and the politicians' background. The existence of a group of non-elected members in both the District Boards and the Municipal Councils suggests the issue of the possible divergence in the pattern of linkage. In general, it was found that elected members performed better in terms of the level of contact with their constituents than the non-elected members. It might be attributed to the fact that the elected members had to solicit the electorate's confidence and support in view of securing success in the next election. In actuality, the study vividly reveals the fact that those intending to stand for re-election in 1991²⁹ tended to perform better in their contact with constituents than those who did not. This seems to support Crewe's contention that political elites having the ambition of being re-elected or continuing their political career would be more prone to have closer elite-mass linkage.³⁰

On the other hand, the political representatives affiliated with political groups also excelled those not having such linkage in the level of contact. Thus, Bogdanor's observation that intermediate organizations like political groups or parties provide assistance to political representatives in having elite-mass linkage can be supported in the local context.³¹ For instance, through participation in the work of one of the District Board member's offices, the author could observe that the member's affiliated district concern group³² could provide such resources as manpower, finance,

premise, and the like, to facilitate the member's promotion and publicity activities.

Table 1 Level of Contact* by Type of Seat (%)

Level of contact	Type of seat	
	Elected	Non-elected
Medium/Low	15.2	81.1
High	84.8	18.9
(n)	(138)	(53)
$\chi^2=71.74, p<0.001; \lambda = 0.52$		

* "Level of Contact" refers to the aggregated score of respondents in performing the various tasks of contacting citizens. For instance, a representative having performed all seven items will be ranked "very high," while one having performed one or none will be classified as "very low." Admittedly, the issue of equal weighting in treating the various items might invite criticisms. Yet, for simplicity sake, the items are treated as equally significant in the elite-mass linkage.

Table 2 Level of Contact by Group Membership (%)

Level of contact	Group membership	
	Yes	No
Medium/Low	12.2	47.4
High	87.8	52.6
(n)	(138)	(116)
$\chi^2=23.58, p<0.001; \lambda = 0.00$		

Table 3 Level of Contact by Intention to Stand for 1991 Election (%)

Level of contact	Intention to stand for 1991 election		
	Will stand	Not stand	Undecided
Medium/Low	14.8	70.9	46.2
High	85.2	29.1	53.8
(n)	(122)	(55)	(13)

$\chi^2=55.00, p<0.001; \lambda = 0.37$

Perception on Elite-Mass Relationship: Inter-relationship amongst Officials, Representatives, and Citizens

In the analysis of the elites' perception of elite-mass relationships, it is of prime importance to investigate the elites' apprehension towards the political system in which the elites are situated. In Hong Kong's context, as in western democracies, career bureaucrats occupy critical positions in policy formulation in addition to implementation. The demarcation between politics and administration, a classic controversy in the study of public administration, has become increasingly blurred. The Hong Kong's case is peculiar in this aspect of administrative dominance. Thus, the political representatives working in the respective government machineries have to recognize such constraints in their performance of the role of citizen's representatives. More peculiar still, the system of appointment of political representatives by the administration into the various representative institutions further complicates the situation. The divergent backgrounds of the political representatives in terms of their difference in official mandate — viz. one being elected by the people while the other being accountable solely to the administration which appoints him/her — make the basis of political representation somewhat indecorous. Thus, there exists a peculiar triadic relationship amongst the three different

groups of actors within the political institutions, i.e. the bureaucrats, the elected, and the non-elected political representatives. It is therefore interesting to study how the political representatives perceive such a triadic relationship within the elite group. On the other hand, another major aspect constituting the elites' perception of elite-mass relationship lies in their apprehension about the masses as the other major group of actors in the relationship. Role perception is primarily based upon the actor's definition of the self and the other and, thereby, their mutual relationship. The elites' assessment of the competence and, therefore, political significance of the masses will direct them to situate their relative position vis-à-vis the masses whom they are supposed to represent.

Elites' Appraisal of Dynamics of Representative Machinery

Results of the present study seemed to show that the local level political representatives under study were inclined to view the political institutions as somewhat remote and insulated from the ordinary citizens. The political actors within the system could "run their own business" without due regard to those outside, even though the two were apparently having a relationship of representation. For instance, most respondents (67.2%) tended to agree to the statement that "The work of the representative machineries is so complicated that the ordinary citizens cannot fully understand." In addition, more respondents tended to agree that "Under certain circumstances, it is necessary to have some kind of compromise among the representatives themselves, even though that might inevitably contradict the interests of the constituents": 47.0% agreed as compared to 38.2% who disagreed. Furthermore, more respondents (66.0%) tended "to keep to their own standpoint whenever they disagree with their constituents." From these observations, one can speculate that the present group of respondents, who were supposedly political representatives of the people, tended to ascribe an elitist position to the elite-mass relationship. Specifically, with reference to Eulau's differentiation between "trustee" and "delegate" roles of the political representa-

tives,³³ these respondents tended to identify themselves more as "trustees" whom are vested with the people's mandate, thereby having full discretion in their performance in the political institutions.

However, though the respondents seemed to follow their own political line, they still recognized the need to keep in contact with their constituents. For instance, it was found that nearly all respondents (97.4%) agreed that "The representatives should have contacts with the citizens to the fullest extent." Nonetheless, there might still be an element of doubt about the possible incidence of "desirability effect" creeping into the respondents' answer in a self-administered questionnaire as used in the present study, which produced such a positive response on this issue. Notwithstanding this, a sizable proportion of the respondents (62.2%) opined that it is technically difficult for the representatives to achieve an acceptable level of consultation with citizens. This therefore reveals the underlying uneasy ambivalence in the respondents' conception of the real as against the ideal. However, views were divided: 43.1% and 50.3% agreed and disagreed respectively on the statement that "It would hinder the efficiency of the representative machinery if representatives had to consult citizens before formulating their stand." That is, though the respondents were rather reserved on the practicality of consulting the citizens, they did not think consultation *per se* would hinder the work of the representative machineries. Thus, it might be postulated that though the responding political representatives might have affirmative stand towards sustaining elite-mass linkage in terms of contact or consultation, they might still adhere to their own judgement in their daily performance in the political system. It therefore invites the question whether the real substance of such linkage is either genuine reflection of the masses' political demands or simply a show-case for the political elites. Hence, the scenario depicting the case that the present group of respondents were having satisfactory linkage with their constituents should deserve more critical examination.

A more refined investigation reveals that there was marked divergence of views between the elected and non-elected members with respect to the various statements related to the appraisal of the dynamics of representative machinery. Elected members

tended to disagree more with the statement of inevitability of mutual compromise among representatives; but to agree less (proportionally) with the issue of whether the representatives should keep to their own idea when they disagreed with their constituents; and they were less inclined to agree that consultation would hinder institutional efficiency. From these, it might be postulated that elected members were having relatively more positive inclinations towards attending to constituent interest than their non-elected counterparts. This obviously reflects their different positions in terms of their object of accountability and responsiveness.

Table 4 Agreement to Statement "inevitability of mutual compromise among representatives" by Type of Seat (%)

Degree of agreement	Type of seat	
	Elected	Non-elected
Agree	39.4	69.6
Disagree	46.0	19.6
No opinion	14.6	10.7
(n)	(137)	(56)
$\chi^2=15.18, p<0.001; \lambda = 0.09$		

Table 5 Agreement to Statement "representatives should keep to own ideas if disagree with constituents" by Type of Seat (%)

Degree of agreement	Type of seat	
	Elected	Non-elected
Agree	63.2	72.2
Disagree	27.9	20.4
No opinion	8.8	7.4
(n)	(136)	(54)
$\chi^2=1.42, n.s.; \lambda = 0.00$		

Table 6 Agreement to Statement "consultation will hinder institutional efficiency" by Type of Seat (%)

Degree of agreement	Type of seat	
	Elected	Non-elected
Agree	38.1	54.5
Disagree	54.0	41.8
No opinion	7.9	3.6
(n)	(139)	(55)
$\chi^2=4.71$, n.s.; $\lambda = 0.07$		

Inter-relationship amongst the Elites: Bureaucrats, Elected and Non-elected Representatives

Political representation in Hong Kong is characterized by the peculiar feature of having non-elected "representatives" in the various representative institutions.³⁴ Their divergence in political roles might possibly pertain to a discord in political allegiance and accountability. It is useful therefore to investigate the role perception of these different types of political representatives or elites. Furthermore, as Hong Kong is marked by bureaucratic dominance in administration, it is also warranted the examination of the political representatives' perception of their relationship with the career bureaucrats, with specific reference to their efficacy in role performance as the people's representatives in the policy-making process.

In the examination of the possible distinction in role perception between the two groups of political representatives, it was found that there existed remarkable divergence of views. Results revealed that 49.5% of the respondents agreed that non-elected members "might have more free-hand in their work in the representative machinery," as compared to 44.4% who disagreed. Similarly, 48.5% agreed to the statement that "Only the elected representatives have to consider the issue of being monitored by citizens," whereas 45.9% disagreed. Finally, 50.5% of the respon-

dents tended to agree that non-elected members "had more difficulty having a solid mass base," whilst 42.4% disagreed. From these three aspects, it is apparent that views were rather divided towards the role and functioning of the two different types of members.

Furthermore, closer examination evinces that difference in membership did lead to a remarkable discrepancy in their responses. For instance, it was found that more elected members agreed to the statement that only elected members had to consider the issue of being monitored by the citizens. However, the non-elected members disagreed more on this issue. In connection with this, more non-elected members agreed that they could have greater flexibility in their work in the representative machinery, whilst the elected members tended to disagree more. If the two results are considered jointly, it could be postulated that, though the non-elected members opined that they still had to consider being monitored by the citizens, in actual practice they alleged to have less constraint in terms of constituent pressure in their performance in the political institutions.

On the other hand, the elected members opined that their non-elected counterparts had more difficulty having a solid mass base since they were not returned by election. However, the non-elected members largely disagreed with this position. This might be due to their consideration that, even though they were not elected by the people, they could still gain people's trust by having good performance in the representative institutions.

From the above divergence, it is understandable that the two types of members were having different perceptions towards themselves as political representatives, as well as that towards each other. This might possibly induce some kind of strain upon their working relationship within the representative institutions.

Table 7 Agreement to Statement “only elected members should consider issue of being monitored” by Type of Seat (%)

Degree of agreement	Type of seat	
	Elected	Non-elected
Agree	55.4	32.1
Disagree	39.6	60.7
No opinion	5.0	7.1
(n)	(139)	(56)
$\chi^2=9.65, p<0.05; \lambda = 0.16$		

Table 8 Agreement to Statement “non-elected members are difficult to have solid mass base” by Type of Seat (%)

Degree of agreement	Type of seat	
	Elected	Non-elected
Agree	61.9	21.4
Disagree	31.7	69.6
No opinion	6.5	8.9
(n)	(139)	(56)
$\chi^2=26.86, p<0.001; \lambda = 0.28$		

Table 9 Agreement to Statement “non-elected members have more flexibility in working in representative machinery” by Type of Seat (%)

Degree of agreement	Type of seat	
	Elected	Non-elected
Agree	41.7	67.9
Disagree	51.1	28.6
No opinion	7.2	3.6
(n)	(139)	(56)
$\chi^2=10.92, p<0.005; \lambda = 0.13$		

Though the District Boards and the Municipal Councils are vested with a designated scope of administrative authority, they are still subjected to the territory's characteristic administrative dominance by career bureaucrats in their functioning. The District Board is expected to “advise its corresponding District Management Committee [DMC] on matters within its terms of reference.”³⁵ The DMCs comprise government officers from departments in the district, and their main functions are basically “to provide a forum for inter-departmental consultation and coordination.”³⁶ The departmental officials may not necessarily attend to the request or resolutions of the Boards. In such cases, the Boards' recourse is to bring the matter to the attention either of the departmental head or the Secretary for Home Affairs.³⁷ Therefore, it is not surprising to see that the Boards have not been entirely successful in wrestling with the administration.³⁸ The internal division amongst the elected and non-elected members, further accentuated by the cleavages in the members' political affiliations, have further undermined the Boards' efficacy in fighting as a united front against bureaucratic dominance.

As for the Municipal Councils, they are vested with greater statutory power, including financial autonomy and delegated legislative authority. However, their reliance upon the government departments of Urban and Regional Services Departments in their

performance of duties, and the latter's provision of policy information, has largely hampered their capacity to shed off administrative dominance. Given that the councillors are largely serving their public duty on a part-time basis and do not have sufficient back-up from political groups, their inefficacious functioning is totally conceivable.

It is therefore crystal clear that the political representatives serving in the respective District Boards and Municipal Councils are largely working in an environment of bureaucratic dominance. The study aptly revealed the respondents' perception of their relationship with the government officials in their respective institutions. It was found that the respondents had quite mixed feelings towards the government officials with whom they had contact. Specifically, 65.5% of the respondents agreed that most of the officials were willing to accept opinions of the representatives. However, from their experience, 78.8% had a rather bitter feeling that, even though they had submitted their views, the final decision rested upon the government officials. It is further reflected by the finding that 57.0% of the respondents opined that, in the work of the representative machineries, the government officials were more influential than the representatives. These seemed to be real reflections of the internal relationship within the elite groups at the two levels of the territory's representative institutions.

Of related interest, results of the present study revealed that more respondents (46.6%) tended to disagree to the statement that "If citizens have any complaints, they should approach the representatives instead of government officials," as contrasted to 40.0% who agreed. Moreover, it was found that both the elected and non-elected members concurred on this issue. Hence, it appears that the representatives in general tended to recognize the officials' dominant role in meeting with citizens' complaints. According to Crewe and others, the bureaucrats in Hong Kong's context constitute a significant substitute for the representatives in providing constituency service in resolving the citizens' grievances.³⁹ Such a displacement of the representatives' function in meeting with the people's political demand might undermine elite-mass linkage between the representatives and the people. This therefore further supports Lau's assertion that Hong Kong is plagued with the problem of "poverty of political leaders,"

whereby the masses cannot find appropriate elites whom they can aspire to support.⁴⁰

Nonetheless, the majority of the respondents (91.3%) agreed that, since they were representing the interest of the public, the government officials should try their best to attend to their views. This subjective aspiration might not necessarily be fulfilled, since as stated above, the respondents had the feeling of incompetence vis-à-vis the government officials.

The above depicts a picture whereby bureaucratic dominance in the local context is vividly displayed. It is startling to note that such a picture is grounded upon the allegations given by a group of active participants of political elites within the government administration. The issue raised by Putnam and Aberbach,⁴¹ Hillyard,⁴² and others that career bureaucrats, being non-elected political elites, eventually replace the representatives in formulation of public policies, is pertinent in Hong Kong.

Elites' Assessment of the Masses' Political Competence

As mentioned earlier, the elites' perception of the masses can affect their orientation towards the elite-mass relationship. In the present survey, we have attempted to explore how the representatives assessed the citizens' level of competence in their participation in the elite-mass interface. In general, results revealed quite consistently that more respondents tended to have a negative assessment of Hong Kong citizens' competence, which reflected their having "elitist" inclination. Specifically, respondents tended to rate negatively the citizens' knowledge, readiness and capacity in relating with the representative institutions. For instance, 74.2% of the respondents agreed that "Hong Kong citizens do not adequately know about the work of representative machineries." More precisely, 65.6% agreed to the statement that local citizens did not have sufficient ability to monitor the work of the representative machineries. Similarly 72.7% agreed that "Hong Kong citizens only have a low level of participation in electoral activities." Furthermore, the majority (82.7%) of the respondents viewed that "The ordinary citizens will only have concern about their own

personal issues, and will seldom show concern for issues of no immediate concern to them." However, views seemed to be divided on whether the citizens were concerned with the work of the representative machinery. It was found that 45.4% of the respondents disagreed, as compared to 41.8% who agreed, that citizens in their respective constituencies were very concerned about the work of the representative machinery.

Given these conceptions on the masses' political orientation, it might possibly tempt these political representatives to pay less regard to maintaining viable elite-mass linkage. The very basis of political representation will thereby languish.

On the other hand, 60.5% of the respondents were of the opinion that "Hong Kong citizens are having high expectations of the work of the representative machineries." This might be attributable to their recognition of the citizen's utilitarian orientation towards political institutions. If such an assessment of the citizens' expectation was taken as a form of political demand or pressure, it might possibly urge the political representatives to perform better in their work in the political institutions. However, given that the present group of political leaders were found to be more attuned to an elitist orientation, and their having a low assessment of citizens' capabilities, their conception of the elite-mass relationship seemed to be skewed towards the elites' position.

Summary and Conclusion

With the advent of the development of a representative democratic system in Hong Kong, the critical issue of political representation is going to take shape. The launching of a series of popular franchise elections at the local, municipal, and eventually central levels of the various representative institutions has given birth to a new cohort of political elites. This new batch of political elites distinguishes itself from their predecessors in having a more solid mass base. However, the hastened pace of opening up the political system has still been blocked by various impediments. The preservation of the vested interests of the territory's business community and the traditional political leaders has still its overriding

constraint upon the progress of political democratization. Thus, the continuation of the appointment system in the representative institutions and the bolstering of bureaucratic dominance in government administration have watered down the territory's democratic progression. The case is even more complicated by the fact that the Chinese regime presents an even more momentous figure in the political configuration of the territory at present and in the future. Nonetheless, the tide of advancing political representation and the corresponding issue of nurturing a new brand of elite-mass relationship are actually gathering their momentum. The masses are increasingly motivated to assume a more active role in the political scene of the territory. The political elites are going to encounter more stringent demands in meeting with the political pressures from the masses and, in working with the bureaucrats, in their role performance as people's representatives.

The present study, which is based upon survey findings on a group of district and municipal level political representatives, revealed the picture that such a group of political elites was apparently aware of the issue of sustaining viable communication with their masses. This seemingly provided a foundation for elite-mass linkage which is the basis of political representation. However, this same group of political elites was apparently more attuned to an elitist orientation in its role-perception as well as in assessing the masses' political competence. Nonetheless, the elites were equally inefficacious in working with the government officials in the political institutions. The elected elites and the non-elected counterparts were obviously having distinct views and orientations on various aspects. Such a divergence might possibly have repercussions on the basis of political representation in the territory's political arena. Specifically, the non-elected political representatives were relatively less constrained by popular political demands from the constituents, and their allegiance could be questioned by the masses.

There is a number of issues which deserves further investigation and serious consideration on the part of the bureaucrats, politicians, citizens, and above all, those who are concerned with the democratic development of Hong Kong society.

Re-orientation of the Elites' Perception

The present study revealed the picture that local level politicians were apparently predisposed to a "trustee" orientation in perceiving their role as political representatives. This might be attributed to their linkage with traditional Chinese political philosophy, where paternalistic orientation seems to prevail. However, though there can be legitimate reservations about the talent and competence of the masses, it hardly warrants depriving them of their political right of being attended to by the political elites. It would be desirable and imperative indeed for the political elites who are in actuality ascending the political arena only recently, to equip themselves more with the grasping of such democratic precepts as representation, accountability, and the like. These can help in positioning themselves in the elite-mass relationship. Only grounded upon an appropriate conception of political representation and related role-perception can the elites engage in viable contact and linkage with the masses. Otherwise, maintaining frequent but not necessarily intensive and effective communication with constituents, as exhibited in the patterns revealed in the present study, the elite-mass relationship cannot be taken to be satisfactory. In fact, the Hong Kong citizenry has been acculturated, perhaps in a somewhat haphazard way by various incidents and parties concerned, to gradually take up such democratic notions requisite for building a democratic social order. The past image of the Hong Kong citizens being politically uninformed, disinterested and incompetent seems to be shed off as time goes on.

On the other hand, as revealed in the present study, there remains an element of inefficacious feeling amongst the local-level political elites. Their sense of relative powerlessness is understandable since bureaucratic dominance has long been upheld in the territory's political arena. However, in view of constructing a more open, responsible and democratic government, it seems also imperative for the political elites to assert their role more proactively in reinstating their positions in the policy-making as well as the implementation processes. The possible reminiscence of the subservient orientation towards authority vested upon officials should perhaps be relinquished.

Enhancing Civic Competence of the Masses

As Hong Kong's population is marked by an overwhelming majority of ethnic Chinese, there might perhaps be a usual association in viewing the local people as politically apathetic and incompetent. A more serious examination into the composition of the present population can reveal that the older generation with past traditional cultural heritage is in the decline in terms of both size and political significance. The new generation, born in post-war years and having received better education, and having been baptized in the political tides throughout the 1980s, has been more attuned to democratic orientations. Their receptiveness to constructing a more viable form of political representation should be recognized. Nonetheless, given the fact that the existing institutional arrangements are still posing various sorts of obstacles frustrating popular participation, the local citizens are still relatively inexperienced in asserting their civic rights. Furthermore, the sentiment of reliance upon the newly emerged political elites might even paralyze them to exert their demand for better accountability of the elites. The past remnants of viewing political leaders as benefactors might perhaps be adjusted to accommodating a structurally pluralistic society in which political representatives act in accordance with their respective constituencies. Thus, it is necessary for the citizens to equip themselves with the various aspects of cognitive, evaluative, and behavioural⁴³ domains in exercising their political rights and duties in a modern political order. In explicit terms, the citizens are encouraged to build up viable linkage with their political representatives for channeling political demands and support. This can revert the top-down or "stalactite" approach of elite mobilization, and assume a more participatory stance in holding the elites accountable.⁴⁴

Changing the Civil Service Orientation

In the discussion of elite-mass relationship in this paper, the bureaucrats have been regarded as significant constituent figures in the elites group, given Hong Kong's bureaucratic dominance in government administration. Their past privilege of being distant from the citizens and immune from the political demands of the

political representatives has made the bureaucrats accustomed to emphasizing administrative efficiency, even at the expense of popular demands. The senior civil servants are even vested with the authority in all the aspects of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. Their predominance is grounded upon institutional arrangements, as well as the past submissiveness of the citizens and the virtual non-existence of political leaders. However, with the advent of democratic government and its corresponding political representatives entering the political arena, these bureaucrats have to encounter greater public scrutiny from both the citizens and the politicians. Thus, it calls for their re-orientation towards attending to such political demands. In their working with the political representatives in the various political institutions, the bureaucrats have to adopt more appropriate working relationship with the latter. All these amount to rethinking the dynamic of the government administration, in accommodating both efficiency and public involvement.

Institutional Re-configuration to Foster Viable Political Representation

As Pitkin rightly pointed out, political representation should be grounded upon institutional arrangements.⁴⁵ As far as the local district and municipal levels are concerned in this study, it is important to look into the issue of giving the District Boards and Municipal Councils more administrative as well as political significance. The mere consultative role of the District Boards apparently watered down the motivation of candidates in the 1991 election.⁴⁶ In actuality, the Boards are having the relative strength of being more responsive to individual district dynamics and demands. Thus, they can help decentralize certain aspects of central government administration. Given greater administrative authority and, therefore, political weight in the territory's entire political arena, the local level politicians can better assume their role as citizens' representatives. However, some precautions should be taken about the delicate inter-relationship between the two levels of political institutions. There were allegations against the possible overlapping of functions between the Municipal

Councils and District Boards. Some even proposed the dissolution of one in favour of the other. The author is inclined to support the dissolution of the Municipal Councils. The District Administration Scheme has demonstrated its effectiveness in reaching the general public and being a more accessible channel for handling citizens' complaints.⁴⁷ The smaller size of the District Board constituencies builds a closer link between the political representatives and their constituents. In fact, the District Board elections have consistently captured more attention from both the citizens and the contesting candidates, as well as the political groups.⁴⁸ It seems to support the postulate about the relative efficacy of the District Boards as compared to the Municipal Councils.

Another major issue concerns the system of appointment into the various representative institutions. As revealed in the present study, the non-elected "representatives" were actually having a somewhat different stance with regard to the perception and performance of the elite-mass linkage, as distinct from their elected counterparts. A recent development in the local political arena concerns the proposal put forward by Governor Patten of abolishing the appointment system.⁴⁹ Such a proposal was received with divided views and heated debates. Those in favour of preserving the appointment system heralded the role of the appointed members in consideration of their expertise, experience and familiarity with local dynamics. On the other hand, those who championed total abolition focused on hastening the pace of democratic development in the territory. The author would side with the latter in view of fostering better elite-mass relationship in building up viable political representation in Hong Kong.

Looking into the Role of Political Groups/Parties

As demonstrated by the results of the present study, the political groups/organizations were playing a significant role in enhancing the political representatives to sustain viable contact with the constituents. Moreover, those having such organizational affiliation were more prone to continue their involvement in the political sphere. In fact, the indispensable role of political parties in elections has been fully acknowledged in countries with established democratic political systems. Furthermore, their functions

as intermediate organizations in sustaining a pluralistic, democratic political order are also recognized. Thus, if Hong Kong is heading towards representative democracy, the further development of these political organizations should receive greater attention. The new term of the Legislative Council since September 1991, with a new batch of elected councillors backed by such political groups, has demonstrated the novel atmosphere of more intense debates and greater pressure upon the administration. All these amount to giving Hong Kong a more solid ground for the further progression of party politics and eventually to building up a democratic social order.

Further Investigations into Central Level Political Elites

The present study merely addressed the issue of elite-mass relationship at the local and municipal levels of the representative institutions. It is evident that these two levels of political institutions lack the political clout and significance comparable to the central level Legislative and Executive Councils. The latter, being the "black-box" of policy formulation within the government administration, can hardly be explored. However, the Legislative Council, with its first direct election held in 1991, is more clearly open to academic investigations. It is worthwhile to launch studies on this particular group of political elites to see how they perceive and handle the issue of elite-mass relationship. It is apparent that the local citizenry has increasingly become aware of its civic rights in holding its political representatives more accountable. It is time for the political elites to spell out clearly their positions as to their role as people's representatives in Hong Kong's political arena. This is a most striking political issue, as Hong Kong is going to experience its unprecedented transition of sovereignty. The political elites have a crucial role to play at this historical juncture in paving the way to greater democracy. However, it is evident that such an elite population is relatively inaccessible to academic investigations. Nevertheless, even though it might appear that direct means of investigation, such as surveys or interviews, face great difficulties, it is warranted to pursue

other indirect means of inquiring into the political elites' performance.

The future of Hong Kong's political development rests upon the construction of an open, democratic system whereby viable political representation is sustained. The issue of elite-mass relationship should be attended to at both the conceptual and practical levels. The citizens and the political elites alike should equip themselves at the cognitive and evaluative levels in perceiving such a relationship. This should also be supplemented by the actual performance of sustaining workable elite-mass linkage by both parties. Furthermore, institutional measures have to be implemented to guarantee the actualization of better elite-mass relationships. If the people of Hong Kong are determined to maintain the *status quo*, and even to improve on it, serious efforts have to be paid to work out a political system grounded upon viable political representation appropriate to the local context.

Notes

1. Steve Tsang traced the territory's history of political development since 1842 when Britain took over Hong Kong from the Ch'ing Dynasty. Tsang concluded that attempts by both the colonial administration as well as demands from the people had been frustrated by the British government in preservation of the territory's stability and British rule. See Tsang, S.Y.S. (1990), *Democracy Shelved*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Lau Siu-kai proposed that local people were having "utilitarianistic familism" as their political orientation, whereby people were largely concerned about their immediate, familial interest rather than remote societal issues. Leung Sai-wing also suggested that Hong Kong people were attuned to "instrumental" orientation to politics and political leaders. See Lau, Siu-kai (1978), *Utilitarianistic Familism: The Basis of Political Stability in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Social Research Centre, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and Leung, Sai-wing (1986), *Perception of Political Authority by the*

Hong Kong Chinese. Hong Kong: Centre for Hong Kong Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

3. The British and Chinese governments signed a "Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Future of Hong Kong" in settlement of the transfer of sovereignty in 1997. The Chinese government promised to give high level of autonomy to the future Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, which was subsequently formally laid down in the territory's "mini-constitution," the Basic Law.
4. King, A. (1975), "Administrative Absorption of Politics in Hong Kong: Emphasis on the Grass Roots Level," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 15, No. 5, pp. 422-39.
5. Harris, P.B. (1978), *Hong Kong: A Study in Bureaucratic Politics*. Hong Kong: Heinemann.
6. Leung, B.K.P. (1990), "Power and Politics: A Critical Analysis," in Leung, B.K.P. (ed), *Social Issues in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Oxford.
7. Cheung, B.L. (1987), "The Future Role of Senior Civil Servants in Hong Kong," *Wide Angle Monthly*, October 1987.
8. Muskhat, M. (1984), "Staff the Administrative Class," in Scott I. and J. Burns (eds.), *The Hong Kong Civil Service*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
9. Mushkat, M. (1982), *The Making of the Hong Kong Administrative Class*. Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong.
10. In contemporary history of Chinese politics, the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) constituted the "Right" faction, while the Communist Party the "Left" in opposition. After 1949, when the Communist Party assumed power on the mainland and the Kuomintang landed on Taiwan, supporters of the two parties dug roots in Hong Kong, which eventually constituted the two opposing political forces in the territory.
11. Lau, Siu-kai (1990), *Decolonization without Independence and the Poverty of Political Leaders in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong

Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

12. Lau, Siu-kai and Kuan Hsin-chi (1988), *The Ethos of the Hong Kong Chinese*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Etzioni-Halevy, E. (1989), *Fragile Democracy*. New Jersey: Transaction Publications.
15. The Hong Kong government launched its first move for the development of representative government by introducing the District Administration Scheme in 1981. Under the scheme, the territory was divided into 18 administrative districts, each vested with a District Board composed of elected and appointed members. Correspondingly, general popular election was firstly introduced, bringing forth the territory's subsequent waves of political mobilization.
16. The District Boards were set up under the District Administration Scheme. The Urban Council had long been established since 1936. The Regional Council was set up in 1986 as the rural counterpart. Their functions are concerned with municipal services like sanitation, recreational facilities, cultural activities.
17. Chui, E.W.T. (1992), *An Exploration into the Perception of Elite-Mass Relationship by Local Level Political Representatives in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Centre of Urban Planning and Environmental Management, University of Hong Kong, p. 15.
18. Pitkin, H.F. (1967), *The Concept of Representation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
19. Various scholars have cast critical analysis on the recent development in western democracies in undermining real representation of people's interest. The bureaucratization of political parties, the usurpation of the representative's role by career bureaucrats, and the like, constitute the various factors threatening the basis of democracy. See Bogdanor, V. (ed.) (1985), *Representatives of the People?* Aldershot: Gower; Etzioni-Halevy, E., *Ibid.*; Hillyard, P. and J. Percy-Smith (1988), *The Coercive State*. London: Pinter Publication.

20. Aberbach, J.D., R.D. Putnam and B.A. Rockman (1981), *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*. London: Harvard University Press.
21. Barber, B.R. (1984), *Strong Democracy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
22. Weisberg, R. (1978), "Collective versus Dyadic Representation in Congress," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 72, pp. 535-47.
23. Hansen, S.B. (1975), "Participation, Political Structure, and Concurrence," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 69, pp. 1181-99.
24. Putnam, R.D. (1970), *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
25. Nettl, J.P. (1967), *Political Mobilization*. London: Faber & Faber, quoted in Putnam op. cit., p. 163.
26. Crewe, I. and D. Denver (eds.) (1985), *Electoral Change in Western Democracies*. Beckenham: Croom Helm.
27. The Hong Kong government launched its massive public housing scheme in 1973. Presently over 45% of the territory's population are living in public housing estates. The dense concentration of population constitutes a favourable and convenient target for electoral mobilization.
28. The Mutual Aid Committee Scheme can be seen as the British-Hong Kong administration's attempt to absorb grassroots grievances demonstrated in the 1966 Kowloon Disturbance. The then Home Affairs Branch delegated its authority to local District Offices to help establish these local organizations in public housing estates and private buildings. These MACs were expected to serve as supportive agents in government-sponsored community activities like "Fight Crime Campaign" and "Keep Hong Kong Clean Campaign."
29. The year of 1991 recorded the consecutive elections for the District Boards, Municipal Councils, and the territory's unprecedented direct election to the Legislative Council.
30. Crewe, I., *Ibid.*
31. Bogdanor, V., *Ibid.*

32. Since 1984, there has been a mushrooming of "district concern groups" which are basically community pressure groups formed by enthusiastic community activists advocating for grassroots interests. These organizations normally serve as the breeding ground for intending politicians at local level. They also work in alliance with the elected District Board members and municipal councillors in their pursuit of community interest.
33. Eulau, H. and others proposed a schema of three possible types of roles for political representatives, namely, "trustee," "delegate," and "politico." The last one is characterized by its being "more sensitive to conflicting alternatives... more flexible... and less dogmatic." See Eulau H., J.C. Wahlke, W. Buchanan and L.C. Ferguson (1959), "The Role of the Representative: Some Empirical Observations on the Theory of Edmund Burke," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 53, pp. 742-56.
34. The "ex-officio" members in the rural District Boards are essentially chairmen of Rural Committees, while those in the Regional Council are the chairmen of the *Heung Yee Kuk*. They are returned by elections in a restricted constituency of indigenous villagers.
35. The relationship between the District Boards and their corresponding District Management Committees is stipulated in Hong Kong Government (1981), *White Paper: District Administration in Hong Kong*, p. 11.
36. The composition and function of the District Management Committee is clearly laid down in the same official document (see Note 35).
37. The Secretary for Home Affairs is vested with the authority to oversee the policy of District Administration. His/Her critical political position as a coordinator amongst various government departments serves to iron out possible conflicts arising from the districts.
38. Kwok, an ex-District Board member, provided ample evidence on the futility of the DBs in making the administration yield to the Board's resolutions on community problems and territory-wide issues. See Kwok, Ngai-kuen (1992), "Party

- Politics and Community Development." In Hong Kong Council of Social Service, *Community Development Resource Book 1991-92*, pp. 31-40.
39. Crewe, I. and D. Denver, *Ibid.*
 40. Lau, Siu-kai (1990), *Ibid.*
 41. Aberbach, J.D., R.D. Putnam and B.A. Rockman, *Ibid.*
 42. Hillyard, P. and J. Percy-Smith, *Ibid.*
 43. These three aspects are in accordance with Almond and Verba's (1963) schema put forward in *Civic Culture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
 44. In Yeung and Chui's (1992) research on the 1991 elections, it was revealed that a majority (93.6%) of the respondents demanded the newly elected Legislative Councillors to report their work regularly to the public. See Yeung, A. and E.W.T. Chui (1992), *Report on A Study of the Patterns of Voting Behavior of Hong Kong Electors in the Three Levels of Popular Elections Held in 1991*. Hong Kong: City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.
 45. Pitkin, H.F., *Ibid.*
 46. The 1991 District Board Election recorded the lowest ratio of candidates contesting for a seat (1.73 to 1) since its first election held in 1982 and was the lowest compared to the Municipal Council and Legislative Council Elections (1.96 and 3.0 to 1 respectively).
 47. In Yeung and Chui's (1992) and Lau, Kuan and Wan's (1991) studies, the District Boards rank highest in order of preference as people's choice of channel for redressing grievances. In the former study, respondents were probed which various channels of complaint they would approach. The District Boards captured 55% of the respondents (N=676), as compared to 52.5% for government departments, 37.9% for the mass media. In Lau, Kuan and Wan's 1988 Study, 10.9% of his 396 respondents would contact the Boards, as compared to 8.3% for government departments and 3.0% the mass media. See Yeung, A. and E.W.T. Chui (1992), *Ibid.*; and Lau, Siu-kai, Hsin-chi Kuan and Po-san Wan (1991), "Political Attitudes," in Lau, Siu-kai, Ming-kwan Lee, Po-san Wan and Siu-lun Wong (eds.), *Indicators of Social Development: Hong*

- Kong 1988*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, pp. 173-206.
48. The voting rates for the four District Board elections were 38.1% (1982), 37.5% (1985), 30.3% (1988), and 32.5% (1991) respectively. While the Municipal Councils elections recorded 22.4% (1983 Urban Council), 26.9% (1986), 17.6% (1989), and 23.1% (1991) respectively. The 1991 Legislative Council Election scored the highest 39.4%.
 49. Hong Kong's new Governor, Chris Patten, put up a valorous proposal of institutional reform for the territory in the transitional period heading towards 1997. Besides proposing the abolition of appointed membership in the District Boards and Municipal Councils, Governor Patten propounded introducing a modified version of directly elected seats into the Legislative Council. Such a reform proposal spurred up a crisis over the Sino-British diplomatic relationship and Hong Kong-China relationship. Fervent repercussions were also aroused in the local political sphere where different factions or parties entered into furious debates.

Appendix 1: Notes on Methodology

1. Survey Research

In this study, survey research was employed as the means of data collection. As the respondents are politicians at district and municipal council levels, a brief account of the local political system is warranted.

It should be clarified that the existing political system of representative government or consultative machineries is marked by a variety of memberships within the several representative institutions. In the District Boards, there are different kinds of members representing varied political and social interests, and serving diverse roles in the political arena. In the urban context, the picture is a bit simpler. There are elected and appointed members, with the ratio of roughly two-to-one, giving a simple majority to the first category of members. The appointed members are usually seen as potential supporters of the government administration. They are appointed on individual basis by local District Commissioners, senior officials from the City and New Territories Administration. Usually they are appointed in consideration of their respective merits of being professionals, representatives of particular social groups in the district, and the like. In actuality, the government never denies its intention to "balance" local power politics with such a mechanism of appointment. In the rural districts, there is still another type of members, "representative members" who are essentially chairmen of respective rural committees of the districts concerned. This rural "gentry" is supposed to represent rural indigenous interests in the modern political system of the entire consultative machinery. However, the number of this category is usually limited to a few, as the constituency of a rural District Board seldom encompasses more than two or three rural "areas." The total number of members of all categories in the entire District Administration Scheme is around four hundred.

For the two municipal councils, a similar pattern of political representation exists. In the Urban Council, there are equal numbers of elected and appointed members. In addition, there is a new category of membership provided by the District Administration

Scheme. There are "district representatives" who are actually District Board members returned by indirect election through the ten urban constituencies. The rural counterpart, the Regional Council is also marked by the similar pattern of rural interest representation. On top of the usual pattern of having elected, appointed, and district representative membership, there is still another brand of local representation. The chairman and two vice-chairmen of the Rural Council, or the *Heung Yee Kuk* which is the encompassing political platform representing rural interests, are ex-officio members of the Regional Council. Thus, with the variety of membership, the two municipal councils comprise nearly a hundred political representatives.

Although Hong Kong is a small territory geographically speaking, its population density and its unique political history give it a rather elaborate system of political representation and consultation. Thus, the total number of potential respondents for the present survey amounted to 496. Upon closer examination, a group of members having dual memberships in two different levels of representative machineries were omitted, thus giving 455 as the final size of potential respondents. In terms of a survey research, such a population size is indeed not a big one. This seemed to warrant a full coverage of all the various types of members of the two levels of representative institutions. In addition to size, the variety of membership itself was indeed a very unique political phenomenon. This also justified a full scale study on all the various types of members, in view of detecting the possible divergence, if any, of political views among the members.

A total of 200 completed questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 44%. Upon closer scrutiny, three were omitted from further analysis due to incomplete or poor quality responses.

2. The Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was designed, based upon the researcher's observation and the insight obtained through interviews with some political representatives. It consisted of three major parts. The first section attempted to explore whether the respondents had made efforts at building up constant and effec-

tive communication channels with their respective constituents. For instance, questions were directed at probing whether they had held consultative fora, conducted opinion surveys, erected notice or display boards in the district, and the like. The second major section consisted of a list of twenty-one questions coupled with a seven-point scale of preference. Such questions aimed at exploring their degree of agreement to some value-laden statements. Such statements were related to the respondents' evaluation of the triadic relationship among the government officials they had contact with in the respective representative institutions, the citizens (or citizens in their respective constituencies), and themselves as political representatives. The statements were designed to have both positive and negative values, and were arranged randomly, in the attempt to avoid patterned response of agreement or disagreement. The third major section dealt mainly with the respondents' socio-economic characteristics as well as their political affiliations.

As this specific group of respondents had their distinct feature of being public figures and were very busy, face-to-face interviews were definitely out of question. The resort to mailed, self-administered questionnaires was then justified with consideration of the unique characteristics of the respondent population. A total of two rounds of questionnaires were sent to each respondent. The first round was mailed to the secretariats of the respective Boards or Councils, before the end of the year (i.e. 1990). The second round was sent directly to the respective addresses (either business or residential) of the respondents, as a reminder and an attempt to boost up the response rate obtained in the first round. A note should be given here that the second round was mailed within the period of the District Board election held in the year (i.e. in the period between January and March 1991). Some caution might therefore be needed in consideration of the possible effect of election upon the respondents' views and proclaimed activities, since a large number of respondents eventually stood in that election.

3. *Limitations*

The use of mailed, self-administered, structured questionnaires was flawed with a number of possible limitations. Firstly, the response rate could not be easily guaranteed. The motivation of filling out the questionnaire and returning by the respondents was affected by many factors. It hinged upon the respondent's personal commitments, his/her evaluation of the contents of the questionnaire, and many others. The quality of data collected was still another possible doubt. Since the researcher could in no way clarify the contents of the questionnaire, and the respondents were left to their own respective interpretations, it might render divergent understanding of the questionnaire. The wording and design of the questionnaire therefore presented a critical issue in tackling this problem. Thirdly, the researcher could not verify the validity of the respondents' responses, and the respondents were fully aware of this since the questionnaire was anonymous. Finally, as the issue under investigation was indeed a somewhat sensitive one related to the political attitudes and performance of the respondents as political representatives, there might possibly be a self-selection process in response. That is, those who were having negative predispositions towards issues under investigation might choose to discard the questionnaire.

Appendix 2: Attitudes towards the Relationship among Officials, Citizens and Political Representatives

	Degree of agreement* (%)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dynamics of Representative Machinery							
The work of the representative machinery (District Boards and Urban/Regional Council) is so complicated that the ordinary citizens cannot fully understand.	7.1 (14)	38.5 (75)	21.5 (42)	1.5 (3)	12.8 (25)	17.9 (35)	0.5 (1)
If the representatives have to consult the citizens before formulating their own stand in the representative machinery, it will hinder the efficiency of the work of the machinery.	4.1 (8)	17.9 (35)	21.0 (41)	6.7 (13)	19.5 (18)	27.7 (54)	3.1 (6)
Technically speaking, the representatives will find it difficult to achieve an acceptable level of consultation with citizens.	8.2 (16)	32.1 (63)	21.9 (43)	2.0 (4)	13.8 (27)	18.4 (36)	3.6 (7)
Under certain circumstances, it is necessary to have some kind of compromise among the representatives themselves, even though that might inevitably contradict the interests of the constituents.	6.7 (13)	22.7 (44)	18.6 (36)	13.9 (27)	11.9 (23)	20.6 (40)	5.7 (11)
Whenever a Board member/councillor disagrees with his/her constituents, he/she should keep to his/her own standpoint.	6.8 (13)	39.3 (75)	19.9 (38)	8.4 (16)	8.9 (17)	16.2 (31)	0.5 (1)

The representatives should have contacts with the citizens to the fullest extent. 50.3 (98) 42.1 (82) 5.1 (10) 1.5 (3) 0.5 (1) 0.5 (1) 0.0 (0)

Citizens' Competence

Hong Kong citizens do not adequately know about the work of representative machineries. 8.2 (16) 33.5 (65) 32.5 (63) 1.0 (2) 11.9 (23) 12.9 (25) 0.0 (0)

Hong Kong citizens only have a low level of participation in election activities. 4.1 (8) 33.5 (65) 35.1 (68) 2.6 (5) 13.4 (26) 11.3 (22) 0.0 (0)

Hong Kong citizens are putting high expectations upon the work of the representative machineries. 4.6 (9) 29.2 (57) 26.7 (52) 8.2 (16) 20.0 (39) 9.7 (19) 1.5 (3)

Hong Kong citizens do not have sufficient ability to monitor the work of the representative machineries. 7.2 (14) 41.0 (80) 17.4 (34) 5.1 (10) 15.4 (30) 11.8 (23) 2.1 (4)

The ordinary citizens will only have concern about their own personal issues, and will seldom have concern about issues of no immediate concern to them. 15.8 (31) 42.9 (84) 24.0 (47) 1.0 (2) 9.7 (19) 4.6 (9) 2.0 (4)

Citizens in my own constituency are very concerned about the work of the representative machinery. 2.0 (4) 15.8 (31) 24.0 (47) 12.8 (25) 24.5 (48) 19.4 (38) 1.5 (3)

Elected vs Non-elected Members

Those representatives who are not elected may have a freer hand in their work in the representative machinery than those who are elected. 11.7 (23) 24.0 (47) 13.8 (27) 6.1 (12) 13.3 (26) 21.4 (42) 9.7 (19)

Those representatives who are not elected find it more difficult to have a solid mass base. 9.2 (18) 28.6 (56) 12.8 (25) 7.1 (14) 11.2 (22) 23.0 (45) 8.2 (16)

Only the elected representatives have to consider the issue of being monitored by citizens. 12.8 (25) 28.1 (55) 7.7 (15) 5.6 (11) 12.8 (25) 26.0 (51) 7.1 (14)

Relationship between Representatives and Officials

In the work of the representative machinery, the government officials are more influential than the representatives.

10.8 35.4 10.8 4.1 15.9 21.5 1.5
(21) (69) (21) (8) (31) (42) (3)

Most of those government officials that I have contact with are willing to accept opinions of the representatives.

1.0 36.6 27.8 5.2 17.5 10.3 1.5
(2) (71) (54) (10) (34) (20) (3)

If citizens have any complaints, they should approach the political representatives instead of the government officials.

2.1 20.5 17.4 13.3 16.9 24.1 5.6
(4) (40) (34) (26) (33) (47) (11)

Since the representatives are representatives of the public, the government officials should try their best to attend to the representatives' opinions.

25.5 56.1 9.7 3.6 3.6 1.5 0.0
(50) (110) (19) (7) (7) (3) (0)

From my personal experience, even though the representatives have already submitted their opinions to the government officials, the final decision rests upon the government officials.

19.4 40.3 18.9 5.1 6.1 9.7 0.5
(38) (79) (37) (10) (12) (19) (1)

Full-time vs Part-time Capacity

If one is not performing his/her duties in the representative machinery in a full-time capacity, the representative may find it difficult to effectively monitor the government.

11.2 25.0 16.8 6.1 11.7 24.5 4.6
(22) (49) (33) (12) (23) (48) (9)

* Degree of agreement to statements:

- 1 = Agree very much,
- 2 = Agree,
- 3 = Somewhat agree,
- 4 = No opinion,
- 5 = Somewhat disagree,
- 6 = Disagree,
- 7 = Disagree very much.

香港的「領袖－群眾」關係： 地區政治領袖的觀點

徐永德著

(中文摘要)

現代的代議式民主制度，是建基於群眾與政治代表間的有效聯繫，由此才能充份闡釋及反映公眾意願。香港是一個特殊的例子，政府的運作是由終身聘任的官僚所操控及壟斷，而人民的政治代表都沒有如西方民主國家般體現相稱的政治權力。總而言之，香港的政治領袖是由官僚及一些正在冒起的政治代表所組成的。

是項調查研究訪問了香港的市政局及區議會議員對「領袖與群眾之關係」的觀點。調查發現被訪者大多對香港市民的政治能力持有負面的評價，他們亦較傾向持有「精英主義」的價值取向。另一方面，他們在面對政府官員的政治無能感，亦足以反映本港官僚行政主導的現實。此外，在有關問題上，民選與非民選的政治領袖之間亦存有明顯的分歧。但總的來說，被訪的政治領袖均能與其群眾維持頗高程度的接觸，其中又以年紀較輕、有政治團體支持的，及有意在一九九一年各級選舉中參選的政治領袖，在這方面有較優勝的表現。

文章最後提出了幾項值得作進一步探討的問題：若香港要建立代議或民主制度，則本港的政治領袖必須充實甚或調整其政治取向，尤其在對「領袖與群眾關係」的觀點方面。至於市民大眾方面，亦須充實其政治效能。然而，代議政制發展所帶來的可能效果——對公務員士氣的打擊，必須加以關注。同時，發展中的政黨在促進領袖與群眾之連繫，亦需扮演重要的角色。最後，政府架構方面亦需作出相應的調整，始能為代議政制中的主要原素——領袖與群眾之有效關係——提供鞏固的基礎。