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衰退的公民媒體：

澳門的網路媒體對公民行動的再現與影響

Declining Civil Media:
The online media's representations and impacts on civic activism in Macau

研究生：甄小島　Student: Ian Sio Tou

指導教授：劉昌德　Advisor: Prof. Liu Chang-De

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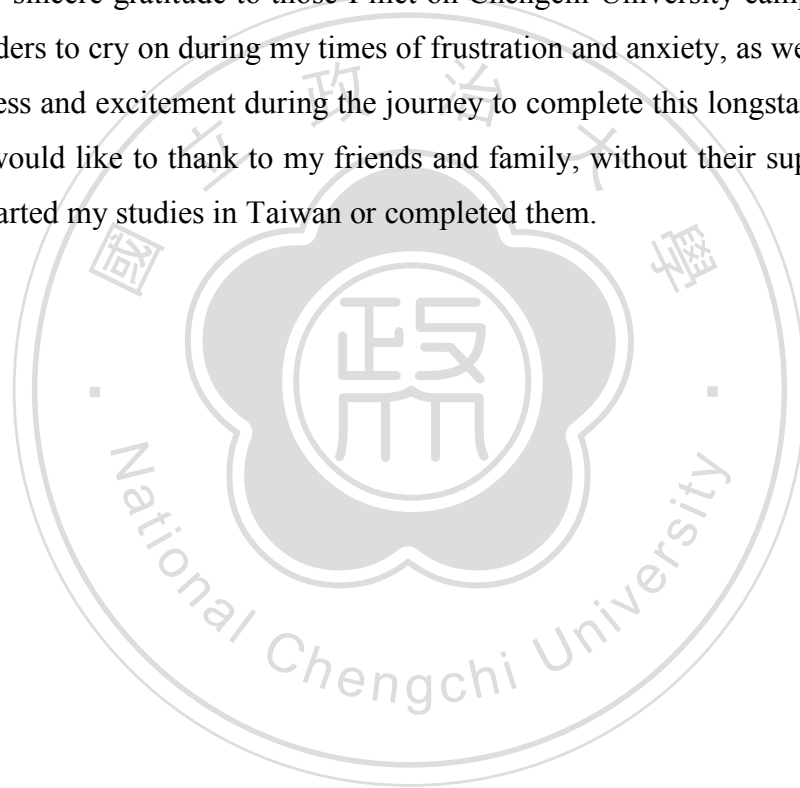International Communication Studies

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Abstract

This study examines how different viewpoints, political preferences in which can be simply considered as pro-establishment and pro-democracy, of online media in Macau affect social movements, particularly civic activism against the government in the city. Posts from four online media in Macau, how they represent significant social issues and the related civic activism that occurred in 2014, 2016 and 2017 are analysed. Moreover, this paper explored the attitude of key people of the online media outlets towards social movements and civil society, as well as main players of those campaigns through in-depth interviews. The findings of this research reveal that online media in Macau can be roughly classified as two main camps – pro-democracy and pro-establishment and they have been becoming more diversified, regardless of the role they play or the contents they released, as well as their starkly opposite attitudes towards civic activism in the city. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the influence of the pro-establishment camp seems to be growing while the latter seems to be declining due to the skyrocketing economy due to the booming gaming industry so that many public resources have been allocated to pro-establishment groups to run their online media. Interviewed members of two media camps stated that it is difficult for online media to mobilise people to become involved in any massive actions opposing the government, while interviewed activists also regard online media as not being influential in building local civil society.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It is believed that the massive protest on 25th May 2014 not only shocked Macau government with its huge number of the protestors but also awakened the government and the whole society to think about how and why it occurred and was supported by many people. This largest protest after Macau returned to mainland China in 1999, in which the organiser claimed that over 20,000 participants sat in front in the Legislative Assembly (AL), expressed their outrage at a government-drafted bill regulating the welfare and benefits for retired high-ranking officials including the chief executive. However, according to the police authority, there were just about 7,000 people took part in the rally.

Apart from its social and political meaning, how this protest, or anti-perks bill protest as called by Macau media in general, had been reported in traditional media and online media as well as drawing the public's attention. Such a massive social campaign not only impressed the general public with its numbers and its appeals but also how the local media interpreted and represented it. However, there has not yet been much research comparing the online media and traditional print media in reporting the incident. Nevertheless, a stark difference between both was seen when comparing the contents and forms of print media and online media

Taking this protest as a case in comparing the way the print media outlets and online media outlets reported it, I found that two online media outlets, namely *Macau Concealers(愛瞞日報)* and *All About Macau (論盡媒體)*, continuously updated their social network -Facebook page on the latest developments in the protest, while the former even had live-streamed the protest.

These two online media outlets kept updating netizens about the protest with text, videos and photos on their Facebook pages. However, most print media outlets just released news about the protest the next day.

According to the data provided by *All About Macau*, on the day the protest occurred, it had composed six posts and released 53 photos updates of the latest development of the march during the demonstration which lasted about eight hours. Those updates received 4,520 likes, 518 shares and 15 comments. Facebook functions not only allow people to express their views, ideas and comments but also, they are able

to express their emotions with emojis and interact with others. One of the comments stated that "If I don't take part in this protest I will regret it for my whole life"[1] and other response stated "Overthrow corrupted officials"[2]. Through the social network site, people not only showed their attitude towards the protest but it also allowed them to interact with others.

Within such new form in receiving and reacting to contents from the media, whether or not there it affects an on-going incident, whether such change can become a power to move people to express their opinions and even take online action and whether such a space can become a public sphere for people to discuss social issues and policies, all these questions need to be addressed.

On the same day, another online media *Macau Concealers* had also composed six posts and 20 photos to update people on the latest situation of the march. Those updates and photos received 19,355 likes, 1,206 comments and 994 shares. Besides the posts and photos, *Macau Concealers* also released two videos which lasted a total of about five minutes, which received 4,400 likes and 353 shares. Among the comments one stated that "We must continue taking action to show them our determination," [3]while another stated that "Today's incident strongly shows us that sheep-like people produce the wolf-alike government"[4].

However, a total of eight articles were published the day after the protest by eight local Chinese language newspapers including two opinion articles. Of the eight print media outlets only newspapers – *Macao Daily News*(*澳門日報*), *Seng Pou* (*星報*) and *Cheng Pou* (*正報*) put the protest as their front page headline while the three other newspapers –*Vakio Daily*(*華僑報*), *Shimin Daily*(*市民報*) and *Taichung Daily* (*大眾報*) put three lawmakers calling for a review of the bill as their front page story while *Sanvaou Daily* (*新華澳報*) and *Exmoo News* (*力報*) published opinion articles about

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1. Source : https://www.facebook.com/allaboutmacau/posts/661541847244323. Also, see screenshot NO.1 on Appendix A.

2. Source : https://www.facebook.com/allaboutmacau/posts/661541847244323. Also, see screenshot NO.2 on Appendix A.

3. Source ： https://www.facebook.com/macauconcealers/photos/a.538666702869102. 1073741826.153478958054547/655275611208210/?type=3&theater. Also, see screen shot NO.3 on Appendix A.

4. Source ： https://www.facebook.com/macauconcealers/photos/a.538666702869102. 1073741826.153478958054547/655275611208210/?type=3&theater. Also, see screen shot NO.4 on Appendix A.

the protest.

When just simply comparing the quantity and form of the contents of the protest that online and print media published, there were very obvious differences found. When such a stark variance is just directly clashing with the print media outlets, it is necessary to carry an in-depth study on the emergence of the online media and their impact on the traditional media and the media ecology, as well as to society.

Liu and Lou (2010) mentioned that the eight government-subsidised Chinese language newspapers have not fully utilised their role of supervising the government. They urged that with the diversified ways of using the Internet the city's netizens have become empowered to make dialogue and take part in actions (Liu & Lou, 2010). While another scholar said that the most representative online alternative media in Macau are *Macau Concealers* and *All About Macau Media* (Su, 2017) and these two online media are the research targets of this study.

However, regarding such a massive protest, some online media including *True. Love Macao (真・愛澳門)*, which is also research target of this paper did not report anything. Even from May 7 to July 10 there was no news or shares about this incident[5].

With using the case of action against the perks bill, we can find how different the traditional print media and online media work regarding the form and content when reporting the incident. However, there are different online media outlets, which have different viewpoints from *Macau Concealers* and *All About Macau*, that seem to lean towards being pro-establishment and establishment. Now I take a case that occurred late in 2017 about a directly-elected lawmaker Sou Ka Hou （蘇嘉豪） facing the possible disqualification from his post to show that online media had a different standpoint when dealing with the incident and what comments were left on their Facebook page. The issue of disqualifying a lawmaker was one visible consequence of the protest against the government's donation to Jinan University in 2015. Sou was one of the key leaders of the anti-Jinan donation campaign and he was elected in 2017's legislative election. At the time of writing this thesis, he was suspended from his position in the Legislature because of the charge of the aggravate disobedience since he was accused of disobeying orders issued by the police authority in the protest against the donation decision. Sou resumed his duty in July 2018.

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5. Source：https://www.facebook.com/pg/true.lovemacao/posts/?ref=page_internal.
Also, see screenshot NO.5a,5b & 5c on Appendix A.

On 13 November 2017, *True. Love Macao* released videos and an opinion article titled "lawmaker violates law must be punished like an ordinary person" and two comments stated, "[He] deserves it".[6] The video titled "Use 2.5 minutes to understand why 'lawmaker who violates the law must be punished like an ordinary person'". Furthermore, the opinion article has been published twice. [7]Meanwhile, another online media *UTV（澳門網絡媒體）*, which is also a target research media for this paper just shared a post from *Macau Cable TV* about Sou and there was no follow-up information about the ongoing case[8]. A comment left under the post was "[He] deserves it".[9] However, *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers* paid continuous attention to the development of the case. Further elaboration about the differences that the four online media made while reporting this case will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

The emergence of online media is usually expected to improve the "public sphere" and expand the way for people to voice their opinions on public issues. With the rise of online media which have a starkly different standpoint and whether they will become forces to propel local civil society to develop healthily, and provide the general public with more channels to supervise the government in a more transparent way or the opposite, should be addressed in this paper.

However, as observed it was seen that there has been very little academic research about the impact of online media on Macau's civil society. Thus, in this paper, I am going to investigate whether the city's online media has a role in promoting people to take part in massive social campaigns or movements and propel the development of civil society for the benefit of the local society. In this thesis, I shall focus on some of them including the four online media outlets mentioned above to see how they develop, their limitations, how their news reports or the information they share, is distinguished from each other, as well as looking into the association between their news reports and significant social issues and the related social campaigns, which mainly occurred between 2014 and 2017, namely the anti-perks bill and anti-Jinan University donation.

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6. Source: https://www.facebook.com/pg/true.lovemacao/posts/?ref=page_internal. Also, see screenshot NO.6 on Appendix A.
7. Source: https://www.facebook.com/true.lovemacao/videos/vb.756251414437439/1619605791435326/?type=2&theater. Also, seescreenshot NO.7 on Appendix A.
8. Source: https://www.facebook.com/true.lovemacao/videos/vb.756251414437439/1619605791435326/?type=2&theater. Also, seen screenshot NO.8 on Appendix A.
9. Source: https://zh-tw.facebook.com/pg/utvmacau/posts/?ref=page_internal. Also, see screenshot NO.9 on Appendix A.

1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In an attempt to find out the answers to these questions, the first thing I needed to do in my thesis was to explore Macau society, its political system and economic situation.

1.2.1 MACAU'S SOCIETY, POLITICAL SYSTEM AND ECONOMY

Macau is a small city with a high-density population and currently there are 648,500 people living and working in the city of 30.5 square metres. Excluding non-local residents and non-local students working and studying in the city, there were 537,018 local residents in August 2016, up by 10 percent from 2011. Non-resident workers and non-local students living in Macau totalled 104,464 and 9,352 respectively, up by 67.7 percent and 89.2 percent respectively, together accounting for 17.5 percent of the total population. The official data also show that population of Chinese ethnicity totalled 575,585, accounting for 88.4 percent of the total population, down by 3.8 percentage points from 2011. Meanwhile, those of Portuguese ethnicity totalled 9,024, with its proportion in the total population rising by 0.5 percentage points from five years ago to 1.4 percent. Due to an increasing number of people coming to work, study or reside in Macau, the proportion of the population of non-Chinese ethnicity went up from 7.7 percent in 2011 to 11.6 percent in 2016, and the majority were Filipinos and Vietnamese, comprising 4.6 percent and 2.4 percent of the total population. The population of Chinese ethnicity totalled 577,107, taking up 88.7 percent of the total population, down by 3.7 percentage points from 2011. Those of Portuguese ethnicity totalled 11,715, with its proportion in the total population increasing by 0.3 percentage points to 1.8 percent. When reviewing the history of the development of Macau's population this city has a strong connection with mainland China. Regarding the composition of Macau population, Chinese ethnicity is the dominant group.

China resumed its rule over the Portuguese colony of Macau on December 20, 1999, after Portuguese sailors first claimed this "fishing village" as their home territory more than four centuries ago. Basically, the history of Macau is one of immigration and immigrants. Academics have different views on when people started to settle in Macau. Chang (2000) said officials and soldiers from Fujian and Zhejiang fled to Macau and from then people formally settled in Macau from the end of the Song Dynasty. However,

scholar Tan (1996) said that there was no historical evidence supporting the conclusion that there had been people formally settling down since a group of officials and soldiers of the Southern Song Dynasty moved in (Shi, 1996). Tan (1996) also said based on the current popular crucial viewpoints of Chinese and non-Chinese academic groups that Macau had been a port between 1535 and 1557 in the Ming Dynasty. Historian Huang (1987) said in his research Macau was leased to Portugal in 1564 (Huang, 1987). In their book: Analysis on Macao's New Immigrants from Mainland China, the authors Wong and Cheng said that people living on the island were the immigrants from the regions nearby or the result of internal migration (Wong & Cheng, 2005). Macau had experienced rise and falls in population growth since it became a port, when in 1640 its population reached 40,000, Macau's population reach a peak for the first time. Meanwhile, the introduction of production technology brought with the Portuguese was the instigator of Macau reaching its golden age. However, in 1743 the Qing Dynasty government further restricting Portuguese activities in Macau which resulted in the first-ever huge reduction in its population and the number decreased to 5,500 while about 3,500 were Portuguese traders. Macau had also been a transition hub for unskilled labourers from the mainland China trafficked to European and American countries during the Ming Dynasty.

The city even recorded its population as being more than a hundred thousand, amounting 193,175, in 1924 as many refugees from mainland China fled to Macau due to an uprising in Guangzhou (Chang, 2000). During the Second World War as Portugal declared its "neutral" status thus Macau became a shelter for refugees from mainland China and thus its population increased from 140,000 in 1938 to 400,000 in 1940, reaching another historical peak (Chang, 2000). Zhang (2003) said in his research that the number of refugees increased twice from 120,000 to 245,200 within three years from 1936.

During the 1960s and 1970s during the mainland's "Cultural Revolution" many mainlanders immigrated to Macau legally or illegally. Mainlanders continued to immigrate to Macau after China opened its doors (Chan, 1999). Simultaneously, a great number of overseas Chinese from Southeast Asian countries were forced to leave their homes vis-à-vis the unstable political situation while some of them chose to settle in Macau. Wong and Cheng (2005) said in their book that there were 55,000 overseas Chinese entering Macau in the first half of 1962. From 1960 to 1993, Macau's population recorded an increase of 226,000 while 122,800 of them were immigrants.

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After the mainland China government started its open-door policy in 1979 Macau recorded it's first-ever high number of so-call "new immigrants" from mainland China. Quoting Penny Chan's definition of "new immigrants" which referred to those mainlanders who entered Macau illegally or legally after 14 January 1979, following the former Chinese communist party leader Deng Xiaoping setting the train in motion for the transformation of China's economy when he announced a new "open door" policy in December 1978.

However, Wong and Cheng defined "new immigrant" as those "who migrated from China legally and had settled down in Macau less than 7 years" (Wong & Cheng, 2005, p.14). In their research about illegal immigration Shyi and Weng (2003) said between 1979 and 1981Macau's population increased a lot and many of them were illegal immigrants from Guangdong and other provinces of mainland China and there was the official record of their numbers. The arrivals of illegal immigrants from mainland China increased Macau population but failed to be shown in 1982's Population Census in which a population of only 241,729 was recorded since those people were hidden. Nevertheless, Macau government corrected the figure and replaced it with 295,300 (Wong & Cheng, 2005).

Much research stated that Macau is not only a city of immigrants but also an associational society. According to the latest official figures, there were 7,533 associations (shetuan, or non-governmental organisations, non-profitable organisations) registered in 2016 while in 1999 there were 1,730. Based on the total of the local population recorded in 2016, the ratio between the local population and the number of associations is about 140 associations per ten thousand people or an association for every 71 people. "Associations, comprising groups of like-minded citizens sanctioned, recognised and funded by the government, have long occupied a unique position within Macao's polity" (Lam & Scott, 2011). Lou (2013) said the ratio between the local population and associations which is calculated based on 2012's figures every 103 people have an association and such a ratio could compete with western countries which have a well-developed civil society. The scholar also said the roles of Macau associations was diversified and they have social and political functions and some of them have "quasi-government" and "quasi-party" roles.

The Macao Chamber of Commerce, the Macau Federation of Trade Unions (Gung Luen), the General Union of Neighbourhood Associations (Kai Fong) and the Women's General Association of Macau (Fu Luen), are regarded as the four most influential,

conservative and pro-Beijing government associations in the local community, have been in existence for decades and those associations were established to "serve as bastions of political and social stability and act as a bridge between the government and citizens and they have specific characteristics related to the role" (Lam & Scott, 2011, P.75). Such associations have high representation in a variety interests in the city and they have continued to "be embedded and important in the post-1999 political order although not to the same extent as they had been under the colonial system. Historically, they mediated between Portuguese political elites and the Chinese community and were an important voice in the Legislative Assembly with many of their leaders elected for the functional seats where they controlled the vote" (Lam & Scott, 2011, P.75).

In delineating local associations' history in political participation local lawmaker Ng Kuok Cheong said that from the mid-20th century although the reality that Macau-Portuguese polity was too far away for the local Chinese community or associations to reach but they had their own source for political participation, which was the result of the agnosticism between the Chinese communist party and Kuomintang. Thus, the local Chinese community which supported the Beijing government had been active in associational activities and being against local associations supported by the Kuomintang government in Taipei. In late 20th century, the pro-Beijing camp had started openly participating in local politics thus many pro-Beijing or leftist associations began registering (Ng, 2013).

The four associations have representatives in the city's important electoral committees and advisory councils such as the Chief Executive Election Committee. They also have representatives in Legislative Assembly, taking both directly and indirectly-elected seats. Those associations receive huge annual subsidies for welfare services and their operations. In Macau only eligible associations have the right to vote for the representatives in the Election Committee and indirectly-elected lawmakers. According to the latest official figure, 865 of those associations have right to vote for indirectly-elected lawmakers and take part in the election of the chief executive.In terms of the explanation of Keane's definition of civil society, non-governmental institutions play an important role. However, in his article, Lou also mentioned that Macau associations were facing many problems and challenges including low representation because of the reduction in members (Lou, 2013).

Although China resumed rule over Macau the city still keeps it social and political systems in accordance with the principle of "One Country, Two Systems". Macau retains its capitalist system, legislative assembly and supreme court while the chief executive is top official of the city. Under "One Country, Two Systems" Macau administrative hierarchical structure is composed of chief executive, secretariats, bureaus, departments and divisions. Lou (2013) stated Macau had changed its status of being a colony to "land under the governance of Portugal" since the promulgation of Macau Organisation Statute, in 1975.

Although Macau has a legislative assembly, not all lawmakers are elected directly. According to the official websites of the committee for the Legislative Assembly election, the city's top legislative body increased by 10 members from 1999, the 1st Legislative Assembly after the handover in which there were 23 members. The 33 legislators comprise 14 directly-elected, 12 indirectly-elected and seven appointed by the chief executive after the amendments to the current election regulation in 2012.

The website of the committee for the chief executive election states that currently there are only 400 permanent residents who have the right to vote for the city's top official and those were elected from eligible associations from various sectors including the labour, business and professional, as well as some lawmakers and local representatives of the National People's Congress (NPC). The first chief executive of the Macau Special, Administrative Region was elected by just 300 members of the Chief Executive Election Committee. According to the latest amendments, a total of 400 Macau residents have the right to vote for the chief executive now. In recent years, Macau people have continuously been appealing for universal suffrage in the chief executive and legislative elections.

Macau's economy has been experiencing ever rapid development since after it liberalised the gambling sector by issuing more licences in 2002 by increasing five more new licenses. The official data shows that the city's gaming sector has about 80 percent of the city's gaming revenue. in December 2017 the city's gross gaming revenue recorded 22,699 million patacas (estimated TWD 83,711.64 million), an increase of 17.9 percent year-on-year. The city's median wage is 15,000 patacas (estimated TWD 55,308).

According to the latest official figures, the city's GNI per capita recorded in 2015 was 520,004 patacas (US$64,725.41, estimated TWD 1,979,467.5) while it was just 282,295 patacas (US$35,137.54, estimated TWD 1,154,619,56) in 2008. According to

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the figure released by World Bank Macau's GNI per capita recorded at US$ 68,030 (estimated TWD 2,015,250.3) in 2017, ranking 10th among 216 countries or regions. Meanwhile, the price of properties in the private market has been continuously increasing and more and more local residents have difficulty purchasing a flat in the city.

1.2.2 MASS MEDIA AND ONLINE MEDIA IN MACAU

According to the Government Information Bureau (GCS), there are a total of 66 periodical publications registered in the bureau[10]. Over the past decade, not only the print media but also the online media in this city have developed quickly at unexpected rate. There is a great deal of existing literature proposing that the development of the Internet has a role in the social movement, as well as on civil society.

The existing literature proposed that Macau's mainstream media including the traditional print and digital media often employed a conservative reporting strategy to ignore, dilute or object to these social movements when they responded to these grassroots social movements in order to maintain the legitimacy of the ruling class (Tam, 2003, Liu and Lei, 2008).

In recent years Macau media have not only changed in quantity but also in their form of spreading information. The development of digital technologies resulted in various forms of media and meanwhile online media, which has sprung up around the world and such alternative media or independent media, have also appeared in Macau.

Macau launched its public telecoms service in 1977 and four years later it privatised it, according to a statement about the development progress of the city's communication and information technologies published on the official website of Macau Post and Telecommunications Bureau (CTT) - the city's regulator of telecom services. Macau has fully digitalised its phone service network in 1991, three years later after the launch of the city's mobile phone service or 2G service while the 3G mobile phone service was launched in 2007.

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10. According to GCS, there are 18 daily newspapers, 13 in Chinese, two in English and three in Portuguese, 20 weekly journals and 17 monthly journals while in 2001, there were only 46 in total. As mentioned in the government's 2008 Year Book that "although Macau was small its media industry was quite "prosperous" and over the past decade the number of a daily newspaper in the Chinese language has increased from nine to 13 nowadays, about 30 percent.

Meanwhile, two more telecom companies started in 2001 and terminated the monopoly of the city's telecom service - Companhia de Telecomunicações de Macau (CTM) – which had been existing for 31 years de facto although officially the company was given a 20-year monopoly.

The Internet service has been in Macau since 1995 and five years later the broadband Internet service came in to use and the high-speed fibre Internet service was started in 2010. According to the latest official figures from the DSEC, Internet subscribers were recorded at 397,000 and grew by 9.1 percent year-on-year in December 2017. The duration of the Internet usage was 108 million hours in December 2017 and went up by 14.7 percent year-on-year. Ten years ago, the number of Internet subscribers was just 128, 502 while the duration of the Internet usage was just 252, 912 in 2008.DESC data showed that in 2016 Macau Internet users aged 3 and above totalled 499,900, up by 6.2 percent year-on-year; the Internet penetration rate was 81.6 percent, up by four percent.

According to the 18th annual report about the Internet usage of Macau residents conducted by Macao Association for Internet Research (MAIR) showed that there were about 510,000 netizens, an increase of about 20,000 compared to 2016 (MAIR. 2018). WeChat, Facebook, YouTube and forums were the most popular social network sites (SNS).

It seems that there has not been much research about the development of the city's online media and there has been no official record of the exact number of online media. However, the development of the online media and their influence are undeniable and unignorable. As observed, there are a number of online media and one of them has even recorded over 100,000 likes and followers on its Facebook page.

With the search engine WiseNews using the keywords - Macau online media in Chinese characters – to search all Chinese language newspapers included in the engine from 2001 to 19 February 2018, the first time the term Macau online media appeared in a newspaper was on 12 December 2014. The newspaper is Chinese language newspaper in Hong Kong *Ming Pao Daily News*. Meanwhile, the first time the term appeared in a local newspaper was on 12 May, 2015, and then the newspaper was *Journal San Wa Ou*. On 29 December 2015, the term appeared for the first time on Taiwan's Yahoo webpage and on 17 December 2017, it was found in *Taiwan Apply Daily* for the first time. The term has been also found in other Chinese language

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newspapers in Hong Kong including *Apple Daily* and *Oriental Daily News* during the period.

The number of times the term "Macau online media" appeared on WiseNews was only 13 and in 2015 they appeared at the most five times while in 2017 it was four-times while in 2016 it was three times. It appeared in the *Hong Kong Apply Daily* at most five times, followed by *Ming Pao Daily News* with four times.

With the other popular search engine Google using the same keywords the results showed that there were a total of 30 searches by 23 February 2018, and the earliest time the term appeared was on 1 August 2014.

1.2.3   MASSIVE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS/CAMPAIGNS IN MACAU

There are several remarkable social movements or social campaigns recorded by the high number of protestors in Macau history, including 12.3 incident and the Mayday protest in 2007 which ended up with a shooting and one person hurt. As existing literature stated online media have interacted with mass social movements somehow over the past years as the rapid development of the social media grew.

－12.3 INCIDENT （12.3 事件／反殖民）

The 12.3 incident refers to a riot in Macau on 3 December 1966, when local residents protested against the then Portuguese Macau government for its delay in issuing permit for the construction of a private school in Taipa. Many researchers stated that it was inspired by the Cultural Revolution in the People's Republic of China. Red Guards took part in the protest which lasted for more than two months and the people of Zhuhai supported Macau residents and the government was forced to sign a confession statement after the People's Liberation Army surrounded Macau. The incident is often referred to as "12.3", with reference to the date of the riots in which eight people died, 212 people were injured and 66 people were arrested according to official figures. Lee argues in his research about the 12.3 incident that the seed of nationalism was planted in Macau and the mainland China government had been recognised and even obtained the ruling power somehow after the incident (Lee, 2001).

There have been various large protests with different aims organised since 1966 including an annual sit-in to mourn the victims of 4 June Tiananmen Square massacre

and calls for a reassessment of the incident since 1990 the year after the tragedy. Except for the 4 June sit-in, there is also the annual Mayday protest. Ho (2014) said that the annual Mayday protest which started in 2006 called for better protection for local employees, a ban on the importation of non-local employees and this was first Mayday protest organised by several unions and in which the grassroots have taken part since 2004 in which year the government called for the establishment of a harmonious society. Local pro-democracy political group New Macau Association (新澳門學社) often organises a protest on 20 December the day Macau was returned to the mainland in 1999 to demand a democratic political system.

－MAYDAY PROTEST AND SHOOTING （五一遊行及開槍事件 ）

In 2007 the annual Mayday protest finally ended when five shots were and one man shot in the neck while riding a scooter passing the area near the clashes between the protestors and police officers. The protest had drawn more than a thousand middle-aged local people appealing for better labour protection and an end to corruption in the former Portuguese enclave. Some also demanded the resignation of the then chief executive Ho Hau Wah (何厚鏵), Macau's Beijing-appointed leader.

－ 5.25 & 5.27 ANTI-PERKS BILL PROTESTS （反離補反特權）

On 25 May 2014 Macau experienced the largest social movement since its handover to the People's Republic of China, appealing to cancel a government-drafted bill regulating the retirement package for the incoming, current and outgoing chief executive and other principal officials. This contentious perks bill proposed granting lavish retirement packages to top officials. According to the local security forces, there were about 7,000 people taking part in the protest and assembled in the square in front of the Legislative Assembly. However, the organisers said around 20,000 people were there. After the massive protest, the government decided to withdraw the bill and up to now the government has not decided how to deal with the bill. Thousands of people sat in front of the Legislative Assembly on May 27 to force the government to withdraw the bill completely.

－ **5.15 Anti government's donation of 100 million yuan to Jinan University protest & Disqualification of lawmaker** （反利益輸送 崔世安下台及 DQ 議員）

Another significant event was a citizens' protest on 15 May 2016, opposing the Macau government and public entity Macau Foundation for donating a vast sum of money, 100 million yuan (estimated at TWD 480.4 million or 123 million patacas), to the mainland-based Jinan University, where Chief Executive Fernando Chui Sai On is one of the board members, suspicions of advantage transfers arose. This protest is generally known as anti-donation of 100 million to Jinan University. This protest caused directly-elected lawmaker Sou Ka Hou (蘇嘉豪) to be summoned to court on a charge of aggravate disobedience and that could have led to him losing his legislative seat. Sou resumed his post in July 2018. Macau Foundation's funding comes from the city's gaming tax and it always plays a significant role in supporting local associations' development with financial support. Over the past decade, the number of the city's association recorded quadrupled in number. However, the increasing number of associations does not seem to further propel Macau residents to take an active role in expressing their views on social issues, instead of being a part of the pro-establishment camp. Associations are the key component of civil society; however, the increasing number of the city's association seems to fail to play an active role in propelling Macau to civil society.

The four massive social actions, the two former ones occurred in the time before information technology was as prominent as nowadays while the situation had undergone swift changes when the latter two incidents occurred. Therefore, in this paper I will only focus on the latter incidents and their related civic activism and how they interact with online media.

1.3 RESEARCH PURPOSE AND THESIS STRUCTURE

Macau has been experiencing unbelievable changes over the past two decades, especially since 2004 when the monopoly of gaming industry was liberalised. While witnessing many significant changes, both good and bad, have imposed tremendous changes on the society and myself over the years. During the past decade I had been wandering the city as a confused reporter, trying to figure out my role, my position, and

how should someone like me record these changes with our privileged yet underrated role — privileged to report news as a kind of truth, and yet unable to persuade people the kind of truth we convey is the kind of truth that leads to reflection and a better society. Those changes and questions have haunted me and pushed me to re-position myself to deal with these changes and consider how to re-adjust the role the media, particularly news outlet should play.

It is with these questions in mind I embarked on my journey in Taiwan as a graduate student and coming up with this topic—something that is quintessential in our time to record the picture of Macau and to reconstruct the idea of "Macau People." When surfing social network sites, the term "Macau people" is often seen in netizens' comments. Such a term also prompts me to rethink who and what "Macau people" are. Within the writing process, I hope I can find what Macau society should be and what "Macau people" should do about it. I am an immigrant, not born in Macau and yet have been living in this city for more than two decades and it has become my hometown. Being a reporter, I want to know whether or not the city's online media will tend to be homogeneous or heterogeneous and how they develop and their attitude towards some social movements. Being "Macau people", I hope this thesis will give an answer to my question: what kind of society should Macau head towards becoming?

Macau is a small city and it has been always "neglected" in academic terms. Furthermore, there has not been a lot of English research about Macau, particularly about online media, social movements and civil society. I believe my thesis will fill this gap, as well as benefiting both people outside and in Macau to better understand this society.

For me, I believe the completion of this paper will be the biggest pleasure in my life, as a perfect full stop to my career of 10 years of being a reporter. Furthermore, I believe I will better understand the meaning of the term "Macau people" and better understand the latest situation of the city's civil society after finishing it, and I hope this thesis will at least inspire and give hope to "Macau people" who are confused and would like to search for an answer and let them know they are not alone. Last but not least, the thesis will be served as a caesura and the summary of my 10 years' as a reporter regardless of whether I will continue to be a journalist or not, this thesis will be a record of my thoughts, my pursuits, and my love for the city.

There will be five chapters in this thesis –introduction, literature review, research questions and methods, results and conclusion. In chapter 1, with the protest against

the perks bill, I outlined a rough contour of Macau's online media and traditional print media regarding the quantity and different forms of content. Meanwhile I also simply compared four online media' attitudes towards the protest when they reported it. In order to understand Macau's online media better and the situation of social movements without knowledge of its society, economy and political system thus a brief history of the three aspects are included in this chapter.

As this thesis is about the association between the online media and social movement, particularly those civic activists, thus a brief about some influential social movements including 12.3 incident and anti-perks bill protest are part of the chapter. Whether such association has an impact on the development of civil society in Macau is another main importance in this paper thus in chapter 2 I focus on the literature about online, social media and civil society, as well the association between the three aspects. Apart from them I also cover the specific characteristics of the online, social movements and civil society in Macau.

In chapter 3 I focus on research questions and method. There are two main research methods – discourse analysis and semi-constructed in-depth interviews – applied in this paper. Considering the association between the online media with different standpoints and social movements is what this paper is going to investigate thus the question design will be divided into two parts. One part is about the basic information of each of the four media outlets while the questions in the second part are aimed at investigating the association between the three elements. Apart from them, I also outline the main characteristics of four online media which will be helpful to get a rough contour of online media in the city.

Chapter 4 and 5 are the discussion and conclusion.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

In this chapter, I will address the concepts of social movement and online media and what characteristics of their can be found in Macau. There is a lot of existing literature describing positive connection between civil society and social movements. The former can be viewed as "nutrition" for the latter while the latter also can be the force to compel the former. Therefore, before delineating the changes of concept of social movement I will first give a brief introduction of the concept of civil society in the following section.

2.1.1 CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

What is civil society? Is civil society important and why? There is no generally accepted definition. Scholars gave different definitions of this idea. One of the definitions of civil society by John Keane states, "civil society, as I used the term and still do so, is an ideal-typical category (an ideal type in the sense of Max Webber) that both describe and envisages a complex and dynamic ensemble of legally protected non-governmental institutions, that tend to be non-violent, self-organising, self-reflexive, and permanently in tension with each other and with the state institutions that 'frame', constrict and enable their activities" (Keane, 1988, P.6).

Regarding Keane's definition, civil society is non-violent, self-organising and reflexive, ensures legal of non-governmental organisation and always in tension with the state institutions and constrict their activities. While Seligman argued civil society is: "an arena where free, self-determining individuality sets forth its claims for the satisfaction of its wants and personal autonomy" (Seligman, 1992, p.5).

Some literature stated that civil society is one of three sectors while the other two are market and state. The trio are separate from each other but sometimes overlapping in the middle (Edwards, 2009).

When summarising the history of the concept, Edwards (2009) pointed out that in classic thought civil society and the state were seen as indistinguishable and both referred to as "a type of political association governing social conflict through the imposition of rules that restrained citizens from harming one another". Reflected in the

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concept of Aristotle's *polis, which* was an "association of associations" so that only those few individuals were qualified to rule and be ruled. In this sense, the state embodied the "civil" form of society while "civility" had been the requirements for a good citizenship.

However, the concept of civil society had experienced fundamental changes in response to the crisis in the ruling social order since the rise of the market economy[11] (Edwards, 2009). There have been three contrast schools of civil society, one considers civil society as a part of society which focuses on associational life, another one considers civil society as a kind of society which is characterised by positive norms and values and aims to meet a particular goal. The last one is to treat civil society as the public sphere.

The essence of civil society is collective action, negotiation and struggle. The concept of "public sphere" was formulated by German philosopher and sociologist Jürgen Habermas. Public sphere is composed of individuals who engage in rational debate and held in a space where the public may freely meet to discuss and articulate problems. (Chang, 2016).

When highlighting the importance of civil society, Ma said that generally speaking "a strong civil society alters the balance of power between the state and society, disciplines and monitors the state, redefines the rules of the political game along democratic lines, and acts as an intermediary between the state and society" (Ma, 2008, P.157). Scholar Li Fan proposed that a self-governing civil society is a base for the development of democracy (Hao, 2013). A democratic society, although much research proved it is not the perfect one, is still the best so far. In the sense of Li, civil society seems to be the means of promoting a democratic society.

According to Chang (2016), the characteristic of civil society is related to public interests, non-governmental, associational and self-organised. He also said the key components of civil society, namely the arena, outside of the family, the government,

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11. In that time the relations between the civil society and the state went in opposite directions and the thinkers of Enlightenment consider such society as a "defence against unwarranted intrusions by the state on the newly realised individual rights and freedom through the medium of voluntary associations." (Edwards, 2009, p.7). A new school, which viewed civil society as a self-regulated universe of associations committing to the same ideals that needed and maintaining role to resist the state, appeared. Later scholars in the USA including John Dewey and Hannah Arendt took Gramsci's idea about civil society as "an arena for contestation and developed around them a theory of the 'public sphere' as an essential component of democracy" (Edwards, 2009, p.9).

and the market; the arena of uncoerced collective actions around shared interests, purposes and values; composed of the totality of many voluntary social relationships, civic and social organisations, and institutions.

The concept of civil society varied. Following previous studies described in this section I consider civil society connecting with public sphere and voluntary, interest-shared collective actions when I discuss it. These two should be considered key components of civil society. Nevertheless, collective actions in the sense of many scholars' view equal social movements.

Dylan Taylor said that "social movements will be important players in the fight to overcome the crisis of democracy" (Taylor, 2017, p.1) and they challenge established power. He cited Marx and Engels that social movements are seen to be "historical movements" and drivers of social change. Thus "social movements are seen to be organised groups seeking to influence the "movement of history" (p.2).

While reviewing previous studies about the social movement, this concept has been given various definitions and it has been defined or conceptualised with different perspectives over past decades. Diani said that "a social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organisations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity" (Diani,1992, p.13). Diani (1992) listed various scholars and theories or approaches adopt for the studies about social movement including collective behaviour perceptive (Tuner and Killian), resource mobilisation theory (Zala & McCarthy), the political process perceptive (Tilly) and 'New Social Movements" (Touraine, Melucci). He further pointed out the first three have a big impact on the USA while the fourth has been mainly related to European scholars. However, according to Gamson and Wolfsfeld, social movement means "sustained and self-conscious challenge to authority or culture colds by field of players-organisations and advocacy networks-some of whom employ extra-institutional means of influence" (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993, p.115). They further stated that they varied in many ways and they often have a distinctive evolving culture that perhaps, in various ways, conflicts with media and mainstream political culture.

Fang said so-called social movement means that a group of people, who share one collective identity and solidarity, carry out collective and continuous actions to pursue or resist a specific social change. In quoting Aberle the author also said that as social movement was the means for social change thus there are four kinds of social

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movement namely alternative movements, reformative movements, redemptive movements and transformative movements (Fang, 2013).

Lee (2002) said a new trend of social movement appeared in the 1970s and 80s in western society, which was considered as "new social movement". She listed some difference between the social movements and "new social movements". According to Lee, the appearance of the "new social movement" accompanied with "post-industrial society" which emphasises fighting for a personal lifestyle and how to uphold the autonomy of embodying ones' values, as well as fighting against cultural suppression.

In the previous literature studies, social movements have been regarded as force by the collective, unconstitutional action from people of a shared identity to challenge the established power or authority, even conflict with media and the mainstream political culture and seeking for social change (Taylor, 2017, Fang, 2013, Gamson & Wolfsele, 1993). Thus, social movements or new social movements are regarded as the possible power to make social change and even promoting a more just society and civil society but engaged in a political or cultural conflict which is on the basis of a shared collective identity (Lee, 2002, Diani, 1992).

After giving a brief introduction to the changes in the concepts of civil society and social movement, in the following section I shall concentrate on civil society and social movements in Macau and investigate what the main characteristics of both have.

2.1.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF MACAU CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS/CAMPAIGNS

In a book edited by Hao titled "*Civil society*: Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan",[12] all authors who focus on Macau society admit the existence of civil society in the city (Hao, 2013). One of the authors Ho wrote: "Macau has a high ratio between the population and associations, with many varied types of non-governmental organisations but there has been a contradictory phenomenon that the degree of mature of its civil society is quite low" (Hao,2013, P125).

In the sense of viewing civil society is one of three sectors while the other two are market and state, Hao (2013) used the four dimensions – structure, values, environment

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12. The book comprises a collection of articles about the civil society in the four places which has been published at various times.

and impact – which are often used to measure the degree of civil society[13] to compare with Macau's situation. He pointed out that there was no data about the four dimensions thus it was hard to tell the real situation in Macau, but he believed that it was better than the mainland but less developed than Hong Kong and Taiwan. Hao also said that there are also some sub-indicators under the four dimensions. Regarding the structure indicator, it is mainly related to associational participation. The environment indicator involves various aspects including political context, basic freedoms and rights, socio-economic, socio-cultural and legal context. Values refer to a set of beliefs including democracy, transparency, tolerance and environmental sustainability. The impact dimension includes various sub-indicators including people's influencing power on public policies and the empowerment of people. The scholar pointed out although the number of associations in the city reached 5,000 and the ratio between the residents and number was high, locals did not seem keen in taking part in association activities.[14] The city's associations were not diversified and those groups placed an emphasis on criticising politics and those advocating it were few. Regarding the environment dimension, most legislators were not directly elected by citizens and division of powers were not ideal. The value dimension and its sub-indicator have shown that there had been problems affecting democracy, tolerance gender equality and transparency. Meanwhile, regarding the aspect residents' influence on public policy he said that civil society has not much power to impact them.

Ho (Hao, 2013) affirmed Hao's views and pointed out that civil society in Macau is not mature although Macau have various associations and every 10,000 residents have about 100 associations. The ratio was higher than France, the USA and Japan the ratio in the three countries were 11.5 /10000, 5.18/10000 and 9.72/10000, respectively. Ho also said that many local associations received government subsidies and failed to supervise the government which is what non-government organisations do in western

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13. According to CIVICUS, the structure of civil society, the external environment in which civil society exists and functions, the values practised and promoted in the civil society arena and the impact of activities pursued by civil society players (CIVICUS, n.d).
14. A survey carried out in 2008 showed that 82 to 84 percent of residents had not taken part in any social, religious or political activities. Furthermore, due to the overlapping of leaders and members thus the actual number of residents taking part in the associations was low (Hao, 2013).

civil society. "Traditional" associations [15] have important social and governing functions as they have been considered the main power of "love country, love Macau" camp. Thus, those associations have strong a say on public issues. Ho said that during the process of the legislation of national security those traditional associations had the role of supporting the regulation of Article 23 of the Macau Basic Law on national security and undermined the opposition. The scholar further pointed out those associations still have an important role in Macau's civil society and implied that the homogeneity of such associations seemed to make more "pro-establishment" voices heard. One function of civil society is to give residents the ability to express their views on political issues. However, the case of Article 23 showed that opposition voices were suppressed. In the conclusion, Ho pointed out the development of civil society in Macau was still "uncertain".

In the sense of Hao and Ho's views, associations in Macau failed to exercise the functions to facilitate the development of civil society. Hao (2013) also said that traditional associations have gradually lost their autonomy and are becoming "government organised non-profit organisations" and that weakened their role in civil society.

Tsoi (2014) said that in recent years the participators of protests in the city have become diversified. The main participators of the mass movements that occurred in the early period after the handover were grassroots unemployed workers and local parents who fought for the right of abode for their adult children who were living in the mainland. On one side, the size and the number of the social movements have increased, as well as having increasing numbers of participators. The number of participators taking part in the movements basically reached 1,000 and the largest number 3,000. From the frequency and the number of participators implied that more residents preferred making their grievances known by joining social movements. The existing literature about the massive actions in Macau has not given clear distinctions among the concepts such as social movements, civic activism and protests. Thus, this study includes relevant papers in which those concepts are found.

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15. Traditional association usually refer to the four old and influential association including Macau General Union of Neighbour Associations (commonly known as Kai Fong), Macao Federation of Trade Unions (commonly known as Gung Luen), Macau Chambers of Commerce (ACM) and Macau Women's General Association (Fu Luen).

Moreover, since 2007 young people have been the main group involved in the social movements and in recent years the city's professionals such as teachers, social workers, doctors, public servants and reporters have become a part of the protests (Tsoi, 2014). The author also pointed out that the groups initiating those movements varied, which from the newly-emerged unions and democratic-livelihood associations to different kinds of associations, included the newly-established youth groups and community associations. Comparing those with the mass movements before the return of Macau to mainland China or the early in the period just after the handover, Tsoi further elaborated the theme of the protests in 2009 to 2013 as being diversified and involved various topics such as political system development, culture, community environment, press freedom, law and regulations and animal protection. Based on Tsoi's view, some social movements have seemed to lean towards being issue-orientated in recent years and there has been a "shadow" of "new social movement". Lee (2002) elaborated that new social movement was issue-orientated and the issues involved were universal. According to Lee, all new social movements have the basic belief, which is to respect individual freedom and oppose unjust social manipulation and central control and civil society is the avenue for new social movements. Those movements aim at changing cultural values rather than transforming politics or economic systems and they cover various themes such as environmental protection, women's rights and gay rights. Compared to new social movements, Lee said that those movements occurring in industrial societies were mainly concerned about politics and economics and such social movements were "class orientated" and fought for material gain from the vested interest as the social conflict in an industrial society.

However, Leung (2012) said that the main players of social movements in society were still grassroots people and marginalised groups and the main issues for concern in those movements were related to livelihood such as anti-illegal workers, reducing the number of non-local employees and building public housing. He further said that protests involving labour gripes still appear frequently over recent years due to the working class not benefiting from the government policies aimed at promoting resident's livelihoods quality.

Regarding the themes, main players and organisers involving social movements over recent years, Tsoi and Leung raised slightly different views. Tsoi (2014) pointed out the three elements tended to diversify and seem to have a trend of "new social

movement" which have been emphasising the fight for personal lifestyles and how to uphold the autonomy of embodying ones' values (Lee, 2002). However, Leung (2012) said the main players and organisers are still mainly related to workers and the themes involved in mass actions were still uniform. In fact, when observing the social movements that have occurred over the past decades, regardless of their themes, the players and organisers have tended to be more diversified and have leanings towards the "new social movement". However, in criticism, protesting against or demanding the government or the authority to make changes were the still mainstream voices heard in those movements. Therefore, the tendency of the new social movement should not be the main concern in this chapter.

Simultaneously, social movements which are initiated through Internet groups seems to be popular, according to Tsoi. Echoed by Rolfed who said that nowadays in the Digital Era, access to and familiarity with technology have become an important resource for a successful movement (Rolfe, 2005). Leung (2012) pointed out that although social movements have been increased there has been no connection between the protest organisers, which were newly-emerged groups. Those movements were fragmented and separately organised by individual groups.

In reviewing civil society in Macau various scholars including Hao and Ho (Hao,2013) see that local associations have not fully developed their role when associational life has been the focus of the civil society since those associations have overlapped many of their key leaders and particularly the traditional associations prefer to be with the government thus they have played a role in undermining opposite opinions. Thus, the scholars pointed out that civil society in Macau is less developed compared to Hong Kong and Taiwan while it is better than the mainland but its development was still uncertain. However, Tsoi (2014) pointed out that there has been a new force in social movements in city which came from the newly-established associations including youth group and those groups have diverse issues on which they are concerned. In the sense of Tsoi's view, new associations in Macau tended to diversify and that has possibly become new power to propel civil society in the city.

Indeed, it is a fact in Macau that social movements, which last for a long period of time fighting for the same goal, have not often been seen in local society. However, some civic activism such as protests have been seen often over the last few years. Thus, in this study, civic activism is the research target.

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2.2 THE INTERACTION BETWEEN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND ONLINE MEDIA

There has been a lot of research investigating the correlation between social movements and online media. Before getting into it I shall first give a general idea about online media. Then I shall focus on its effects on social movements in general in the context of Macau society in the following part.

2.2.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF ONLINE MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA

一 ONLINE MEDIA

What are online media, Kayany & Yelsma (2000, p.215) considered online media as the "new agents of information and entertainment, similar to traditional media such as television, radio and print". The two researchers also said there has been aggregative attention to the impact the new communication technologies have on society and social institutions while the popularity of the Internet and World Wide Web (WWW) have been continuously increasing. As result, the computers connecting to the global telecommunication network have become powerful tools of instantaneous communication around the world. Considering that since computer-mediated communication (CMC) has created new channels for interactive, two-way communication that rival telephone conversations in their capacity to sustain conferencing and asynchronous communication thus the two scholars proposed that CMC should also be considered online media. Online media should be included in the public service mission because online media could be considered a "relevant mass media outlet for a growing number of internet users who inform themselves about the latest news by surfing news websites" (Trappel, 2008, p.313). They are a "new mass medium that has been established with distinct structural features regarding its institutionalisation, newsroom routines and journalistic approach" (Trappel, 2007a, p.123). Chang (2005) said that online media and public opinion formation in Korea where new technological developments that support online media are rapidly changing the nature of communications.

Trappel (2008) furthermore proposed that the fully digital mode of production and distribution was the biggest distinction between the online media and other mass media

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while other scholars raised the differences between both in which could be summarised as five features, namely digitality and ubiquity, immediacy, multimediality, interactivity and hypertexuality[16].

Meanwhile, Hess (2014) pointed out that online media have attained a considerable reach in many countries and they are still gaining popularity. According to Hess, online media are characterised by the three well-known characteristics, namely the bi-directional, multimedia-based and low entry barriers. The scholar elaborated the bidirectional which contrasts to unidirectional by allowing a dialogue between communication partners. The feature of multimedia-based in online media which contrast to print companies and broadcasters may be used to transfer all kinds of content while the low entry barrier referred to capital investment in contrast to printing or broadcasting which requires substantial investments such as the purchase of licences (Hess, 2014, P.4).

Lee (2016) gave a broader definition of online media. He proposed that they generally refer to a mediated communication tool based on Internet technology including various websites, online forums and communication Apps. It is undeniable that social media should be also included.

－SOCIAL MEDIA

In recent years, the central source for dispersion of news has been shifting from the "Internet as public sphere" to "social network sites as public sphere" (Liu & Weber, 2014). According to the definition provided by Kaplan and Haenlein, social media is regarded as a "web-based" as well as a "mobile-based" Internet application, which enables the "creation, access, and exchange of user generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Considering all of this, social networking sites (SNS) provide opportunities for users not only to interact with people within their immediate, first-order social network,

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16. According to Trappel (2008), digitality and ubiquity mean the universal availability of online media with constraints as to time and space. To online media, immediacy implies that information can be provided instantaneously while multimediality means the content provided by online media varies and it is an integration of text, pictures, graphs, animation, moving image and sound. Interactivity to online media refers both to the exchange of ideas between journalists and users and among users and hypertextuality refers to non-linear narrative structures of texts and users are allowed to give their own, personal analysis of texts.

but also with second- and third-degree connections (McLeod & Lee, 2012). This allows for the inclusion of a heterogeneous array of people into conversations facilitated by SNS (Lee, Choi, Kim, et al., 2014). Postings on Facebook, for instance, can bring unconnected users together into an extended discussion through a shared personal connection (Heatherly, Lee & Lu, 2016).

Unsurprisingly, Facebook is one of the most influential and widely-used social medias in the world[17]. Facebook is also one of most the most popular SNSs in Macau and 74 percent of netizens use it (MAIR, 2018). Moreover, what powerful social media platforms like Facebook are capable of nowadays has transcended beyond analytics and the spread of world news and personal updates. According to Itoga and Lin, the findings in their paper have discovered that Facebook has become a very "beneficial" and "important" medium for promoting events in Taiwan. (Itoga & Lin, 2013, p.1). Therefore, the fact that Facebook is not only used extensively throughout the world but also in Taiwan facilitates the decision to utilise it as the focus of this research.

Chang (2016) pointed out that with the increasing ubiquity of social media, citizens are no longer passive consumers of media content. In addition to autonomous exposures, they become active producers and disseminators of all sorts of content, including news and views. For many people, especially the young generation, social media serve some useful purpose.

Various authors (Chen, 2016, Chen, Chang & Huang, 2016) elaborated on the association between social movements and social media. Chen said that with the high frequency of the students using Facebook it was highly possible for them to take to the streets and participate in Sunflower student movement. She further said that there was a significant correlation between the motivation and the how long the students that used Facebook so the students took to the streets and joined the protest. Meanwhile, Chen, et al. said that their findings showed that there was an association between the habit and frequency of using social media and the active participation in political and public affairs.

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17. According to the numbers provided by the Statistics Portal as of the first quarter of 2018, Facebook had 2.19 billion monthly active users. In the third quarter of 2012, the number of active Facebook users had surpassed one billion, making it the first social network ever to do so. Active users are those which have logged in to Facebook during the last 30 days. Furthermore, as of the previous quarter the social network had 1.74 billion mobile MAU. The platform is also the most popular social network worldwide (Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of the first quarter, 2018).

Apparently, so far there has been no a unified definition of this concept but some specific characteristics of online media have been elaborated. However, one undeniable fact is that social media including Facebook play significant roles in online media. Based on the particular characteristic mentioned above I shall now turn my focus on the influences of social media on social movements, namely civic activism.

2.2.2 THE IMPACT OF ONLINE MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA ON SOCIAL MOVEMENT

In interpreting the relationship between the media and social movements, scholars Gamson & Wolfsfeld (1993) also pointed out that "movements are generally much more dependent on media than the reverse and this fundamental asymmetry implies that the greater power of the media system in the transaction between both" (p.119). They further pointed out that movements need the news media for three major purposes: mobilisation, validation, and scope enlargement. In other words, media help movements to convey the message to their constituency, to allow the movement to be watched by the whole world and help them to be relevant and make history. "If there is no media cover, they are a non-event. …movements depend on the media to 'generate public sympathy for their challenge'." (p.116). Although movements also provide "drama, conflict; and actions; colourful copy and photo opportunities to the media (pp.116-117). However, movement activists tend to consider mainstream media as not being independent and neutral players but as "agents and handmaidens of dominant groups whom they are challenging" (p.119). In other words, the correlation between the media and social movements is complicated and the impact of the former on the latter could be positive or even uncertain dependant on the media's interest.

Gamson & Wolfsfeld (1993) said that media systems vary both organisationally and ideologically and different media organisations have their own preference thus media's attitude towards social movements varied. The two authors said that some media organisations saw entertainment values as the main concern in their production of news. According to the authors, some consider journalistic values as being more dominant. Some target political and cultural elites, while others aim at a broader, popular audience. Some see news as a commodity that can attract an audience to that they can sell to advertisers, while others produce news to promote "a worldview, to

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further the interests of a political party, or as a public service for the citizenry" (p.112). In their sense of the two authors, media seem to have "flexibility" in making their choice on how to report incidents or events and they also have the power to influence the latter while the political influence has its role.

Regarding the positive effects, the case of Korea's online media indicated that the avenue to be opened by the online media is expected to be a path that leads to a more vibrant form of citizen participatory democracy as the limits of existing journalism are overcome (Hwang & Yang, 2003, p.111). In their paper, the term of online media used referred to independent online journalism. Despite their capacity to efficiently mass-produce and transmit messages, the existing mass media have been criticised on their apparent inability to foster public discussions by espousing divergent social opinions. (Chang, 2005). Web 2.0, known for its interactive platform, includes blogs and social network sites like Facebook and Twitter. Boyd and Ellison (2007) defined social network sites (SNS) as an online service for users to create a public or semi-public profile, build a network with other users with whom they share a common link, and navigate other users' profiles and networks (Harlow, 2011).

2.2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF ONLINE MEDIA IN MACAU AND THEIR ROLE

There has not been much academic research about online media in Macau. As observed, online media in Macau are similar to what Kayany and Yelsma proposed that the online media are considered the "new agents of information and entertainment, similar to traditional media such as television, radio and print" and meanwhile the computer-mediated communication (CMC) should be included too.

If based on the definition of the two scholars, online media in Macau include online journalism in which traditional print outlets, radio and TV set up websites to provide immediate information or news to their readers. Apart from, online media in the city it also includes media outlets, which mainly depend on the Internet and social network sites as their main platform, to spread their information including news or opinion articles or entertaining contents. If based on the broader concept defined by Lee (Lee, 2016), online media in Macau should also include communication Apps and Internet forums and social network sites.

Regarding the content which the online media in Macau disseminate, it may be categorised into online media with emphasis on news and non-news online media. Su (2017) defined two online media –*Macau Concealers（愛瞞日報）* and *All About Macau （論盡媒體）* as online alternative media and both are considered the first batch of such kind of media to start in Macau, bringing multiple innovative reforms to local media practice (Su, 2017). In other words, based on the view of Su, online media in Macau can be divided by their nature and they encompass those so-called alternatives and those that can be regarded as mainstream. Kuang (2015) said that the term "alternative media" appeared in about 1960 and in the early stages they were called as "radical journalism".

"Alternative media" (AA) often refer to those media acting as "marginal and alternative" to those media considered mainstream (MM) (Kuang, 2015, Yung & Leung, 2014). Alternative media has always been considered one of the most effective tools for the pursuit of democracy and the struggle for freedom (Atton,2002).

Kuang (2015) also pointed out that the names and meanings of alternative media have varied in various historical periods in different countries thus alternative media sometimes were called as "radical media", grassroots media", and "independent media". Such media have not only provided the platform for radical-alternative views but also placing an emphasis on inviting the audience or general public to create, produce and disseminate to promote mass social participation. Such media aim to create an alternative public sphere thus some people directly called radical media "activist media". However, quoting scholar Waltz, Kuang "alternative media" just have the name of "alternative" but still convey the value of the mainstream. "Activist media" encourage the audience to take actual action and take part in the social transformation.

Although *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers* both have been considered online alternative media in Su's article, they still have differences to a certain degree according to Kuang's view about alternative media. The former should be considered close to alternative media while the latter is closer to "activist media". However, there are also some online media close to the mainstream values. Generally speaking, online media in Macau include alternative, activist media and those close to mainstream values but they vary in the form of information. Nevertheless, based on a general idea of the content each media released it can be presumed that Macau's online media can be

divided into anti-establishment or democratic camps. Meanwhile, compared to other SNSs, Facebook is still the main platform for local online media.

In Macau, there has not been much study on the relationship between the online media and social movements. When discussing online media's positive influences on social movement, Chou (2016) said that non-pro-establishment media *Macau Concealers* and *All About Macau*, are both considered online alternative media (Su, 2017), which can break the hegemony of 'harmonic news' of the city's mainstream media by using the Internet as their platform. (Chou, 2016). Leung (2012) the emergence and expansion of new media such as YouTube, Blog, Wechat, forums, websites, phone-in political programmes have allowed "invisible" residents to take part in the discussions about public affairs. He pointed out that the rapid change in society has broken the original balance between the interests and the explosion of the dynamic that has created opportunities for the development and space for civil society in Macau.

Tsoi (2014) said that each social movement addresses issues and irregularity. Since social movements have been developing as a "regular" method of expressing participators' concerns. Such a trend does not only appear in western societies but also in Macau after the handover. an "institutionalised" social movement can ease social conflict and be a path to strengthen civil society. He also said that various appeals including labour protection, anti-corruption and animal rights found in an individual social movement revealed diversified values embedded in civil society, as well as promoting tolerance.

In sense of those authors' views, social movements and media, particularly independent media and alternative media, seem to have the positive effect on social movements and the development of civil society (Chou, 2016, Tsoi, 2014, Leung ,2012).

Since there been also little research about the negative impact of online media on social movements in Macau and since there are many similarities between online media and traditional print newspaper and broadcasting, how media including newspapers and TV play their roles in affecting civil society and social movements will be included in this part. Now I shall take a case about local government TV station TDM[18] to see how the social activists are portrayed in its news bulletins.

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18. TDM is the only government fully funded broadcaster and it is the most popular TV station in Macau.

Lei and Liu (2008) pointed out that **TDM** had been a subdued political power and that prevented the general public from taking part in political participation any further. They also said that standpoint of **TDM**'s news reports in past years were found to be anti-democracy and their news failed to embody diverse political views and different interests (Lei & Liu, 2008) In analysing news reports about the incident of the Mayday shooting the two authors pointed out that **TDM** had delineated the protestors as "troublemakers", destroying social harmony and public interest, focusing on protestors' mistakes and marginalised the dissent for covering the causes of the movement. They also said that the publicity for the station had been under the constraint of a pro-consortium government and pro-establishment groups and it has kept its political role from the colonial period to the handover even being a new form of power to suppress dissent. Under such a structure, **TDM** will cause many difficulties to the construction of civil society in the city.

The **TDM** study case showed that media can be strongly affected by politics and the local government, particularly the media institutions that receive full funding from the government.

Lam (Hao, 2013) pointed out that media, namely the print media help local people to form what Macau people should think. She said that the term "Macau people" was first time seen in a Chinese language newspaper in 1833 and the vague term Macau people was defined as a group of people who were making a living quietly in places between China and Portugal and it has been the reason as to why Macau people had been apathetic about politics. During 1966's 12.3 incident newspapers had temporarily defined Macau as a colony under the suppression of Portugal. In an attempt to encourage the Chinese to resist the Portuguese at that time the term "Macau people" was given the meaning of "patriotic, anti-colonialism and imperialism". However, after the incident, Macau people became a been vague term again and was re-considered to be people who just made a living in Macau quietly and as such was kept until before and after the handover. Macau people in Lam's resereach have been shaped as "love country love Macau" and hate having conflict and considerate. Thus, Macau people are silent and they will not fight injustice because they love harmony.

The newly emerged and expanding media including Internet-based platforms such as YouTube, Blog, forum, websites and phone-ins encourage people to think about "what Macau people" are and build a "collective identity" （Leung, 2012）.

Leung (2012) said that Macau society, politics and the economy have changed rapidly and those have inspired more local people to think about "what Macau is", "how Macau is positioned", "how Macau decides its way". Since the communication channels have been expanded that could have changed the attitude of Macau people from "don't care" to "daring to express their views" and meanwhile a relatively equal public discussion space has been created. Herein the self-identification of the Macau people and the subjectivity of Macau have grown. In quoting local culture critic Pan Lei, Leung said nowadays Macau has learnt how to sing "I can still say I am myself". The rise of identities and local consciousness has promoted people's reflection on the current development of Macau. At the same time, it also encouraged the emergence of non-mainstream associations. Meanwhile, Tsoi (2014) said that the various sources of the participators and appeals from different groups has been seen in recent years and can be considered as an embodiment of "collective identity". Collective identity emphasises "invisible connection" resulting in values and emotions of people, connecting the collective groups' perception, affection and tendency of the action.

Lam (Hao, 2013) also said that Chinese language media has the role of constructing an imagined community of "Macau People" and the process of constructing the identity of Macau people before or after the handover, Macau people have been defined as "contributing to even sacrificing" for the country and Macau and they have considered as having special citizen characteristics such as "agreeing with negotiation, are conservative about radical social actions such as protests". However, Lam concluded that the shooting during the Mayday protest in 2007 Chinese language print media seemed on one side promoted the civil society establishment but on the other hand they undermined the function of Macau civil citizens in building civil society.

Based on the existing literature and observations, in term of the contents released by the city's online media, some of them can be considered "alternative online media" or even "activist online media". Such kinds of online media are usually considered anti-establishment or democratic media camp. The opposite of alternative is non-alternative or close to mainstream values and those online can be seen as the pro-establishment media camp. The existing study also revealed that media or online media has a role in affecting social movement – negative and positive impacts. How the two online media camps influence civic activism will be further investigated in following chapters.

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CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this study is to investigate the association between the online media and civic activism within Macau's social context. I shall mainly focus on two aspects, one is how the colonial background of the city affects its online media, social movement and their correlation. Another is how the different viewpoint of online media affects civil society, whether they are the forces to propel the development of civil society or just a barrier to the development of civil society in Macau.

Following the discussions of previous studies on similar topics, this paper will analyse three research questions:

1. How do the online media represent civic activism and the differences between the two camps of online media?

2. How do the online media impact and mobilise civic activism and the differences between the two camps?

3. How do online media impact the development of local civil society?

In an attempt to analyse the questions, I shall choose some civic activism mainly ones that occurred in 2014 and 2017. One is the anti-perks bill protests and the other is the protest about the government's donation to the mainland-based Jinan University. Apart from those, I shall also include "DQ" case which is connected to the donation incident as a study subject. The DQ case, including an assembly, involves a lawmaker who underwent a legal process of "disqualified" or so-call DQ. In the following section, I shall explain why these incidents and the related civic activism were chosen.

－5.25 & 5.27 ANTI-PERKS BILL PROTESTS（反離補反特權）

May 2014 was considered momentous occasion to Macau society and it has been depicted as "Splendid May". Two massive collective actions occurred on 25 and 27 May 2014, which were in protest of the government-proposed bill offering generous retirement benefits to the chief executive and other principal officials but denied to other public sector workers, have been regarded as a significant aspiration to the awakening of local Macau people (Chan,2014). The protests aimed at opposing lavish

retirement benefits and privileges to retired principal officials. After the two protests, the government withdrew the bill and the result has been regarded as "the victory for Macau citizens". One main organiser of the protests Macau Conscience, an online group, claimed in its statement that 2014 was "the year that citizens began to wake up" and the protests showed that "Macau people are not to be silenced anymore".

Without public consultation on the bill, the Macau government submitted it to the Legislative Assembly in December 2013 and the outline of the bill was approved. However, the bill had received much criticism after more details were revealed during committee level discussions including retired principals could receive over several million patacas as a one-off pension and the chief executive could be granted immunity from criminal penalty during his/her official term. Until 25 May over 20, 000 people took to the streets in opposition to the bill and demanded it be withdrawn. One day later, more than 7,000 people sat outside the Legislative Assembly when the lawmakers were supposed to have an article-by-article vote on the bill but instead of voting on whether to accept Chief Executive Chui Sai On's （崔世安） proposal they returned the bill to the committee for further discussion. According to police authority statements, the participants in both protests were less than 10,000. However, Chui suddenly announced the withdrawal of the bill on 29 May.

The two protests were the largest actions since 1989's assembly which drew about 50,000 participators to support the students' movement in Beijing[19] and it was also the first time that over a thousand people surrounded the Legislative Assembly since the handover. After the protest on 27 May, flowers and bushes were planted in the square outside the Legislative Assembly to prevent any further protests from using it as a gathering point.

－5.15 ANTI GOVERNMENT'S DONATION OF 100 MILLION YUAN TO JINAN UNIVERSITY PROTEST （反利益輸送 崔世安下台）

However, almost two years later another important massive collective action also occurred in May in which the participants demanded the resignation of Chief Executive

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19. 肥崔急撤《離補法》澳門人光輝五月 Retrieved from https://hk.news.appledail y.com/local/daily/article/20140530/18737608

Chui Sai On and the public Macau Foundation to withdraw its controversial decision to donate 100 million yuan (estimated TWD 480.4 million) to Jinan University in Guangzhou. The activism aimed to protest against the transferring of benefits and demand Chui step down. A total of 17 local groups, comprising two ad-hoc alliances with about 5,000 participants took to the streets and opposed the system which allows "pork barrels" by people or groups that are close to the key members of the foundation. According to the police authority, about 1,100 demonstrators joined the two alliances.

Chui is a deputy chairman of the university's board of directors and the chairman of the Foundation's Council of Trustees. The protesters demanded Chui's resignation for alleged conflict of interest in granting the donation. Nevertheless, Chui neither resigned nor rescinded the decision. However, the unexpected consequence of this action was that directly-elected lawmaker Sou Ka Hou (蘇嘉豪) facing the risk of losing his Legislative Assembly seat. the so-call DQ (disqualified) lawmaker incident

－DISQUALIFICATION OF LAWMAKER （DQ 議員）

In the demonstration against Macau Foundation's donation, two key leaders of the protest Sou and Chiang Meng Hin （鄭明軒） had to attend the court to defend aggravate disobedience charges. The duo had been charged with disobeying a police order for having an assembly outside the residence of Chief Executive Chui Sai On after the end of the protest on 15 May. During the assembly activists had thrown paper planes into Chui's residence's gardens as they wanted to convey their appeal to Chui. Sou, who was elected as a directly-elected lawmaker faced the risk of losing his seat if he was sentenced to 30 days in prison. Sou is one of the city's 14 directly-elected lawmakers. Apart from those elected by universal suffrage there are 12 lawmakers that are elected by representatives from eligible association and seven appointed by the chief executive. Considering the importance of Sou's case and how local media represented this case also shows how they view the democratic election system and what values they think that the city should uphold.

Within such short time from 2014 to 2016 and the two incidents had moved over several thousand participants to take to the streets although Macau economic situation was still fairly robust. Additionally, the participants asked the government for a response to their appeal. I believe the causes of the two incidents are worth investigating.

During the process of the protests against the perks bill, we found that ***Macau Concealers (愛瞞日報))*** had come up with various ways to encourage netizens to take part in the protest on 25 May. Such behaviour had never been seen before. From these protests, we found that online media like ***Macau Concealers*** had not only been involved but also been one of the players. Another online media ***All About Macau (論盡媒體)*** also seems to have lost its neutrality. Such a significant change from the traditional role that media should play such as being neutral to an active role in protests is worth looking into and investigate further. Furthermore, a possible consequence of the protest in 2016 could have been that a directly-elected lawmaker lost his post. I believe that online media in the city has a role affecting the matters and whole society.

In an attempt to look into such a change, I shall analyse how online media reports those events and what are the reasons behind their decisions in reporting them. Considering limitations in human resources, I shall choose four local online media as research targets which have different political preferences regarding their content. The four online media outlets have been operating for a long period with a relatively high number of followers and their emphasis of news reports.

一PRO-DEMOCRACY CAMP

All About Macau （論盡媒體）

All About Macau is an independent local news media. Initially in 2010, it was just did a weekly news reports about various social issues published in a local weekly newspaper ***Son Pou*** （訊報）. ***Son Pou*** is published both online and in print. ***All About Macau's*** slogan is 'independence, justice, conscience, diversity', and its aim is to 'explore alternative methods and social practices that allow voices to be heard in Macau'. In 2012, All About Macau media was established as an independent media outlet and launched its website: AAMacau.com.

Except for the release of sports news on its Facebook page and the weekly report about various issue in ***Son Pou***, from 1 May 2015, ***All About Macau*** has been publishing the very first monthly journal, enriching the coverage gradually, including live reports, features, news analysis, art commentaries, interviews, sharing other news outlets' contents, constantly enlarging media space and increasing social impact. The

news outlet's Facebook page was set up in 2012 has gained 43,620 likes and 43,620 followers recorded in Februry 2019.

Macau Concealers（*愛瞞日報*）

The first edition of Macau Concealers was published in November 2005 as the 31st issue of *New Macau* (a monthly journal published by the local political group －New Macau Association). Mimicking the design of *Macao News Daily*—the dominant Chinese language newspaper in the city— *Macau Concealers,* on the other hand, comments on news sarcastically. *Macau Concealers* endeavours to report on things that people do not know in Macau and started to publish independently in November 2010. Its Facebook page was set up in 2005 and until February 2019 it has obtained 103,869 likes and 106,189 followers. Except for the continuous release of the one-page printed publication, *Macau Concealers* has turned its focus to its Facebook page in which sports news, opinions and live broadcasts, as well as sharing other news outlets' contents. Now the print version of *Macau Concealers* has changed from being published quarterly to.

－PRO-ESTABLISHMENT CAMP

UTV （*澳門網絡媒體*）

UTV has a website, Facebook page and YouTube channel. According to the records in February 2019, there have been 10,572 likes and 11,155 followers. Its YouTube channel, which was created in 2011, had up to February 2019, 298 subscribers. But it only started to release posts in April 2015. As described on its official webpage, *UTV* means Your TV and it is the first digital TV channel focusing on current social issues. Now it has three main programmes: "Neighbourhood Focus", "Youth. Talk" and "Stories of a Small City" providing multi-angle views on what has happened in the city. In order to help local residents and Chinese people all over the world to better understand Macau, this online media promises that it will create more channels to provide news on hot issues and information about the city.

Unveiled on its webpage, "Neighbourhood Focus" places emphasis on the critics and opinions on current issues by inviting guests who are well-known in local society.

Another programme "Youth. Talk" aims to provide a platform for local youths to take part in discussions on political matters and has guests such as lawmakers, scholars and government officials are invited to attend the programme to discuss political matters with local youths. The other programme "Stories of a Small City" covers stories about Macau people and tells people about hardworking and passionate local residents. According to the website, one of its key members is also a board member of Macau's most influential association and pro-establishment group – Macau General Association of Neighbourhood Unions, commonly known as Kai Fong.

True. Love Macao（*真·愛澳門*）

As described on its Facebook page *True. Love Macao* aims to share information, produce a good page and construct a good society. It also states that "[If you] Love Macau please give it time to let it grow slowly."

The Facebook page of *True. Love Macao* was founded in 2004 but it published its first post in May 2014, according to its Facebook page. Based on the record of February 2019 there have been 6,517likes and 6,542 followers. The page's main emphasis is on sharing local news reports that were published in the city's Chinese language newspapers, the government-owned broadcaster **TDM** – radio and TV, CCTV and private broadcasters such as *MASTV*. Simultaneously, this page also shares news releases or videos by the local government. Not only sharing information the page also releases so-called "warm notices" in which it reminds people to take care of others and give help to those people who are in need or it publishes articles on various themes such information about the Macau SAR's Basic Law.

These four online media have similar characteristics but are also differential from one other. According to an initial observation of the content of the four online media, *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers*, seem close to Kuang's view of "alternative" while the latter two are closer to Kuang's view of the value of the mainstream (Kuang 2015). *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers* also prefer reporting "alternative" voices from the marginalised groups including the non-local workers while the latter two prefer promoting government policies and measures and encouraging stories to promote "good things and good people". Their standpoints often seem to be the same as the government when there are social conflicts.

Generally speaking, *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers* are in anti-establishment or democratic camp while *"True. Love Macao"* and *UTV* can be treated as pro-establishment or establishment media groups although more details about their political preference and the accurate background of each is needed to be further confirm by conducting in-depth interviews with their key members later.

Regarding the form of media content, *UTV* and *Macau Concealers* prefer releasing videos compared to the other two.

However, there are differences between the two media in same camp. When comparing *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers*, both seem to have a similar standpoint, there are some slight differences in various aspects, for example, *All About Macau* is run by a group of reporters, commentators, and artists, unlike *Macau Concealers* which is managed by the affiliate of New Macau Association, which has one seat in the local Legislative Assembly. Therefore, the practices revealed in *Macau Concealers* — an online media outlet consistent with New Macau Association's political stance on 'anti-corruption, the struggle for democracy and the promotion of people's livelihoods. The topics covered by the former are more diverse than the latter. Topics covered in *All About Macau* include social, political and cultural issues while *Macau Concealers* pays high attention to political events or government scandals and it also an player in some social action. Therefore, *Macau Concealers* is activist media according to Kuang's view.

Regarding the pro-establishment camp, for example, *UTV* places more emphasis on the local community while *True. Love Macao* also pays attention to the politics in mainland China and Hong Kong, thus its content is more diverse and has a great deal of information about the Central Government on it.

The coverage of the four online media's Facebook page can be seen in Appendix A: Screenshots, Nos 10,11,12 & 13.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODS

In this study two research methods are set to be applied, one is discourse analysis and semi-structured in-depth interviews.

3.2.1 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Considering that Facebook is the main platform for the four online media in Macau to share their information thus posts about the protests are the study object of this study.

－SAMPLING

In order to analyse the posts about these protests, I shall set a specific period for collecting samples for each incident. However, I have not chosen the same period for data collection for all incidents considering that each of them lasted different lengths of time and the timing of the critical moment. To provide a better understanding of the protests I shall give a simple timeline of each incident.

Macau government proposed the perks bill in 2013 and the outline of the bill was approved by lawmakers in December that year. After a five-month committee level discussion, the bill was originally scheduled to be voted article by article on 29 May. Simultaneously, *Macau Concealers* launched a campaign which asked netizens to post their photos along with slogans against the bill and an online group Macau Conscience also undertook serious action again the bill including submitting a petition. Until 25 and 27 May, the two collective actions occurred.

In an attempt to give a clear picture of how online media represented those protests thus I chose a specific period from which to collect the posts as a study subject in this paper.

Regarding the two protests in 2014 I shall set the time for the sampling for two weeks, from 18 May to 3 June, one week before and one week after the two protests. Since some online campaigns had started earlier than 18 May and continued until the occurrence of the protest thus I choose to collect the sampling from 18 May. The posts from the two can help the general public to understand how online media describe the events and social movements and the meaning behind them. Concerning the time limitation. I used the Facebook search function which allows users to search past posts by month thus I elected to search all posts in May and June that the four online media released and then checked whether the related news was found from 18 May to 3 June.

In an initial check, it was found that there are about 670 posts in May and June and about 130 post about the incidents between 18 May to 3 June. Since *UTV* only started operating in 2016 there are no post from this media. Meanwhile, *True. Love*

Macao had not posted anything in May and June although it started operating in early 2014. Therefore, all posts came from *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers*.

Regarding the donation incident, the time for collecting post-sampling is set from 5 to 28 May. The outcry came after a news report by a mainland newspaper stated that Macau Foundation donated about TWD 480.4 million to Jinan University and local media including online media started to follow up the news in early May. Local groups paid attention to the matter including local pro-democracy youth group Youth Dynamics (澳門青年動力) who submitted a petition to the local graft-buster on 12 May calling for an investigation into whether Chui and Macau Foundation Council of Trustees had followed all the necessary procedures to avoid any conflict of interest. on 15 May various groups took to the streets. However, the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) said in a statement on 28 May that the there was no rule violation regarding the donation. Therefore, I chose to start collecting the posts from 5 to 28 May when the graft buster announced the donation was in line with the regulations. I shall also use the Facebook search function to check all posts of the four media uploaded in May and select those related to the incident.

After a preliminary check, there are a total of 76 posts related to the incident while there were about 410 posts released by the four media in May. *UTV* did not report the incident at all while *True. Love Macao* had one report about it.

However, concerning the legal process of the DQ case lasted for such a long time and the final result was only announced on 29 May 2018, thus I only chose five days which I believe to be critical moments in the case. I chose 13 and 14 November and 3 and 4, December 2017 and 29 May 2018. The Legislative Assembly announced on 3 November it would follow the court's suggestion to have a plenary meeting to discuss whether to suspend Sou from the Legislature and once Sou was suspended he would be able to attend the court. (A sitting Legislature cannot be prosecuted until he is suspended or loses an election). About 300 people joined the protest in support of Sou on 3 December, one day before the Legislative Assembly held a plenary session to vote on whether Sou should be suspended from the Legislature or not, and on 29 May the court announced the ruling over case. Since the case occurred last year and it is easy to search the daily posts on the Facebook pages of the four media.

一 TOPICS OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

When having an initial look on how the four online media reported the massive collective actions mentioned above, there has been a great deal of difference in the quantity and the quality, for example, **Macau Concealers** and **All About Macau** paid more attention to reporting social movements and other related matter than the other two. However, even the anti-democratic camp media have a different degrees of involvement in the situation.

When briefly analysing the posts about protests against the perks-bill and donation the terms such as "citizen" （公民）, "citizen awakening" (公民醒覺) "Macau people" or sentences such as "Macau people have to unite to protect their home and public treasure", "Macau people will not keep silent anymore" and "Macau people have stood up and united to protect their home and public treasure", as well opposing privileges, often appeared. Such descriptions are so different to what Lam said in her research that Macau people have been shaped to "love the country love Macau" and hate having conflict and are silent and they will not resist injustice because they love harmony. Macau people are those people who just quietly made a living in Macau. Although they had been given the names of "patriotic, anti-colonialism and imperialism" by local newspapers during the period of the 1966 incident since they were encouraged to resist Portugal's suppression. The author also said that after the incident, the term of "Macau people" became vague again and they were once again considered "silent" people who just quietly made a living in Macau and such a state had been kept until before and after the handover.

From such terms and sentences, a new image of "Macau people" seems to have appeared and they care more about the city in which they live, they will not keep silent when facing injustice and they consider they are owners of the city. In other words, today's Macau people have come to realise who they are and their identity, they are more concerned about what the city is becoming. Through the collective actions, people of this city seem to have a shared identity and that may inspire locals to explore the subjectivity of the city. When more people in Macau realise who they are the more discussions about how the city should develop will be had.

When investigating the posts about the DQ case, sentences such as directly-elected lawmakers must be respected and Macau progresses meanwhile the terms such as "Macau people", "political persecution" were found. However, sentences such as

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"lawmaker violates law must be punished like an ordinary person" and "lawmaker has to obey the law".

Regarding such stark differences, this paper will explore how the online media from two different camps used the terms such as "citizen", "citizen awakening", "Macau people" in their posts about these incidents and their related anti-government actions and in what context they have been used. While analysing the use of such terms helps to recognise how the two online media camps represent those civic activism and whether there were any differences between the two camps.

3.2.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Apart from the analysis of the posts about the actions by the four online media, I shall conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews with the key members of the four online media of the two camps, as well the main players in the protests. Here is a list of the names of the interviewees and the general outline of the interview. See table 3.1

TABLE 3.1: INTERVIEWEES LIST – PRO-ESTABLISHMENT AND PRO-DEMOCRACY ONLINE MEDIA CAMP

Name	Media	Title	Political attitude
Ng Sio Ngai 吳小毅	*All About Macau*	Director	Pro-democracy
Choi Chi Chio 崔子釗	*Macau Concealers*	Vice-director cum Editor-in-chief-	Pro-democracy
Loi Man Keong 雷民強	*UTV*	Director/ key member of local pro-establishment group	Pro-establishment
Unknown	*True. Love Macao*	Editor-in-chief	Pro-establishment

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Regarding the two different media camps, I shall focus on questions related to how they view their role in social movements and civil society, and how their political preferences or attitude affect the contents they chose to write.

Here is the outline:

1. When setting up the media? Why set up it? Background? Why choose online-media?

2. What are the main contents of your news? Why choose this kind of news? What are the criteria for sharing news or information? Why?

3. How do you define the role of your media? Why?

4. What do think about the ecology of online media?

5. Do you think the colonial background of Macau affects the landscape of online media? How and why?

6. Can you evaluate the relationship between your medium and social movements/NGOs?

7. How do you evaluate the politics or governmental influence on the operation of media?

8. What kind of civic society Macau should head towards? And the role of online media in it?

As each online media has its own conditions and characteristics I shall come up with tailored questions for each one (See Appendix B)

Apart from interviewees from the four online media, I shall also interview two main players from each civic activism mentioned. Regarding the interviews with the players of the social movements, the questions will be mainly associated with the interviewees' personal information and the turning point for them to take part in social movements.

The other questions will be related to what they think about social movements and civil society in Macau and whether the colonial history of Macau affects the online media landscape, social movements and civil society in the city. See table 3.2

TABLE 3.2: INTERVIEWEES LIST – CIVIC ACTIVISM AND MAIN PLAYERS

Chao Teng Hei 周庭希	**Macau Conscience (澳門良心)**	Main player/former New Macau Association president	Anti-perks bill protest
Lei Kuok Keong 李國強	**Youth Dynamics （澳門青年動力）**	Main player/key member of Youth Dynamics	Anti-perks bill protest
Sou Ka Hou 蘇嘉豪	**New Macau Association （新澳門學社）**	Main player / lawmaker/ vice-president of New Macau Association	Anti-Jinan Donation protest DQ victim
Chiang Meng Hin 鄭明軒	**New Macau Association**	Main player/ president of New Macau Association	Anti-Jinan Donation protest, facing court case

Interview outline for the civic activism players

1. Can you brief your personal background?
2. Why and how have you become the main player of this social movement?
3. How do you evaluate online media's attitude towards this social movement?
4. What do think about the ecology of online media?
5. Do you think the colonial background of Macau affects the landscape of local online media? How and why?
6. What kind of civic society should Macau should head to?
7. What is the role of social movements and online media to civil society in Macau?

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CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 ONLINE MEDIA OPERATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

The present study explores what are the differences of the two online media camps – pro-establishment and pro-democracy – in representing civic activism, how do these two camps impact and mobilise civic activism and the differences between them, and how do those online media affect the development of civil society in this city? After responding to the first research question I analyse their posts.

In response to the second and third questions I conducted semi-constructed interviews in July, August and September 2018 with three key members of three online media[20] from the two camps and four activists from separate anti-government protests. The key members of the three online media outlets are Choi Chi Chio, (崔子釗) Ng Sio Ngai （吳小毅）and Loi Man Keong （雷民強）. The pro-democracy media outlets are *Macau Concealers (愛瞞日報)* and *All About Macau (論盡澳門)* while *UTV (澳門網絡媒體)* is considered pro-establishment. Four activists - Chao Teng Hei (周庭希)， Chiang Meng Hin (鄭明軒) Lei Kuok Keong (李國強) and Sou Ka Hou (蘇嘉豪). Before discussing the three questions I shall first give more details in the following part about the latest situation of the three online media outlets.

In this part, I shall focus on the scrutiny of the data collected from the interviews with the two media camps with the themes related to the operation ad development of three online media outlets.

4.1.1. ONLINE MEDIA'S SURVIVAL SITUATION

The three interviewees from the online media outlets expressed their worries about the critical conditions affecting online media, regardless of whether online media from either camp as limited resources such as shortage of manpower affecting them. Compared to most traditional media which receive subsidies from the government the three online media have to rely on themselves. For searching for sources of revenue,

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20. One of the original four online media outlets slated for interviews – *True. Love Macao* –rejected to my request for an interview although I had repeatedly used various ways to approach it such as leaving messages on its Facebook page and Wechat.

the three online media have come up with their own survival tactics and provide contents tailored for their readers.

Funding

一 PRO-DEMOCRACY MEDIA CAMP USES CROWD FUNDING

Now the three media outlets do not charge for their online contents. However, pro-democracy media *All About Macau* sets a price per month for the printed journal at seven patacas (estimated to TWD 27) each.

Comparing the two online media from the pro-democracy camp, the financial support received by *Macau Concealers* comes mainly from local pro-democracy group New Macau Association (新澳門學社) and some donations from the general public while *All About Macau* mainly relies on advertisements and donations from their readers except its start-up funding which came from the support of the founder's anonymous friends but no commitments are required.

The pro-democracy media camp has used public donations including crowd funding as important means of raising funds.

Choi, the former vice-director of *Macau Concealers*, said that since the media comes under New Macau Association and this political group fully supports it. , They appeal for public donations on their Facebook page or print version. So, this media can only afford to hire one full-time reporter. He said,

> *"Luckily, Macau Concealers does not face a threat to its survival ...its main support comes from New Macau Association". He also said that Macau Concealers does not have any advertisement but it had created a bank account for public donations. The small amount of money collected from the public is used to support the print version…… which published every six months".*

Ng, who established *All About Macau*, admitted the situation of her media outlet is critical and its operation may only last six months to a year so they plan to launch another online crowd funding appeal once they encounter a critical financial deficit. She said if *All About Macau* fails to receive enough support from society it means that local society does not need such a media. She said,

> *"We just receive a few advertisements and donations. We sometimes receive donations from members of the general public. Those donations*

are received without any commitments required. But now the number of advertisements has gradually reduced……now we can still last for six months to a year. We shall hold another online crowded funding appeal..... We do [face a survival crisis]. But I remember many people saying that if we are not needed in society, we shall just close it. Because you [the general public] don't support us [means] you don't need it, [it means] you don't need different voices……even those weak civil actions. If society only needs the mainstream, only the pro-establishment is needed, so you [the general public] don't have to support us. That is all. But if you think different voices are needed and that should be the reason we can go on".

This media outlet carried out a crowded funding event from May to July in 2016 in which it collected about 382,000 patacas (estimated TWD 1,455,420) from 320 people, some 80 percent of its planned goal, 245 donated about 188,800 patacas (estimated TWD 719,328) through an online platform while 75 deposited about 157,500 patacas (estimated TWD 600,075) into their bank account.

The veteran reporter, who has worked for a local traditional newspaper more than two decades, pointed out that media ecology has been worsening as over the past few years government has seemed to place more restrictions on local media to force them into being a propaganda machine. Ng said,

"Indeed, the media ecology has already been worsening……now there have been many legislations targeting the media including the bill of civil protection 21, even the law regulating the use and protection of the national flag 22 [which is being amended now] regulates the media having to support the government promotion…… This means that we have to be a propaganda machine......and tool. The media must not be tool. ...... Of

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21. According to the bill, one of its aims at strengthening the social responsibility of mass media regarding its broadcasting of the information about civil protection which the authorities think is important and media outlets may face criminal prosecution if it is proved they have violated the regulation. However, local media groups and critics slammed such attention as having the purpose of intervening in freedom of expression and autonomy of the media.
22. The Legislative Assembly has just approved the amendments to the law regulating the use and protection of of the national flag, emblem and anthem and the amendments suggest that the government can request news media to co-operate with the propaganda of the national anthem.

course, we always displease the government because of our critical spirit and that is why we can't count on the government as the source of advertisement''.

However, pro-establishment ***UTV*** also said it is a hard struggle for survival but crowd funding is not the answer. Loi said that it ever never receives any subsidy from the government. In an order to keep ***UTV*** operating they need to accept some jobs like making short films or videos such as cocktail receptions or promotions for some companies.

Loi, who is a businessman and key member of a local influential traditional association – Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations (commonly known as Kai Fong), also said that his media finds it difficult to hire people and so far there are six staff members including an intern. Loi has been a member of various government-appointed committees including the committee of youth affairs and district council. Now he is member of the government-appointed Consultative Council of Public Administration Reform.

Contents:

一 PRO-DEMOCRACY CAMP PREFERS CONTROVERSIES & PRO-CIVIC VOICES

In the following the part, I shall place emphasis on discussing how these media outlets pick the contents for their readers. The preferred contents of each firm also reflect how they decide their role. The pro-democracy media camp seems to prefer controversies and supports various civil voices which their counterparts do not.

Being new media Choi stated they have positioned ***Macau Concealers*** to be different from traditional media thus they would like to report issues adding their own stance or opinion in their report. He also said this pro-democracy media outlet has always been searching for the role it should play but overseeing and criticising the government has been its stance. He said the following:

"At that time...there had not been many questions about the [perks] bill as every traditional media reported the same, just report the incident in a plain and simple way and did not further investigate what was behind the case thus many residents could not understand why it was problem. Thus, we discovered some key problems affecting the incident and then magnified them....... we let the incident continue burning. We have our

*own political stance as **Macau Concealers** comes under New Macau Association…… we have to keep the role of checking on the authority. We support democratic polity and that gives us a direction to run the media. …… We oversee the government, criticise it".*

Another pro-democracy media ***All About Macau*** said it has always insisted on the original goal when they set up this media thus its contents and role have remained unchanged. Ng said:

"We need various voices, [the voices from] civil citizens, particularly supporting civil society, the UNESCO cultural heritage, equality and the underprivileged, we always cover news [in line with them]. ……we report even if there is a small event like a petition [to the government] as we fear that such weak voices [will not be heard] therefore we have to pay even more attention. …… Even till today we don't think we should play a leading role in the development of local civil society but we support it.

We have always been kept the role as a media, we also have reports from 'rival' camps as long as what they did are good for Macau. Of course, we do not sweet talk the authorities. There are many government tongues already. We help different voices to be heard, for those underprivileged, civil society, press freedom and the right to know. We contributed much effort to investigate land issue23 and we cover such issues the most, also revealing many land scandals and later the Commission Against Corruption proved what we revealed. We always maintain our original purpose when we decided to start a media outlet.".

一 PRO-ESTABLISHMENT CAMP LIKES SOCIAL CELEBRITIES & OFFICIALS

At the beginning of its operation, the pro-establishment *UTV* released interviews with principal government officials – four of the city's five policy secretaries, only the Transportation and Public Works Secretary was not interviewed.

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23. According to local media, the local government has always come under attack for its dealing with land issues involving some plots of land that have been idle and their 25-year legal period of development has expired, some land has been changed from their original use without reasonable land premiums being paid and others have been swapped in which the transaction and the legal procedures are not transparent.

There are three main kinds of content covered on *UTV* including those about governmental affairs such as public policies, the opinions of community representatives/ leaders and the opinions of residents.

Loi admitted that the percentage of the opinions from community leaders is higher than the other two in an attempt to attract an audience. In listing the criteria for inviting community leaders to attend their talk shows Loi said they preferred those that can raise rational and constructive opinions. "Mr Sou [Ka Hou] as you mentioned......Macau does not accept the style [of Sou]".   He also said that he admired Sou's drive but implied that he should be more rational.

Hottest social issues have always drawn the attention of this media and it has positioned its role as a member of the fourth estate and hopes to oversee the public administration and speak out for residents, to conduct in-depth analysis of the social issues and judge whether the public policies are correct or not. Loi said the following:

> *"We are quite critical of the government. As you saw two years ago we were highly critical of the government's implementation of the land law. There had been much criticism of the public works... for those in the government that have done a good job we conduct an in-depth report about them, for those in the government that have failed to do their job we make open criticism and hope they improve. I believe that biased reports will not gain support from the public. Over the few years, we have gained recognition and support, including our reports about the government policies as we have made comprehensive reports about them. Fair reports and open criticism aiming for improvement is our stance when forming this media".*

The implementation of Land Law and its related land issues have put the government in the firing line in the last few years. A legislative committee led by legislator Ho Ion Sang, who is a key leader of Loi's association – Kai Fong – had been responsible for the affairs involving land concessions between 2013 and 2017.

Loi also stated that until now his media has not achieved its ideal role due to the difficulty encountering in hiring staff.

 Generally speaking, the topics covered by *All About Macau* are relatively diversified than the other duo, the former also publishes features focusing on specific topics such as the land issue or those related to local culture and art. Nevertheless, *Macau Concealers* is more political/scandal-orientated due to its connection with the

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local political group. Although *UTV* said it positioned itself as media and was strictly in line with the role as media, obviously the topics covered by *UTV* are relatively soft and less political-orientated. *UTV* also said that it would criticise the government officials, but most of its criticism seems to focus on the public works and transportation portfolio which includes the city's bus service and the construction of the light rail transit system which the government get s a lot of flak over because of the longstanding delays and being extremely over budget.

Obviously, the contents they choose reflect the role they play. Unsurprisingly, in the line with their background the pro-democracy media camp has always maintained their role of supervising the authorities and pay more attention to the underprivileged and alternative opinions. The duo also preferred revealing scandals involving the government and that what the *UTV* does not do.

The preference revealed in the contents chosen by the two media camps confirmed the existing literature that online media, particularly the alternative online media – *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers* –in Macau provide alternative information (Su, 2017) while the pro-establishment *UTV* is closer to the local mainstream media.

In the following part, I am going to further look into the current situation of online media and its possible development after the rival pro-establishment media appeared. Views from the four activists are also included aside from the two media camps.

4.1.2. LATEST DEVELOPMENT OF ONLINE MEDIA

－RIVAL **PRO-ESTABLISHMENT CAMP PRESSES PRO-DEMOCRACY CAMP TO BE MARGINALISED**

Regardless of which side, online media outlets or activists, both considered that the two massive protests against the perks bill in 2014 had not only impacted society but also affected the landscape of the online media. Although there had been no research at the time the pro-establishment online media appeared but 2014 seems to be the time when the power from the local and the central authorities played a role in pushing their arrival. Both the social activists and pro-democracy media camps consider that the activities of such media have become more visible since then.

Activists and pro-democracy online media admitted the rise of the pro-establishment media camp could marginalise their rivals as they can invest a lot to draw the attention of the audiences.

Choi believed that those online media, which run by traditional associations or come under the mainstream traditional print media and the government, could undermine their rivals' influence on some serious topics such as the political system and democracy. He said that since the representative of the Central Government in Macau –the Liaison Office of the Central Government in the Macau Special Administrative Region (S.A.R) - has urged local traditional media to develop their own new media and use their function to create a "positive image" so that many traditional media have developed their own new media.

He also pointed out that with more pro-establishment online media outlets setting up there is less space for pro-democracy online media to survive. He offered the following:

"Apparently the government has not restrained the development of the existing online media so far, but it neither wants nor allows some online media to be the number one, thus it calls traditional media to take an active initiative in developing new media to balance the market. That is why many pro-establishment associations spend money to run look-alike online media…… the government and those pro-establishment associations have many resources to expand their network. There have been different online media set up so that there has been competition. It is a good thing that there is more online media…… readers have more channels to watch or read different things and that is good for readers to understand what has happened in Macau".

Choi continued,

*"However, I don't think such online media will report about an issue related to political polity or others which is totally against the government, or those social incidents that displease the government. Still only very few online media cover such topics. However, once the audience get used to such mainstream or pro-establishment online media, their rivals become marginalised…… definitely, online media such as **Macau Concealers** and **All About Macau** must face marginalising…… especially **Macau Concealers** must face more difficulties and it will become more favourable*

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to a niche audience and there is no way of stopping it. Now the issues
related to livelihoods and associations are the main part and the basis of
the contents of online media".

The former-vice director also said that the pro-democracy media camp should think about how to figure out a new way, whether to integrate or transform for a bigger share of the audience.

Choi's view about the current situation of the online media has been echoed by activist Lei, who is the main player in the anti-perks bill incident and its protests. The activist said that to prevent the officials namely Chui Sai On, the city's chief executive, from being harassed about the government offering financial support to establishment groups to run so-call new network power – online media - over the last few years. Some of the online media which are run by young pro-establishment groups cover various topics including politics. Such online media do not mind covering politics and they have been successful in attracting young people. Meanwhile, some newspapers such as **Macao Daily News** (澳門日報**)** and **Exmoo (**力報**)** have live-broadcasting for some incidents such as people jumping from heights, typhoons and floodingg. Lei said,

"Since the anti-perks bill incident there have been many antagonistic
[Facebook] pages. we set up a page called Macau Conscience , there was
a page named True. Macau Conscience set up. One of their [online media
run by pro-establishment groups] mission is to maintain a stable society
for the final five years [of the current government term] and they are paid
to do this. Thus, they have to recruit more viewers so they don't mind
covering politics…… some of them are so humorous……[those] are quite
successful in attracting young people ……regardless of whether the
government or the pro-establishment groups pay much attention to this
market which you invest more on your message as they are seen by more
people. Now such media have become number one and they can lead the
residents to see what they want them to see".

He also said,

"Currently, the market of local online media is shared by three kinds of
operators - the earliest ones are those so-called opposition power –
***Macau Concealers** and **All About Macau**; another by the pro-*
establishment groups while the rest are traditional media. At the early

*stage, **Macau Concealers** and **All About Macau** had dominant role and that threatened the government a great deal… but [the online media run by] traditional media and pro-establishment camp have gradually grown, for example Facebook, if you don't pay for advertisements basically it is game over. **Macau Concealers** and **All About Macau** basically do not pay for advertisements. As long as you have money you can use a short amount of time to reach most people. Compared with the past, it is easier for the ruling group to keep track of the real power of its rivals. It is the first time that I have seen the government has its complete grasp on the Internet since the handover".*

Lei is the president of Youth Dynamics (澳門青力動力), a group of young activists which has close connections with New Macau Association (新澳門學社). Lei was a key member of the latter association but resigned. This activist also said that he was not optimistic about the online media keeping a positive attitude about anti-government actions in the future.

Another activist Chao, another main player in the anti-perks bill demonstration, said that there was a "explosion" of pro-establishment online media after the compensation bill saga. This activist voiced the following:

"I believe that it was not until the campaign did the pro-government camp realise the impact of online influence. The "explosion" was very likely the result of a coordinated effort to claim their online space to influence public opinion".

Chao is the former president of New Macau Association who headed **Macau Concealers** for years. Now he is studying abroad.

There have been different views about the development of the pro-establishment media camp.

Another pro-democracy media **All About Macau** and activist Sou do not see the arrival of pro-establishment media as impacting their counterparts due to their stance and way of reporting make it hard to be popular.

Ng, who heads another pro-democracy online media – **All About Macau** – believed that audiences will be aware of the stance of each online media. She thinks the rival pro-establishment media outlets will not replace the role that her media outlet

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plays as they will be keen to do what the traditional media do – sweet talking and glorying the government. She said,

> *"I believe if Macau people like news about worshiping the government they choose traditional media outlets. Although Macau people do not easily pay attention [to an issue] they have their own judgment when facing the question of right or wrong. …… I do not worry about such media".*

Activist Sou said that it was obvious that the pro-establishment camp appeared after the anti–perks bill incidents and before the election of the chief executive in 2014.

Considering that the nature of the Internet is open, liberal, borderless and cosmopolitan, Sou believed that those pro-establishment online media outlets are not in line with such nature thus it is hard for them to succeed. Therefore, he believed the pro-democracy camp still has its advantages.

However, some opinions pointed out the rise of pro-establishment online media has its positive and negative sides.

Chiang, the main player in protest about the government's donation to Jinan University and the related actions, said that even though those conservative opinions should be allowed to be heard. He believed the appearance of pro-establishment online media provides diverse views but warns that pro-democracy online media should be ready for competition. The activist said,

> *"When the society is diversified even though you are conservative person you also have the freedom to express your conservative views. Even those evil people should not banned from speaking. The Internet has temporarily changed [the dominance of the print media]. ……the Internet allows everyone to find one's position and be heard. It is just, isn't it? …… Every media has its right to express its views the public can consider whose views are reasonable……. they should compete with each other. In other words, we still have to struggle".*

Meanwhile, the pro-establishment *UTV* sees the current online media as diversified but there are too few and the competition among them has not formed. Loi who heads *UTV* said that an extensive readership has not been formed since there been many platforms and netizens are not that rational.

Among the three online media, pro-democracy *All About Macau* seems more confident in gaining support because of the contents they provide and the role it plays.

According to the information it shows that the donors to the crowd funding event carried out two years ago come from various regions and countries such as Australia, France, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, the UK and the USA.

However, the reality it is facing is that there is a reduction in the number of advertisements from the government and the lack of a stable source of revenue. This media is facing quite critical fight for survival. As its founder Ng warned if it cannot receive support from the general public its operation cannot go on. The implication in her remarks is that if *All About Macau* shuts down it means that society does not need an alternative voice. That is undeniable that the appearance of *All About Macau* has marked a new era for Macau media, not only its new form of providing contents but also its survival tactics.

Another pro-democracy media *Macau Concealers* seems to be receiving stable financial support from its association. However, such support is not that firm since the financial support of this association mainly comes from its legislator's donations. In other words, if the association loses its legislative seat it means the media loses its financial support too. In the 2017 legislative election, the association's candidate Sou won one seat with 9,213 votes and his votes put him in 12th place of the 14 directly-elected lawmakers. Furthermore, the split and reconstruction this association has currently undergone has made this minority political group more fragile.

On the one hand, although Macau government has not directly restricted the development of the online media it still has an influence in this sector. With the support of the government, those online media run by the pro-establishment associations should have resources to make their contents become more accessible and that could lead to more propaganda about a "positive image" of the government being seen. On the other hand, the local government seems to be promulgating regulations aimed at forcing the media to be a propaganda machine. Although detailed articles have not yet come veteran reporters and activists express their serious concerns. Ng mentioned that the ecology of local media is worsening as the government aims to force media to play the role it requires. Lei described the civil protection bill as "crazy". He voiced the following:

> *"It is really shocking, in fact it [the government want to completely control whatever the smart phones or social networks pick up. In other words, it dominates all things".*

It is undeniable that the civil protection bill, which has not been approved and the cybersecurity bill [24] which was just approved recently must have impact on the current ecology of the media. Those regulations seem to restraining the media's autonomy which could undermine the freedom of expression and the people's right to know. Such uncertain changes will also influence the development of the online media although there is no tailor-made regulation for this sector yet.

Overall, two pro-democracy media have their fragile sides and the growing influence of pro-establishment online media must have an impact on them, but inevitably they may also reshape the landscape of local online media – once the pro-establishment media camp grows, the question is whether the alternative media or voices will still be heard if Facebook remains their main platform in which its algorithm system providing designed contents is shown to their readers based how much is invested. Meanwhile, the government does not seem to be stopping the influence on the media.

4.2 TWO ONLINE MEDIA CAMPS REPRESENT CIVIC ACTIVISM & DQ CASE

In this part, I shall discuss the first research question. Before analysing the chosen posts, I shall give numbers to show an honest but general perception of how the four online media dealt with the three incidents and their related social actions.

Compared with the pro- establishment camp, the pro-democracy camp – *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers* have covered the events in great detail, both in quality and quantity. The pro-establishment camp – *True. Love Macao* and *UTV* – either covered the three incidents either very little or nothing at all. See table 4.1

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[24] The cybersecurity bill, approved in October, suggested that the real-name must be used by those who bought prepaid cards mobile phone sim cards and the judiciary officers have the right to search broadcasters' offices. Local media groups have expressed concerns about such suggestions.

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TABLE 4.1 TIMES THE FOUR MEDIA OUTLETS REPORTED THE TWO INCIDENTS & DQ CASE

	Incident (posts/collection period)	Anti-perks demo (May 11-June 8 2014)	Anti-donation demo (May 1- 28, 2016)	DQ(Nov 13/14, Dec 3/4, 2017, May 29, 2018	Total
Pro-establishment media	*True. Love Macao*	0	1	5	6
	UTV	0	0	1	1
Pro-democracy media	*ALL About Macau*	67	29	13	109
	Macau Concealers	67	37	18	122

Pro-establishment ***True. Love Macao*** did not publish anything at all about the anti-perks demonstration although its Facebook page was created in 2004 but it was more active in 2014. Regarding the incident in relation to the government's donation of 100 million yuan (estimated TWD 480.4 million or 123 million patacas) to Jinan University, it just published one post on an official statement elaborating the reasons why the government decided to donate the money. For the DQ case, it published a total of five posts in the five days, one was about Sou being suspended, two were to share two links to the live broadcast of Sou being suspended, one is a video titled "lawmaker violates law and must be punished like an ordinary person" and an article titled the same. Obviously, this pro-establishment media directed its attention to Sou which could be a reaction to the rise of the youngest lawmaker which has alarmed the pro-establishment camp.

Another pro-establishment group ***UTV*** also published very few posts about the three incidents and their related actions. Since its Facebook page was just set up in 2015 it therefore did not cover the 2014's anti perks-bill case and its protests. However, regarding the other two hot button issues it did not cover much about them either. It did not release any posts about the donation incident and for the DQ case it just released one post in which it shared ***Macao Cable TV***'s live broadcast about Sou being suspended from the Legislature.

The original design mentioned in Chapter 3 that discourse analysis will be applied and terms such as "Citizens (公民), citizen (市民)，residents (居民），"Citizen awakening (公民覺醒)" "Macau people (澳門人)" were supposedly chosen to compare how the two media camps presented in their articles about the three incidents.

However, due to the fact that the two pro-establishment media outlets had released very few posts and most of their posts were related to the DQ case thus I shall mainly use this case to compare how these terms were being used in the posts released over five days –13 and 14 November and 3 and 4 December 2017 and 29 May 2018, five key days of the case and how these two camps reported the DQ case differently.

The Chinese terms "市民" and "公民" both can be translated into "citizen". Considering the concept of Citizen (公民) has been given various implications thus I use the term "Citizen" with capital letter "C" to present this idea while term "citizen" (市民) with small letter "c" to refer people who live in the city. In following two sections of this chapter, these two terms were used in specific context.

I shall also discuss how these two pro-democracy media outlets use the terms "Citizen awakening, "Citizens", "citizen" and "Macau people" and see whether there were any differences when they represented the two incidents, namely the-perks bill in 2014 and the donation to Jinan University in 2016.

While reporting the DQ case, the pro-establishment media camp stressed "the rule of law" and penalties while their rival media camp accentuates the terms such as "citizens" and "civil rights" and their posts focused more on citizens' rights and freedom.

4.2.1 PRO-ESTABLISHMENT MEDIA CAMP: RULE BY LAW

In reporting the DQ case, the two pro-establishment media outlets have never used the terms "Citizens" and "civil rights" instead emphasising that those who exercised civil rights – participating in a protest or assembly –might face penalties as they did not obey the police order.

In the post released on 13 November 2017 titled "lawmaker violates law must be punished like an ordinary person" by **True. Love Macao** in which this pro-establishment media outlet explained why Sou faced DQ and what he had done during the protest in 2016 against the government's donation decision.

Sou and his fellow activist Chiang had been charged for violating the law for having an assembly outside the residence of the Chief Executive Chui Sai On after the end of the protest on 15 May. They threw paper planes into Chui's garden as they wanted to make sure that the chief executive received their appeal directly during the assembly. The activists had told the public about the assembly in advance.

This pro-establishment media outlet stated that Sou had led protestors to occupy the road and "severely" affected the traffic during the protest. The media also said that Sou had "incited" protestors to proceed to the chief executive's residence.

> "Sou ignored the warning of [possibly] being charged for aggravated disobedience…… Macau is a place which values the rule of law and if there are no rules everything can be done. Regardless of being a privileged lawmaker or ordinary people they have to be treated without bias if as they violate law. In other words, the behaviour of the people including Sou extremely violated the critical component of the law".

True. Love. Macau also said,

> "If lawmaker does not need to shoulder the responsibility for breaking the law causally even including those illegal acts before becoming a lawmaker, [it is] believed that many criminals choose not to run away but instead would stand for election. Such acts really trample on social justice and the rule of law. It is unreasonable that a lawmaker who broke law is not prosecuted because of "claiming" oneself being persecuted. Lawmakers should have higher ethical standards, be role models and obey the law".

On 14 November, this pro-establishment media outlet only released a two-minute 35 second video titled "story about lawmaker violating law must be punished like an ordinary person".

Apparently, this pro-establishment media presumed Sou and other activists that took part in the protest had broken the law and they should face punishment for breaking law. This media also stressed the rule of law is important and everyone must obey the law with no exceptions. In the sense of this pro-establishment media outlet, to obey law should be the biggest priority than anything including citizens' ability to exercise their rights and freedoms. There was the implication that exercising civil rights could lead to facing criminal charges.

However, the other pro-establishment media *UTV* did not released any posts over the two days.

These two media outlets did not report anything about Sou on 3 December although there was an gathering organised to support Sou that night as the Legislative Assembly would vote whether Sou should be suspended the next day. They pro-establishment media between them on only released five posts in total – one from *UTV* and four from *True. Love Macao* and all were on 4 December. *UTV* only shared a link to the live broadcast of the Legislative Assembly voting while *True. Love Macao* shared two links of the live broadcast of the vote and a post in which stated that Sou was suspended from the Legislature.

On 29 May 2018 the day the court ruled on Sou's case neither of the media outlets uploaded any posts.

4.2.2 PRO-DEMOCRACY ONLINE MEDIA CAMP: CITIZENS/citizens (公民／市民) & MACAU PEOPLE （澳門人）

On 13 and 14 November 2017, only the pro-democracy *All About Macau* released two related posts about the Sou case. One post on 13 November – stated that Sou complained that the police had abused their power and restricted and infringed citizens' rights which are enshrined in Macau Basic Law. The activist also said that what they had done was in line with the law and they had the right to express their opinions about the issue as it involved significant public interest.

This media stressed that what the activists had done was in accordance with the citizens' rights and was aimed at protecting public interest. In other words, the exercising of civil rights must be ensured. In this sense, citizens seem to be empowered.

Among the posts related to the Sou case released on 3 and 4 December 2017, one was a video released by *Macau Concealers* titled "Support Sou, Safeguard Legislative Assembly" – we stand by Sou."

While the other pro-democracy media outlet *All About Macau* told its readers in its post about the assembly supporting Sou on 4 December said,

"……citizens: opposing political suppression, he is also Macau people.
Sou is elected by citizens".

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In this post, it was stated that citizens are given the right to vote and had elected their representative in the Legislative Assembly.

In another post about the supporting assembly, this media also stated "Macau people are the masters of Macau." This media also uploaded a post on 4 December after Sou was suspended in which it said,

"Macau people (澳門人) should not feel depressed instead of becoming angry they strive drive to push Macau towards progress".

Among the posts about Sou's case released on 29 May 2018, the day the court ruled on the case, one by ***All About Macau*** said that Sou worried about residents' basic rights being limited while a post on ***Macau Concealers*** stated "Citizens' rights are facing crisis; Citizens' rights and freedom, and Citizens' space is further restricted."

Those posts by the pro-democracy camp implied that Macau people are the masters of the city and they are also citizens and voters who are empowered to protect their rights and the interests of the city. The term "Macau people" was often used by the pro-democracy media camp, has the term been used by the media to construct a collective identity so that it may become a force for unification? Once a collective identity and unification are formed, inevitably their impact on collective actions is undeniable and that needs to be examined. Moreover, the concept of "Macau people" is vague, which can not only be legal status but it can be also constructed by appealing to people's emotions. The various names for Macau people used in the posts revealed the different topics being addressed and appealed for.

Posts such as "Macau people, stand up, fighting", "Macau people significantly become more confident, more powerful, and being honest in fighting for personal and public interests." "Macau people should ……contribute to the effort to change Macau." The future of Macau society should be in the hands of Macau people again". "Macau people created history with this citizen's movement".

To the pro-democracy camp, the term "Macau people" has changed from "being quiet" to "being vocal" and they have been empowered to protect their interests and the future of Macau society. Meanwhile this term has also been used as a symbol to bring people together in the fight for change.

When analysing the posts from the pro-democracy media camp, the phrase "Macau people" was also found to be connected with "Citizens"/citizens (公民/市民), residents (居民), voters (選民) and even tax payers (納稅人). However, those terms

found in the posts were for corresponding issues or targets. In depicting the protests in 2014, the term "Citizen" and "citizen" were often used and stressed and they were interchanged while the term "Citizen awakening" had been often seen. However, in reporting the 2016's protest, the term "Citizen" had been used relatively less and stressed while another concept "Citizen awakening" was not seen. Meanwhile the terms "citizen" and "resident" were found to have been used more frequently.

A post on 28 May 2014 by ***All About Macau*** said:

> *"Macau people created history with local civil movement ……after the protest on 25 May Macau people have become confident, powerful and peaceful in fighting for their rights and public interest. …… From the scenes of the protests on 25 and 27 May, citizens woke up and a mature civil power was seen. The network for civil society was formed. The small masters will bring the ruling group to account if it fails to correct its mistakes.* Another post by the media on 29 May 2014 *"People are power; citizen waking up is power…Thank you everyone [protestors] for safeguarding Macau"*.

The term "Citizen" was found to be connected with civil rights, civic consciousness, civil education, civil society and civil actions or movements. Posts stated "Citizens speak out for the unjust and being awoken", "Citizen awakening is power", "today is a milestone for civil society" and "today's action to express public opinion is the victory for Citizens."

However，the term "Macau citizens" was found in relation to various issues, such as one post stating "so many citizens express their opinion in such hot weather, the public opinion must not be ignored", "many citizens are discontented and hope to express their dissatisfaction about social injustice".

In reporting the two protests in 2014, ***Macau Concealers*** often stressed Macau people had been woken up. Macau people have power to protect their rights and they would not keep silent when facing injustice. One post on 23 May by this pro-democracy media to urge local people to take part in protest on 25 May said:

> *"This Sunday, let the power of Macau people be shown in Tap Seac Square……. Apart from expressing opinions on the Internet Macau citizens should also take action. In terms of political affairs [you] should not ask others to represent you, the more people that show up the bigger*

the power and the higher probability for success. Regarding this incident, [we] beg the public to understand: It is the source of evil in the government is the product of a small circle and the non-democratic electoral system. If we do not wake up and face this evil or fight for universal suffrage, even worse than this incident will happen. We have not kept silent about political reform ²⁵ and in the legislative election (in 2013) we were slow on the uptake. Are we going to wake up today to face down the ridiculous perks bill? How about facing them down when Chief Executive Chui Sai On seeks re-election? We believe the younger generation of Macau people know what to do. **Macau Concealers** *hereby sincerely appeal each reader to show the power of Macau people at 2:30 p.m., on 25 May to do what we should".*

On 27 May 2014 another two posts stated "Thank you all! Macau people have awakened", "Awakened Macau people! All of you that were outside the Legislative Assembly! please click like!"

Obviously, to the pro-democracy camp the use the term of "Citizen" seems to give power and rights or empowers people to carry out actions to safeguard their interests or fight against what is perceived as unjust. When the term "Citizen" is used meaning that local people should take action to fight for values., to some extent, it is interchanged but the latter to place emphasise on rights and actions.

The term "resident" is found to be used in relation to the livelihood problems such as housing and traffic while voters have connected with the reform of the legislative council and local political system. The term taxpayer has been seldom used and it connected with the public purse.

All About Macau released a post on 20 May 2016 saying:

"A small group of people suddenly seem to have been 'possessed by spirits' and deviated from the original protest route and 'rushed up the road',

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25. In 2012, the government launched a public consultation to collect views from the general public on how to amend the electoral laws of Chief Executive and Legislative Assembly. The conservative opinion was an overwhelming over those calling for democratic elections. Then lawmakers passed amendments to add two more directly-elected seats making 14 in total while two more indirectly-elected seats were added making 12 in total and the seven appointed by the chief executive remained unchanged. Meanwhile, the number of eligible people to vote for the chief executive increased from 300 to 400.

> *attempting to cause trouble and block the traffic, 'making a farce of things*
> *as they often do' affecting residents by hanging around".*

This media released another post on 10 May 2016 saying:

> *"Public money belongs to all 640,000 residents……but it seems it is*
> *becoming the private property of the top-ranking officials".*

In interpreting the protest in 2016 the term "Citizen awakening" is not found and the term "citizen" is replaced "Citizen" being often used in connection with fight for rights. A post on 12 May 2016 by ***All About Macau*** stated "the government should respect the citizens' right of expression and assembly;" while another post on 12 May 2016 stated "citizens need to have an awareness to supervise …change current corrupt system." At the same time, the other term "resident" was found to be used more often.

As most opinions from pro-democracy media and activists pointed out that the arrival of citizen awakening in 2014 after two protests was just flash in the pan and did not last. Thus, the term "Citizen awakening" was not often used when the pro-democracy media reported the protest in 2016.

4.2.3 "MACAU PEOPLE" IN ONLINE MEDIA

Concerning the fact that there are not many posts collected from the reports in the online media in interpreting or constructing the term "Macau people", therefore during the interviews with the people in-charge of the online media I had to come up with relevant questions to see what the online media and activists think about the concept of "Macau people".

In responding to the questions about whether and how their online media have done regarding constructing the idea of "Macau people", both media camps expressed similar views that they had no intention to building the concept of "Macau people". But pro-democracy media stated that they would prefer using China instead of the mainland and the term "Macau People" was used when local cultural heritage are facing risk of damage. While pro-establishment media said that it has not thought about it. Activists worry about local people not being allowed to construe the identity of Macau people and this identity is being lost due to the increasing integration into the mainland.

Choi who heads the pro-democracy media outlet ***Macau Concealers*** had the following view:

"Maybe we will but we will not intentionally do so. However, some words we do change slightly, for example if the term 'China' is used we emphasise 'China', China is China as many times they [other media] may use the term the mainland. When we cover some topics involving China we will use the term China if nothing is special. We always use the terms China or Macau, in other words, China is China, Macau is Macau, so we do".

"Sometimes we directly use the term 'China' [when being asked whether the media uses the term mainland], because the term 'China'…… everyone understands the meaning of the term 'China'. However, regarding the matter of identity we don't intend to cover it or to emphasise it specially".

The other pro-democracy media **All About Macau** director Ng said,

"We have not been aware of such an issue [the identity of Macau people] …… we do not stress the term Macau people. We stress the identity of Macau people when we cover the issues about the protection of the city's cultural heritage as they belong to Macau people".

In responding to this question, **UTV** director Loi said that he did not have such feelings about the concepts such as "Macau people" and "locals". He said,

"Macau is not like Hong Kong, [such concepts of] Hong Kong People, locals I don't feel that".

He also stated that he had ever thought about concepts such as citizen awareness, Macau people and Macau identity.

In one of its series titled "Stories of a Small City" the description states that Macau has four hundred years of history about cultural integration between the Chinese and Westerners. The bricks and mortar of the are full of historical stories and that is worth getting to know. It also depicts that although Macau's population is not high each Macau person uses her/his story to show the hardworking and passionate nature of local people.

However, Loi explained that the terms such as "small city" and "Macau people" were not meant to search Macau's identity, instead of stressing that Macau was just a small city and that was its past. He also stated the term "small town" does not reflect that feels inferior [to people from other places] namely Hong Kong instead it is to show young people how to be humble.

In explaining their idea about "Macau people" activists also raised their concerns about the losing identity of the Macau people because of the economic drive including gaming industry hegemony and problem of turning Macau red.

Chiang stated the image of Macau has been depicted as a city of casinos as the gaming operators have made advertisements with their understanding of Macau to attract the majority of tourists to the city from the mainland. He added, "we do not have the right to interpret Macau, Macau people."

Another activist Lei had his view following:

"By 2047…Hong Kong is 2047, all possible happens including RMB may [replace patacas] use in [Macau] society, all write simplified Chinese, we may be banned from speaking Cantonese…… days are used to count the speed of turning Hong Kong red while it counted by a year".

In the previous literature review local Chinese language print media had shaped Macau people as those who "quiet", "preferring harmony than conflict" and "earning live" quietly in this Portuguese colony. Nevertheless, the content of the term of "Macau people" in those posts has been extended and even go to opposite to the previous literature. The concept of "Macau people" found connecting with resistance, dispute, taking action and being the owner of the future Macau society. Leung (2012) suggested that the newly emerged and expanding Internet-based new media such as YouTube, Blog, forums and websites has stimulated Macau people to think about who they are and their subjectivity. However, from the findings from the interviews three online media suggest that they do not have an intention in helping the construction of the identity of "Macau people". The term of "Macau people" had not been stressed in 2016's protest comparing to 2014. On the other hand, activists worried about local people might lose their identity due to the mainland China or economy factors.

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4.3 ONLINE MEDIA IMPACT ON CIVIC ACTIVISM

This section will focus on analysing interviews in an attempt to responding the research question – the impact of online media on civic activism, explicitly the two anti-perks bill protests and the massive action protested against the government's donation to Jinan University. I will first analyse these two media camps' attitudes towards such massive actions, whether they were involved in mobilising people to take part in the protests, and what they had done to promote the anti–government actions will be also addressed.

4.3.1 ATTITUDE TOWARDS ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

In general, most online media outlets pointed out that they have not had a consistent standpoint towards anti- government protests and do not have an intuitive to carry out strategies to mobilise people to take part in such kind of collective actions. The pro-democracy camp would like to pay attention to those against establishment actions. However, their rival *UTV* said that such actions would not be its main concern. Compared to other social issues, pro-democracy media *Macau Concealers* said that when there was collective action against the establishment it would like investigate further to see whether anything was especially behind the relevant incidents to attract the public's attention.

Choi, the former editor-in-chief of this media outlet, was also the only reporter for this online media from 2014 to 2016 and quit early in 2017. Elaborating on Macau *Concealers*' overall attitude towards civic activism, Choi said,

> "It depends on [the nature] of the incident. ...... we are not opposing something just for the sake of opposing it".

In recalling the anti-perks incidents and the related collective actions, Choi pointed out that *Macau Concealers* later agreed with the bill being withdrawn. He said,

> "Seeing the government was drafting such a bill, of course we considered it is a problem. Firstly, we reported this incident....... next we saw this incident worth drawing more people's attention to it. We hope to inform more people about this incident and allow them to express their views about it. Then our association New Macau Association wanted to organise a protest to urge [the government] to withdraw the bill. We agreed with

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it thus we assisted in and carried out relevant actions to make more people pay attention to the incident. Therefore, we also shot a video so that we could show what was happening".

Another pro-democracy media **All About Macau** said that it gives more notice to collective antagonistic actions as she believed the reasons behind those actions involved social injustice. Its director Ng said,

"These two cases [the perks-bill and the donation] caused harm to Macau, resulting in loss of public confidence. We questioned why the chief executive be allowed the privilege of criminal immunity [in the bill] ......that should be opposed. There are many poor schools in mainland China and we did not oppose donating money to mainland China. But we questioned the rationality of the government's decision for choosing this university. We have to ensure that public money is being spent reasonably".

"As I have already mentioned we support the underprivileged, as if there is any opposition and they really want to state their appeal, we will support them even though some of their appeals are not related to the public interest. As we mentioned before we must speak out for the most marginalised and underprivileged groups. That is why we cannot have support from business groups or advertisements. If we keep silent to those injustices and do what the traditional media do, which just reporting when and where, I think that is meaningless. This mode of traditional media is so boring and we shall not be fettered".

However, the pro-establishment media **UTV** said it prefers reporting news about the government such as public policies and public consultations, community leaders and residents' opinions, instead of social movements. Loi, who heads the media outlet, said the following:

"We help [the government] by explaining to general public in an easy to understand way about the contents of the government policies that are undergoing the public consultation [process] because the government prefers using official ways [to promote its policies], in other words, it uses the ways which it understands but we don't".

Loi also said that they also invite community representatives to attend **UTV** programmes, as well interviewing residents or youths so that they can express their

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feelings about some hot issues such as using public transport and driving cars or producing a related programme. He also stated that regarding some civic activism whether **UTV** supports it or not depends on whether the campaigns are reasonable or not. He stated the following:

> "*We* neither oppose for the sake of opposition nor support for the sake of support. [If the government] does not do its work well, as you see from the transportation and public works critics".

It is not surprising that these two media camps have different feedback on civic activism in general, while the pro-democracy camps tend to support such action while **UTV**'s attitude is ambiguous.

Of the three online media outlets, **Macau Concealers** has taken a more of an initiative in the protests against the government. The analysis of its content shows that **Macau Concealers** had carried out an online photo-campaign urging the government to withdraw the bill. Apart from that, it also posted messages to urge people to take part in the protest on 25 May.

However, the other pro-democracy media outlet – **All About Macau** – seemed relatively quiet and did not come up with any action to persuade people to join the protests. However, it published two messages on 25 and 29 May to express its thanks those who took part in the protests.

4.3.2 ONLINE MEDIA'S MOBILISING

What the two media camps think about their influence on such anti-government actions is significant thus I have collected their views about the mobilising power of online media and what they do to draw the public attention to the specific issue they want to address.

These two media camps both believe that online media have power to mobilise people but such power is not strong. However, the two pro-democracy media outlets are split over whether media should be involved in mobilising the public or not while pro-establishment **UTV** thinks that media should not be involved in mobilising the public for civic activism.

Pro-democracy **All About Macau** sees some media does have a role in mobilising the public but their power is not strong enough. Ng who heads the company stressed

that media outlets have no reason to be involved in campaign mobilising instead they should conduct in-depth reports or investigations. She said,

> "We have no reasons to take the initiative of launching a protest and that should be belong to civil groups. Media must uphold the public right to know thus we report and comment…… to ensure the public know what is happening".

However, Ng said that *All About Macau* will repeatedly report on an individual topic if they considered it important, including asking people to give comments and investigate further as they did with the Land Law. Her media was not involved in mobilising any social movements, just focusing on reporting what was happening. She stated the following:

> "We did not encourage people [to take part in the protests], we just informed the general public about what was happening we did not urge them [to get involved in the actions in 2014]. To inform the general public what a citizen should or should not do is considered agitation or something worse. Even at the end we posted a message to express our thanks as so many people took to the streets to demand justice, this was being a citizen and supporting civil society".

This senior journalist pointed out that *All About Macau* has been consistent in its role of being a media by investigating more behind the incidents.

Pro-establishment *UTV* agrees that online media have a certain power to mobilise people but his media has never been involved and in accordance with its official stance will not change its philosophy.

However, pro-democracy media *Macau Concealers* believed online media must have impact on social movements otherwise the protests against the perks bill would not have happened but he admitted that the real mobilising power of online media now is hard to define and its line has been becoming vague since there are the many Facebook pages or other social network sites. The former editor-in-chief Choi said:

> "It is not now necessary for online media to take the role. Of course, they can still get involved, but its de facto role in such events is not that significant. In fact, the original function of online media is reporting and it continue this function. To report, to explore and to reveal them should be the basis of online media".

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Overall, to attract people's attention to the on-going incidents, ***Macau Concealers*** pointed out that they used some keywords such as public money to draw the public's attention to the incidents. Meanwhile, ***All About Macau*** said that they preferred investigating deeply to encourage the general public to continue to pay attention to the incidents. However, ***UTV*** said it preferred covering issues related to livelihoods.

Since only ***Macau Concealers*** has not only reported a great deal about these incidents but had also carried out actions and published messages to promote the protest on 25 May thus what this media did to mobilise the general public will be discussed later on.

Choi who headed this pro-democracy media recognised the mobilising function this online media developed in 2014's protests. However, he also admitted that online media has its passive and active sides. Its active side, he stated which is similar to the traditional media includes revealing what was happening to the public, collecting comments and giving opinions. In this way the incident would continue to develop.

He said that it was passive for the media have to wait for comments from the government which could help keep the issue on the boil. Therefore, there also had been interaction on how the authorities reacted to the matter and how the media responded to the reaction and the media can continue to write reports. In recollecting what ***Macau Concealers*** did to urge local people to take part in the protests in 2014, Choi admitted that at the beginning he had not realised the problems with the bill until the problems had been addressed by his association. Meanwhile, he also realised that it was hard to find a complete news report about the bill. He said,

> *"Regarding the anti-perks incident, we had to cut the incident into small pieces and explain each part explicitly. Because of our reports about the issue and the government's remarks of may make the public angry……we kept asking people to comment on the case, plus the government's response so that the news could last for one or two weeks …… so that more people noticed it".*

> *"Furthermore, we needed some promotion activities to let more people know about this case. To the Internet, I had thought there should be an interactive way, not just published information. We wanted to raise a new method to let the general public express their stance. Macau people are used to just reading but they do not or daren't take to the streets. ……That year, media in Hong Kong like Apple Daily had done the same thing. They*

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had come up with mobilisation tactics such as writing songs or doing something to prolong the incident ......we shot videos and took photos. In that year [2014] there was the Sunflower Movement [in March in Taiwan], the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong [in September] and Anti-perks protests in Macau. Of course, there was no direct relation between them. Somehow, I was inspired therefore I thought it was okay to make a video or take photos".

He also said,

"So, we told people to hold a placard [to show their stance on the incident]. Many people slanged many things, but we wanted them to take action to express their views with holding a placard stating 'withdraw it'. Considering that the time was urgent and if there was no any antagonistic action the bill would be passed. To withdraw it is the only thing we can do and we asked people to do such an act. Once we knew people attitude we could continue. Taking account of the interaction of the Internet and the flexibility of online media we believed that what we were doing benefited to the incident. De facto not only holding the placard but also many people commented on it and we published what people wrote. With the Internet......we could know what audiences read and how they reacted. In fact, Hong Kong media had their role in assisting the incident to continue burning since they put the case as their front page for several days. Those factors result in so many people took to the streets to express their opposition".

In an attempt to get people to continue following the latest developments in an individual incident, pro-democracy **Macau Concealers** prefers to emphasise some key terms such as money. This media outlet's editor-in-chief Choi said,

"If you want to draw people's attention the easiest way is to magnify the amount of money involved, for example, [when reporting the perks-bill incident] ....we stressed the amount of money and we chose an impressive word to state the amount of public money that it would involve [once the bill was enacted]...... we used easy and key concepts or words to make an impression on people ".

"We also named these two incidents and after naming them they seemed to go on like a soap opera on the TV so that everyone would keep curious

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enough to what would happen next. If you put those components together they can become a protest. In that way it is easier for people to understand what's happened. Many news reports just simply tell the case but with no key points. That is because of media's self-censorship and self-constraints so they did not emphasise what should be paid attention to therefore the man-in-the-street had difficulty in grasping the problem. Our media simplified the case by emphasising the important points. We turned our emphasis on the cost or value. Based on my observation, the things that draw Macau people the most is money, how much something costs,. The thing the general public care about the most is money".

Considering that local people care about the public money, Choi said their articles about the incident involving Jinan University had addressed the amount of public money it might involve. Local people are more sensitive to how the government use its funds than anything else.

However, when dealing with the donation incident and its related protest on 15 May 2016, the pro-democracy camp – ***Macau Concealers*** and ***All About Macau*** – seem have been more constrained. They seemed to be returning to the role of just reporting and taking less of an initiative in promoting the action. Neither media had carried out any action to promote this protest or released any message to express thanks but simply wrote actual reports on the event. Definitely, there were many differences between the two incidents which resulted in specific aspects being addressed.

However, the obvious change in ***Macau Concealers***'s attitude is what I am going to address. In the next part I shall turn my focus to discussing why there has been a significant change in ***Macau Concealers.***

4.3.3 MACAU CONCEALERS : LESS ACTIVISM, MORE MEDIA

Obviously, compared to 2016's anti-donation protest, the role that ***Macau Concealers*** played was more than the media should. However, regarding the incident about anti-donation event and its protest, Choi said that they just reported the incident and investigated more to get the general public's attention and did not need to come up with any plan to move more people to take part in the collective action.

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Choi admitted that they have always been seeking a better role for their media outlet to play and what happened in 2014 was an "extreme" case and his media had no intention of being an activist media. He said,

"After that [2014's protests] we are not always thinking about being an activist media we neither have the intention to do so. Looking back to 2014 we were not the only one, Hong Kong [media] did something to mobilise [people], they composed songs to get a specific event to continue. We had neither intended to be such media nor did we intend to be active by raising an initiative or taking any action. ...... protests in 2016 or in recent year the most we have done has to be active in reporting when we wanted any individual event to continue being noticed…… or publicising protests instead of organising any actions. I do not think there is a necessity for us to take a leading role in organising actions".

Choi also said that it has been learning how to be a media over the past few years.

Is *Macau Concealers* an activist online media? According to Choi, it isn't. this media has never thought it would be an activist online media. He said the following:

"Actually, I just want to run a media. …… Actually do not often [act as an activist media]. We never think being a new media with a role of social activism. We do not have an intention to do so either. But such a case just lasted during the anti-perks incident. Actually, that is the only time we did."

"I think nowadays Macau does not need an activist media which has to turn each social topic into a massive action……it depends on whether the incident is worth it or not. I think it will be enough if any political groups want to do so …. every political group has its Facebook or other Internet platforms which are similar to media. They can also spread the [messages] and do promotions. The role of Macau Concealers now is to focus on reporting news, revealing what behind incidents".

However, Su (2017) pointed "the role of *Macau Concealers* in mobilising the public, spreading information and stimulating discussion during social movements marked it out as an activist media."

Choi concluded that *Macau Concealers* should continue to uphold the role of being media after searching direction for several years and he believed that local civil groups can mobilise people to take part in their civil actions through their networks, it is not something only the online media can do.

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Obliviously, the three media outlets have clear stances on civic activism. However, the pro-democracy camp seems a little ambiguous on whether it should assist in carrying out action on a particular ant-government campaign or not.

The findings of the interviews show that *Macau Concealers* is the most active in organising events assisting civic activism. In fact, some key members of New Macau Association were the main players in the protests in 2014 and 2016. However, as this media has changed its tune from being active to being neutral or more report-orientated seems hard to justify.

However, the pro-democracy camp insists that the role of the media should be upheld and it not actively launch any activities assisting an anti-government action.

It is not astonishing that online media in Macau preferred not to take an initiative in mobilising people to get involved in social movements although all believed that online media has an influence when it comes to mobilising people through their reports. Although Su (2017) classified the two pro-democracy media outlets as alternative online media, Kuang (2015) stated not all alternative media are becoming real "alternative" media or activist media. Apparently, the three media prefer to uphold the traditional role of the media it's original functions.

However, of the three media outlets *All About Macau* and *UTV* are more resistant about mobilising the public. Though, compared to *UTV*, the pro-democracy camp has its ways of attracting readers' attention to a particular issue which they want to address. The ways include repeatedly reporting the same issue with different interviewees and comments or go further into the issue, also paying attention to what the government has to say on the issue. Focusing on a special topic and coming up with all possible ways to extend the life of the topic in an attempt to make the public consider the possible side effects to society is the main feature of the two pro-democracy media. *All About Macau* described what it has done regarding the Land Law as "a battle", as it continuously published articles supporting the courses in this law related to the government having a right to launch legal procedures to repossess the plots of land on which the development period had expired, although many opinions from local development sector were calling to axe the regulation.

In general, the pro-democracy camp is more active in reporting or revealing what they think is beneficial to society or the topics that match their beliefs.

In the 2014's protests the two pro-democracy media outlets were more favour not only in reporting these two massive actions but also being more active although the

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former had just released a post expressing their thanks. However, two years later, both media seem more "conservative" towards the 2016's anti-government action. *All About Macau* insists that the way it adopted to deal with two incidents has been consistent and it upholds media rules while *Macau Concealers* believes that it is better to be media not an organiser. The significant change in *Macau Concealers* shows the pro-democracy camp moving back to their original functions. As Ng who heads *All About Macau* mentioned that as the traditional media has failed its role of informing the public about what is really happening and those dissenting opinions always are left on the inner pages and even short articles which the readers can easily overlook. Therefore, she believed that the most important task for *All About Macau* is to ensure the public's right to know or they will not ever know when there are protests.

4.4 ACTIVISTS' VIEWS ON ONLINE MEDIA INFLUENCE & ONLINE MEDIA & CIVIL SOCIETY

4.4.1 ONLINE MEDIA'S INFLUENCE ON ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIONS & ACTIVISTS & ONLINE MEDIA RELATIONS

Seeing that activists have an important role in civic activism thus it is important to discuss their views on online media. In the following discussion, I shall focus on the perspective of the four main players who participated in the protests in 2014 and 2016 about the online media's power to move people to become involved in civic activism, the relationship between online media and activists and how they use online media to mobilise people. The four main players are Lei and Chao, both were involved in the anti-perks incident while Chiang and Sou were involved in the anti- donation issue.

－ LIMITED ON MOVING PEOPLE TO TAKE ACTIONS

Most activists believe that online media have the power to spread messages but do not play a dominant role in getting ordinary people to get involved in collective actions. In general, activists agree that online media have power to mobilise but that it also depends on the issue and that power may only affect a small group of people.

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Activist Sou pointed out that although online media have limited power in mobilising people to take part in real actions but they have changed the protagonists in their reports from the officials, the government to ordinary residents.

Sou said that the disseminative power of online media and its assisting role were quite strong and such power has gradually grown. He said,

"I think online media have the power of dissemination, cohesion and giving people a faster understanding of an individual event and such power has continued growing. The way they spread messages affects possible mobilising strategies [of organisers of the campaigns]. I think the biggest role of online media is to make more people really understand a particular issue or matter".

"Currently, traditional media always place emphasis on officials or the pro-establishment camp, thus the subject is always the government or a policy secretary. However, online media have changed the subject in their news reports to residents and civil society. It is sure that online media are friendly to civil society, not necessarilyy to the activists, but residents. If talking about the power to move people to take part in real actions I am quiet conservative about it…… it is not very reliable. For example, for a group like New Macau Association which is concerned more about some ideas such as social equality, justice, transparency of government, environment protection and animal rights, I think it is very difficult to [use the Internet as platform to] mobilise people to take part in our action if we call for a protest for such ideas. People promise on the Internet that they would join the protest but only a very few really show up. Plus, now there is live broadcasting [of protests] with people thinking they are supporting the protest…… and felt relaxed watching the live-streaming. Therefore, we have to transform gradually...... go down the streets to supplement such inadequate …… and do more in the real world".

Sou also said that the Internet is an assistant or tool and they cannot fully rely on them. Activists should go back to the real world to connect and mobilise people. He added the following:

"What I have realised over past few years is that we can't completely rely on them, we should not fully trust them. We also have to go back to the real world. Therefore, we first carry out action in the real world and then

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with help from the Internet, this assisting tool, we spread and amplify our messages. This is the direction that we are headed to. Therefore, our focus is on the real world and through the Internet we disseminate what is happening in the real society. To us, the non-establishment camp, our main platform is the Internet but I have realised that we have to cultivate more platforms in the real world to spread our messages and influence. When the pro-establishment groups fight for their space through online media we have to go in the opposite direction to them by visiting the venues where this camp is actively carrying out their activities such as banquets".

Another activist Chao said that the mobilising power of online media depends on the issue in question and the impact of an issue seems to be more determining of the success of mobilisation, rather than the other way round.

Another activist Chiang agreed with online media's impact on those massive actions against the government. He pointed out that online media promote discussion about the perks bill and "objectively speaking" that had moved people to become involved in the protest. He said,

"Their influence on [a particular issue or promote space for public discussion] is not small…… if there was no such role their attitude towards (the incident) could be different. If at that time, there were no online media……I think the form of collective action would be different".
"But they just affect a specific small group of people. ……. Online media have the power to pass the messages or appeals of the protestors to their targets including the authorities and residents. Online media help the public know what they will not know from reading [traditional media]. People will learn what other people think about a specific issue".

Generally speaking, the activists saw there was not much resistant from online media regarding the protests in 2014 and 2016. As Chao said that the online media adopted a critical view on the bill from the beginning and were largely on the same side of the campaign against the bill while Sou said that he saw that online media at that time were leaning to support their action.

In the following part, the main concern will be about how those players used online media to mobilise people to get involved in their planned actions in 2014 and 2016.

Most activists recalled that they had not come up with any particular media tactics to move people engage the protests.

In recalling the 2014's massive campaign, Lei who is the president of Macau Young Dynamics (澳門青年動力) – a young group of activists who have close connection with New Macau Association which is more concerned about the issues related to youths－ said that they were "passive", "no strategy" and "basically we just came up with next step based on the latest development". Lei said the following:

> *"We never thought so many people would join the protest [on 25 May] and then the action to surround the Legislative Council was just a temporal plan to responseto the demand from so many protestors...... we decided to organise the action on 27 May".*

> *"The only tactics we had was to call for people to take part in our action through the Internet…… messages about the protest were spread through Facebook groups and pages as the limitation was not strict like today's. …… It was easier to see the information [on Facebook pages]. We did not have any strategy it was completely spontaneous…… people printed [promotion material] with their company resources and then told other people to get it …… to stick it on their cars. The one thing we did was to shoot a video about the bill and its problems and then this video was uploaded on YouTube. At that time every one had a strong initiative so we just informed them of the date, time and location and then they showed up".*

Lei, who was a casino employee at that time, also remembered that he caught some of his casino co-workers using the company's resources to print promotion material for the campaign.

Another main player of this campaign also said that no special strategy was devised for this campaign. "Personally, I would owe the successful mobilisation to the problems of the bill *per se,"* Chao who was one of the main players of this incident said.

Concerning the government's donation to the university, the main player of the incident Chiang admitted they had not worked out a good plan. He said the following:

> *"The correct countermeasure we used was to fight for 'space' [on the Internet] we used all possible ways to disseminate our messages……and*

that meant we did what we had to do. Online media at least had broken

the control of the traditional media".

Chiang, the former president of New Macau Association who had been a candidate in the Legislative Assembly election in 2013 and 2009 but failed to win a seat, also said that the media had the autonomy to decide whether to continue to pay attention to an issue and players had no control over the decision.

However directly-elected lawmaker Sou said that with the support of online media in the beginning was what had turned a matter into an "incident". Then it entered the agenda setting of the traditional media once it became an "incident". However, he also said it was rare that a campaign was successful because of the promotion from the Internet.

When promoting the message about the donation incident Sou remembered that they had fully utilised every opportunity when the officials made ridiculous or unacceptable remarks in response to the incident and amplified and spread such remarks through various Internet platforms including their Facebook page. This activist who was a candidate for 2013's Legislative Assembly but also failed to win a seat at that time said,

"Eventually, we had to bring the incident [from the Internet] to the real

world. What did we do to bring the topics [about the incident] to the real

world? This relied on some social actions [we carried out] such as

explaining the incident to residents in the streets and handing out

leaflets".

– FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP, REPORTERS CO-OPTED, MEDIA WORRIED ABOUT BECOMING DEFENDANT IN COURT

Overall, activists see online media as friendly to them and had done their duty. However, some opinion pointed out that the media ecology may worsen as more senior reporters have either been co-opted into the government or are more cautious to start investigating what was behind an incident because they feared the possible cost.

Activist Lei said the following:

"So far I still believe that although online media might have neither

recognised what we were doing nor our political beliefs but I think they

have done what media should do. Although sometimes they raised

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questions related to their own preference when there is a contrversial

issue but it won't impact on our supervision of the government".

However, Lei believed that the relationship between the online media and players may become more separated. This activist said the following:

"According to what I knew news reporters have placed senior reporters in some traditional print media and some even changed their editor-in-chiefr......there must be a change in their editorial stance......there are few reporters who have the heart to their job that stay in this industry ...... some reporters who have a conscience became quiet after being hired by the government or co-opted into the institutions. Some who have always done their job with their heart find it hard to keep that same passion ...... even becoming very cautious in case the media may become a defendant in a lawsuit once the civil protection law takes effect. Relatively speaking, the price [that media/reporter may] pay for telling the truth has been increased. The impact of the media on [the massive campaigns] has started reducing".

In concluding the relationship, the between online media and players, Lei believed that an action could fail if the government just crushed one of them but so far, the media still have a decisive role as they still have the final say on whether report or not. Such a view also confirms the views of Gamson & Wolfsfeld (1993) that in general social movements are much more dependent on media.

Another activist Sou sees online media as friendly towards activists and he has no clear stance on whether online media should develop into activist media. He said the following:

"I am definitely sure that they are friendly in general. I think they are friendly in general. Why I say that they are friendly in general since in terms of the influence the non-establishment online media still have a larger impact [on anti-government stances than their rivals] thus I see non-establishment online media or those that are critical of the government are friendly towards activists".

Sou also said that although the number of pro-establishment online media had increased significantly, they were found not to fit the ecology of online media which provides favourable coverage in support of liberty, openness and creativity. However,

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on whether online media should be an activist media Sou said that he was open to this question. The activist said the following:

> *"Basically, there is no activist media in Macau, even the most critical online media's stance is still hoping to maintain the role of being a "reporter" and aiming to spread their messages with as many people as they can. After spreading of the message to a group of people the job of the online media is completed. Within current conditions in Macau society online media have a bottom line and that line should be moved forward or back as it is neither correct nor wrong. It is okay if they should go forward [to be activist media]".*

Interpreting the relationship between players and the online media the findings suggest that players trust online media's broadcasting power but their power in driving people to take actions in the real world is limited. On the one hand, the activists are optimistic about online media's dissemination power but on the other hand activists raised their concerns about its limited influence on moving residents on to the streets to express what they feel. As more senior and enthusiastic reporters either left or are co-opted, plus more regulations are being imposed on this industry, activists worry the influence of online media on campaigns could be reduced.

From the perspective of Sou, whether the online media should develop into an activist media or not he took an open attitude to such question. Former reporter Choi said that so far, he saw there was no need for an activist media and nowadays the activist groups can have the autonomy of promoting their actions or mobilising people to take part into their action. To Choi, the function of activist media does not seem as powerful as was when it initially arrived. To some degree Sou and Choi see the potential mobilising power of the online media being concentrated on their disseminative ability and doing more investigation in to a particular issue.

4.4.2 ONLINE MEDIA AND CIVIL SOCIETY

This part mainly focuses on discussing the relationship between the online media, civic activism and civil society.

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一 CURRENT STATUS OF CIVIL SOCIETY: *A FLASH IN THE PAN*

I shall place emphasis on discussing the latest situation of civil society and how it should develop. Most pro-democracy online media and activists do not consider the current situation of civil society as being ideal and they believe the coming of citizen awakening in 2014 was just a flash in the pan. Furthermore, most of them believe that social participation of local people has increased include expressing their opinions by actions such as protests. However, the main drive of social participation due to personal interest is damaged.

Pro-democracy media ***Macau Concealers*** sees there was progress in citizen awareness of Macau people in 2014. Its former editor-in-chiefr Choi said,

> *"At that time (2014) we mentioned that they had woken up for a while but fell asleep again. There have been many issues involving universal suffrage and democracy and now we see such topics have disappeared. After 2014 such hopes had become impossible for Macau and Hong Kong to fight for and therefore such voices had been non-existence. Even democratic groups are not willing to talk about them. As seen in Macau and Hong Kong actions for universal suffrage has become less and more passive. In Macau some members of the democratic group have been persecuted with criminal charges and have been defendants of lawsuits. It has never happened that those who take part in protests have to attend court as defendants. It is true that the government's hegemony has strengthened".*

Ng who heads pro-democracy media outlet ***All About Macau*** said,

> *"Civil society in Macau is so weak and so far it has just started. Even including the so-called resplendent Mayday[26] .... many people thought that it could the awakening of civil society. Macau had been described as a 'sleeping city' where the people would not protest against anything and the living tempo here was so slow. Suddenly so many people took to the streets and that had never happened before. But in retrospect, civil society just "woke" up suddenly at that time, just a sudden wake-up but not real awakening".*

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26. Splendid Mayday referred to by some media is the two massive civic activism in May 2014 opposing the perks-bill which had drawn thousands of people to take part.

Meanwhile activist Sou thinks that Macau has not formed its civil society and citizen awakening has not come about and over the past few years he has often reviewed the meaning of those protests in terms of citizen awakening. He offered the following:

"That is why we have reviewed the past few years. Of course, what we had said [about citizen awakening] is not the reality of social development so we re-examined it. To be honest, we are not strongly insisting on what we had said. During the period of -perks bill demonstrations there was either no definite extensive citizen awakening nor had [local people] started getting used of taking actions to safeguard their rights or voices. They have not got used to taking actions to fight for what they believe or demand, or raising their voices. In terms of citizen awakening what local people lack is that they have not got used to carrying out real actions".

Senior journalist Ng said that so far Macau residents have a strong voice when their interests are damaged and some values such as democracy, rights and freedom are still not their main concern. She stated the following:

"Macau residents are used to keeping silent except when it is their interests that are harmed since this city was a colony and many people living here are not locally born. Because of being a colony for a long time it has resulted in local people regarding personal freedom as more important than other rights thus Macau people value freedom and even consider it more important than democracy".

Another pro-democracy media outlet ***Macau Concealers*** thinks civil society in Macau has improved since the channels for information have been broadened. However, its former vice-director Choi questioned that the increasing social participation does not mean that local people have thought much about a democratic political system or social values.

"Whether they [local people] have understood democracy more? What are they willing to pay for democracy? I don't know which degree we have reached. However, it is true that Macau people have been active in participating in civil actions for other issues. Macau people were afraid of taking part in protests or even worried about being persecuted after giving their opinions about some issues publicly. Now they dare to take to the streets for some livelihood issues and speak out but with conditions that they are victims or [their interest is]involved. Over recent years some

protests took place in Macau and most involved livelihood isssues such as traffic problems, inflation but there have been few protests fighting for a democratic political system"

"In other words, in terms of civil society the number of people participating is higher ……I think it has reached the top level and will not go further. But how about the depth of such participation? I mean going further to fight for some values, I think they will not or daren't. They will not do those as they know those are impossible to reach. They are only concerned about livelihood, for the issues related to the government, corruption or money laundering, or something related to policies, won't draw their attention"

This former journalist also said there has been a regression compared to 2014 [in the terms of the diversity of social actions]. Although there has been extensive participation by more people. At the same time the government has strengthen its power over the civil actions by setting more restrictions. In Macau, protests are either because of a particular event or purpose, or on a special date such as Mayday, Handover Day and there have been no follow-ups after the protests ended. Currently, even less protests are held on special dates in Macau.

However, pro-establishment *UTV* did not comment on the latest status of local civil society. Loi said that he was not familiar with the concept of civil society.

On the other hand, activists also have different views on current status of civil society with most opinions being there has been regression and suppression of local civil society while one suggests that civil society has progressed. There have been similar views as the pro-democracy camp revealing that local people are more willing to speak out or carry out actions when their interests are involved.

Activist Sou said that civil society in Macau has surely not formed te type it wants to be and is still embryonic but that it will gradually form.

His fellow activist Chiang said that there has been progression in local civil society while two other activists Lei and Chao see there has been suppression and a huge regression. Chiang said the following:

"I think civil society in Macau has been continuously improving, evolving. Progression does not mean that everything becomes better. Before local people considered taking to the streets violently but now, they won't think like that. The condition of civil society is not that bad. However, protests

that often draw people to react are when their interests are involved. I seldom find that social movement has an initiative, in other words, a social action for pursing for a goal.

Now Macau civil society is not active …… for controversial issues the government still takes the leading role and there is no discussion among different interest involved groups. However, local government always washes its hands when there has been opposition. The government is also a part of civil society. Both residents and the government need to learn".

Another activist Lei raised opposite views in which he thought that local civil society is regressing.

"Absolutely it (Macau civil society) is regressing, even worse. There are several aspects resulting from such regression. Firstly, the landscape of the media regardless of print media or electronic media, the censorship has gradually increased, either the managerial staff of local media changed what their junior reporters wrote, or refused sensitive news to be published or just a small piece of such news, or the editorial autonomy has been further tightened. Secondly, frontline reporters have been exhausted covering several events in a day and only given little time to finish their reports. Thirdly, many senior reporters have been co-opted into the government and this problem is serious. The space for free speech has been further restricted. Self-censored impacts much on the freedom of press as most of Macau media receive subsidies from the government thus, they have to show their loyalty and this signals what content can be published and what should not be addressed".

While Lei's views were confirmed by his fellow activist Chao who described local civil society as "under suppression"

In terms of the relationship between the social actions and civil society, Sou believed a positive view is that each social action carried out helps residents gradually understand what was really happening. He also said that after 2014's perks bill protests some Macau residents have come up with more ideas about how civil society in the city should be. This activist said,

"Thus, our role should let those people who do not have ideas to think more, another one is make those who have ideas think what they can do to make their idea come true. Such work takes a lot of time, it is boring,

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and difficult, this is also what I should be doing after reviewing 2014's protests".

"The accumulation of such actions helps residents to get use to paying their attention on controversial issues. As all those gathered help residents to picture their image of civil society. I think residents, particularly the younger generations, have more awareness of civil society compared to ten years and that is the embody of the accumulation of those actions. They have been awakened and imagine civil society, as well as started thinking what civil society should be in Macau. First, we should have an idea of what kind of civil society it should be, what our government, Legislative Assembly should be, or even associations should be. Those need to build up slowly. If there is no imagination there may be no actions. When you have an imagination then you learn how to come up with actions to put those thoughts into reality, from easy to difficulty, during such a process online media have their role in which they can speedup or be a catalyst".

He also said that there are various types of actions including those aimed at protecting one's interests, some are reasonable but some not. This activist said the following:

"Therefore, we neither think all social actions are correct nor support all. If we think some actions are unreasonable, or even nonsense, we should not aim to reduce such actions but instead think how to improve them. ……If you see those actions unreasonable, you can communicate with the players to convey the values you think correct. Maybe they will not accept them but at least we can have a target to convey our values.

"On the other side, the government should learn how to react to social actions/movements reasonably…… It should not fear that more actions would come if it reacted more. The government should come up with a practical, reasonable communication with high transparency to reduce social actions. If the system improved, I have no reason to make myself suffer to take action. I think there are barriers for the government to overcome, it may worry that a quicker reaction to possible social actions would draw more real actions in the end".

Activist Chiang sees the anti-government actions helping civil society to understand different voices are allowed to be heard and respected. Fellow activist Chao

sees anti-government actions as the voices for / from a moral high-ground / conscience in Macau and they are a symbolic resistance against authoritarianism.

Most opinions from the two media camps and activists see civil society in Macau as not being mature and its development is facing many difficulties. In interpreting the relationship among the online media, anti-government actions and civil society, both pro-democracy and pro-establishment media outlet see online media has a limited impact on the development of civil society due to online media being a limited resource restricting its scale and power.

Meanwhile, most activists opinions is that the role of online media and the anti-government actions are benefiting civil society.

一 HOW DOES LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOP? PESSIMISTIC

In the follow discussion I am going to summarise how the two media camps and activists see the possible outlook of future civil society in the city. The pro-democracy media camp sees a pessimistic development of civil society as Beijing has overwhelming control over its development. Nevertheless, in terms of Macau civil society in the future, a general outlook has not been formed on how it should develop but most of them believe there are many barriers to overcome. Meanwhile, most of them think the local government has further restricted people from exercising citizens' rights and the media operation.

Pro-democracy media outlet ***All About Macau*** pointed out that a mature civil society where the citizens are aware of their responsibility to oversee the government. They immediately speak out when they find something wrong with the government but local society does not. Its director Ng said,

> *"However, I am a little pessimistic about the development of civil society in Macau as it must follow Beijing……when Beijing does not follow the western model or follow the one which universally recognised modern civil polity and democracy, both in Macau and Hong Kong it hard to have real democracy. In previous years, the suggested method in selecting the chief executive for Hong Kong was that Hong Kong people had to choose among those who were designated by the central government. Now Beijing just allows Hong Kong to have so-called democracy – a "democracy in a cage". But in Macau even such democracy isn't allowed. Those who hold*

the balance of power have never thought about fighting for a universally recognised democracy for Macau. That is why we don't have a say on this matter and that is so bad for society. After the Carnation Revolution in 1974 the Portuguese authority allowed Macau to have democracy but local society rejected it".

"In Macau, not only the Beijing authority but also the invested interests or government affect how the city's democracy should develop. However, such people have gained much profit from the current systems I don't think they will fight for democracy for us. When there is democracy, they lose their interests. In Macau, when you are insiders you can receive sweets".

This veteran reporter also worried that the government seemed to draft bills or alter regulations aimed restricting the development of civil society, including the amendments to the law regulating the use and protection of the national flag, emblem and anthem, cybercriminal law and the civil protection bill in which still under discussion. Her following view:

"It [the government] is not a bone fide government and now it has continuously altered or drafted some regulations aimed at eliminating dissenting opinions and such opinion are important to civil society. Now the whole media landscape......freedom of press and freedom of speech have been worsening. The civil protection and the [amendments] to the law regulating the use and protection of the national flag, emblem and anthem even state what the media should do to co-operate with its implementation...... and that is against the freedom of press".

Pro-establishment **UTV** thinks civil society should be highly ttolerant as Macau is a place where conflict rises easily. **UTV** Director Loi said,

"For example, I am not satisfied with the government in many aspects and I am not happy with the young people with new thoughts so I have argued with them".

Activists Sou said he believes the local older generations have always had their ideas about civil society and their idea about civil society involves fair job opportunities. In recent year, the younger generations have imagined a civil society that does not only have fair job chances but also fresh air, a better environment for working and living. There has been an evolutionary procedure, from demanding material to non-material things including a better environment, clean, efficient and transparent government. He

sees the progress moving gradually and those non-material demands help civil society develop.

Sou believes that the development of local civil society should not be separate from its social context. This activist had the following view:

"We have to face the past of this city when we are imagining how its civil society should develop. If we want to move civil society the first thing we have to do is to know the realty and then think about how loosen the social structure, not directly reform it but to loosen it. When such a tight structure is loosened you can fill the values. For example, it is a culture that public servants find it hard to say no, we have to come up methods to make it loosre. To let those who have intuitive thoughts to start imagining……. let them know there maybe alternative choices or answers…… in such a way we can create a diversified culture".

Chiang's views on civil society includes many aspects and one of them is citizen awareness. He said:

"In term of citizen awareness, I do not think we should just learn how to deal with the government but also among groups. We should learn how to understand the interests of different groups. People from different groups share some common interests but may disagree on some. We have to learn how to reach an acceptable solution [to a controversy] between us. Before we just wanted to the government to find a solution for some conflicts and if the solution damages my interest I complain. But the fact is that some solutions either damage some groups' interest or other groups' like the controversy about relocating the gas terminal to Green Island. In a mature civil society, in terms of controversies like the relocation of the gas terminal different interests involving groups, should be discussed for a solution with sympathy of the others'needs and difficulties and this is big challenge for our civil society".

Another activist Lei said there should be no haste in pursuing for a civil society in Macau and he believed there were uncertain factors affecting the central government which also impact the local gaming industry. The gaming industry is a key dynamic keeping local society in harmony. Once it is adversely affected the interest of the ruling groups must be in tension and that may bring another chance for the development of local civil society. He stated the following:

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"Macau civil society will form gradually. That is the fact that local younger generations do not have the same sense of crisis as their counterparts in Hong Kong thus we do not have similar civil power like Hong Kong…… I believe that the younger generations are willing to fight more for themselves, not like their last generations who were conservative……. they relatively have less chances, thus how much they receive from society will lead to how much social participation they are involved in. The perks bill event is not an ending but a signal to say the show has just begun".

一 ONLINE MEDIA IMPACT ON CIVIL SOCIETY

In the following discussion I shall concentrate on analysing the role of online media on civil society. Most pro-democracy media outlets and activists see online media as not having much impact on the development of civil society in the city. The role of online media, particularly the pro-democracy camp, played a leading role in 2014's protests and functioned fully while in 2016's protest and they have preferred to return to a traditional media role.

Pro-democracy *Macau Concealers* sees the online media's role in moving civil society as weak and they purely have become a platform for news or to broadcast the messages. Choi who headed this media said that to spread information and messages should be the role online media play. He stated the following:

"During the protests in 2014 and 2016, online media developed their function at the most and now…… if there are no unusual things happening in local society, they can't go back to the role they played at that time. Restricted by limited resources Macau Concealers has to go back its basic role to report daily news".

All About Macau also said that the impact of online media on civil society is not that significant, because online media in Macau are not that powerful. Its director Ng said:

"All About Macau is not a strong online media Macau Concealer neither, even this pro-democracy media outlet has support from a local political group but both the group and this media are facing difficulties in recruiting potential successors while the veterans either left or quit. All

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***About Macau** lacks resources so we all are facing difficulties. Secondly, there has been no strong appeal for civil society in Macau. Thirdly, the government has secretly suppressed online media by not giving them advertisements all those things added up, and Macau people don't have strong demand [for civil society] that is why Macau civil society is still in its infancy. Unless there is something special or an external stimulus and the economic situation becomes bad, usually when the economy is bad there are more social appeals and those unreasonable things will be revealed".*

Pro-establishment media outlet **UTV** said that online media can provide information for reference. Loi, who heads the media, said that basically it is hard for online media to obtain public trust since over the past years a lot of disinformation has been found, thus Internet information can be just considered as a reference. To cultivate civic consciousness or civil education their role is a little degenerated compared with traditional print media. Its director Loi had following view:

"I don't think online media can play an active role in promoting discussion about different topics among groups and or help local civil society to mature. Macau is a small place there is no need to use the Internet for exchanges and propaganda. Its impact is not big".

Activist Sou stated that the Internet gradually started impacting the city's politics since 2013's Legislative Assembly election and it's been becoming significant in influencing social issues. In interpreting their views about the role of online media in the development of civil society in Macau, he said that online media has a powerful role in spreading information and messages but its impact on getting people involved in a collective action is limited.

"Thus, this is why we go back to reality to carry out concrete jobs in promoting our work to the general public".

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The role of the online media in the local media market has become significant. Therefore, the ways and attitude the online media have adopted while reporting social issues or conveying messages are worth studying, especially when they report controversies and massive actions opposing the authorities. To some degree the news reports about controversies and anti-government actions by online media will impact what their readers think about them and how they react to them.

Therefore, this study applied two research methods – discourse analysis and semi-constructed interview – to explore how the online media report civic activism and whether their stance affects their representation; and the relationship between online media and the development of local civil society.

The development of the Internet has brought a significant impact to the landscape of the local media industry thus the local print media were attracted to exploring the potential market. Meanwhile, the Internet also encourages the growth of local online media, particularly those preferring to publish alternative views to the mainstream media and that causes pressure on the government.

The findings, although restrained by the scope of research methods, suggest online media in Macau have been rapidly developing over past few years, particularly after 2014, which local activists consider remarkable. On the one hand, the role of online media, namely the pro-democracy media outlets have never reached a peak. On the other hand, the local online media market has been diversifying. It has not dominated by the pro-democracy camp any more as its counterparts have become significant. Since 2014 the city's online media obviously separated into two rival camps and the power of the two camps seems to be level pegged over the past few years. However, so far it seems that there is little research about the two online media camps and their operations, as well as their influence. To some degree this research fills the gap. The results of this research suggest that the two media camps have relatively opposite preferences in their contents, attitude towards anti-government actions or civic activism and their methods of survival are also different. In general, the pro-democracy camp supports civil actions, underprivileged groups and those that embarrass the government while the pro-establishment camp goes in the opposite direction. The pro-democracy

camp is more dependent on the general public so crowd funding is their main way of surviving while the pro-establishment camp relies on their social connections. Interviews with working journalist, former journalist and activists confirmed the ecology of online media, especially in terms of the pro-democracy media camp, has been deteriorating. More competition, few financial resources and a lot of suppression from regulations have made the pro-democracy media outlets face more difficulties meanwhile the pro-establishment online media camp has been steadily increasing its influence by providing entertainment information or soft contents.

The findings of the discourse analysis indicate that the two media camps have different emphasis when they reported news related to the case of disqualifying local lawmaker (DQ) Sou Ka Hou (蘇嘉豪) and the related demonstration. The pro-establishment media stresses on the rule of law and those who must face penalties when they break law regardless of what they had done and the reasons behind it. Conversely, pro-democracy media outlets stress the terms such as citizens, civil rights, Macau people and civil actions and power when they are facing social injustice issues. Such findings proved the existing research which suggested that two pro-democracy media outlets – *All About Macau(論盡澳門)* and *Macau Concealers(愛瞞日報)* as anti-establishment or online alternative media and they can break the hegemony of "harmonic news" of the city's mainstream media (Chou, 2016, Su, 2017). Previous research also suggests media and new media, namely those which relay on the Internet as a platform (Hao, 2013, Leung, 2012) had helped to construct a collective identity of Macau people. However, this study finds that online media have no intention to do anything aimed at constructing the identity of Macau people. However, the pro-democracy camp sometimes uses the term "China" instead of the mainland in their reports to make a distinction or emphasising the term "Macau people" when depicting the city's landscape.

On the one hand, comments from activists and online media outlets indicate that it is difficult for online media to motivate people to take real actions although their dissemination power is vast thus, they believe that they should go back to the real world. This study also finds that local activists had not paid much attention to media strategies when they were moving local people to take into civic activism, explicitly the protests related to the perks-bill and the donation incident. On the other hand, findings presented in current research indicate all three online media outlets disagree that they should be

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involved in moving people to take part in any individual civil action thus none of them consider activist media as direction for their future development. Scholar Su (2017) suggested *Macau* **Concealers** acted in the role as an activist media but the findings of this research indicate this media outlet has no intention of being an activist media. Comments from activists and online media outlets suggest that the role of the pro-democracy media camp in affecting civil actions such as protests has been declining, particularly when comparing their roles in 2014's protests and 2016's protest. The main players of these protests confirmed the influence of the pro-democracy media camp in terms of massive civic activism has been marginalised after the arrival of the pro-establishment media camp.

In describing the latest development of civil society, most of pro-democracy online media and activists see it is not ideal and those who take part in anti-government actions are doing it more for the sake of personal interest than demanding a change to institutions such as the political system. Pro-democracy media outlet – *All About Macau* – sees that Macau civil society has not arrived at the level demanding democracy instead residents have a strong voice when their personal interests are involved. In terms of the situation of local civil society, the findings confirm the existing literature that suggests that civil society in Macau is not mature (Hao, 2013). Furthermore, the findings also indicate that although a larger variety voices are heard although most of them are not involved in the pursuit values such as democracy or social justice, thus whether more people taking part in social issues or actions has moved the development of local civil society remains questionable. However, the findings of this study suggest that the development of Macau civil society is not that optimistic and its development and the central government has power over how it should grow thus the local community seems powerless to decide the outlook of the future civil society for Macau. Furthermore, the findings also indicate that online media has limited impact on the development of civil society in Macau. Su (2017) suggested that the emergence of the alternative media, namely *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers*, was believed to facilitate the development of local civil society. This scholar suggested their role of alternative online media on the growth of Macau's civil society has recently become more and important. In Su's article, he has not discussed the arrival of the pro-establishment media and the influence over its rival and local civil society.

Over recent years the society has developed rapidly namely its economy which is benefiting from the gaming industry. Therefore, the local government has repeatedly recorded huge fiscal surpluses. The wealthy government uses public money to subsidise pro-establishment groups and many associations established their own online media to promote the values they believe in or are favoured by the government. However, concerning the government's intention of further restricting the operation of the local media industry and the growing influence of the pro-establishment online media camp, the pro-democracy camp probably face more challenges and difficulties, even a survival crisis. It could be a question whether the pro-democracy media camp could keep its influence over public issues or controversies, even with the growth of local civil society.

Unsurprisingly the Internet or social network sites have been a battlefield for groups believing in various values. Online media in Macau have also followed such a trend and fight to spread their influence wider and more deeply. The findings of the research reveal that over the past decade more resources have been invested in developing online media, particularly the pro-establishment camp, even the traditional print media have also allocated their resources to spread or propagate their messages and values. Macau is a small city, which mainly relies on tourism and gambling, but it has its fragile side, in which the number of tourists has been a critical factor influencing the city's economy. According to the latest official data, most of the visitors to the city come from mainland China. In other words, the central government policies have a decisive impact on the local economic development. The Chinese authorities could have an overwhelming impact on the local economy if the economic structure does not fundamentally change and if so, local media should lean towards polarisation as most local media know to choose a position which benefits their development. Thus, it could be seen that more and more local media even online media could choose to keep in line with the existing authority.

Before 2004 the local gaming industry was still a monopoly and local society still enjoyed a relatively diversified economic structure while local media had also preferred to expressing fairly different preferences in their standpoint. However, currently the local media including online media tends to be more uniform while the local economy has becoming very dependent on the gaming and gaming-related businesses. It could be that local media are leaning towards being more pro-establishment and that is not an ideal condition to help the city develop with diversified values.

5.2 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

－LIMITATIONS

This study is an exploration, it does not test any cause-effect-relationship between the online media, anti-government actions and civil society thus it is hard to tell if these three elements interacted with each other and their connection. Therefore, it is also difficult to interpret the degree of the online media' influence on civic activism and civil society.

Furthermore, there have been some limitations impacting this research. This study could not collect enough examples from the pro-establishment media due to there being too few posts by the pro-establishment camp consequently it is difficult to give a clearer picture to show the differences of how the two media camps represent anti-government actions. Additionally, one senior pro-establishment media outlet – ***True. Love Macao (真愛澳門)***, which was an interview target declined to talk also making it hard for the researcher to collect more opinions.

In terms of activists who share similar backgrounds and experience in participating in civil actions it may result in homogenous views on some issues. For example, the four activists either had close connections or are still key members of New Macau Association (新澳門學社), a local pro-democracy political group. This association owns pro-democracy media outlet *Macau Concealers*.

Furthermore, one activist –Chao Teng Hei (周庭希) – had been director of this media although he was not the real one in-charge of the media. Furthermore, the interviewee Choi Chi Choi (崔子釗) who had been working as an assistant to the lawmakers from the New Macau Association (新澳門學社) before becoming the person- in - charge of *Macau Concealers* that there is no surprise that he and another activist Lei Kuok Keong share similar views when responding to how the emergence of the pro-establishment camp impacted the rival camp. Both see the pro-democracy camp's influence over social issues being undermined.

Due to the fact that there is not many relevant references to local online media and civil society it has been difficult to provide comparative views on how far both are from neighbouring regions such as Hong Kong.

－FUTURE RESEARCH

Media's key members think there is no intention to construct the identity of Macau people while literature reviews suggest that new media helped to build it. There is room for further study on:

- The survival of pro-democracy media as both activists and pro-democracy media outlets see the local media ecology as worsening as the local government seems to be further restraining the media's behaviour, particularly those dissenting media outlets by putting out more regulations.

- A big picture of the pro-establishment media camp including its development and its impact because of its extensive influence.

- How to apply discourse analysis to discuss the two media camps' interpretation of the subjectivity of Macau, the identity of Macau people. One of the original purposes of this paper was to apply discourse analysis to compare how the media outlets of the two camps employ such elements in their reports but unfortunately there have been too few examples collected in this study to make comparison. Media have their influence of affecting people to envisage how their society should develop. Online media's construction of subjectivity of the city and the identity of Macau people also impacts their thoughts on of the future of the city.

- The differences between Hong Kong's independent media and local pro-democracy media camp is to see which role they can play to better assist the development of civil society in the two former colonies, Hong Kong returned to the mainland in 1997 while Macau returned in 1999.

- Online media have their advantages and influence which the traditional media cannot compete with and there has been a great deal of research suggesting that the Internet has an impact on social change. If online media in Macau just prefer to maintain their reporting role, whether that may be a key advantage by using social media as the main platform in making possible changes to local society needs further study.

Compared to online media in Hong Kong and Taiwan, it seems that local online media are less diverse and less active in taking part in social movements. However, whether such characteristics are good for the development of the city's civil society or

not is still a question. Although *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers* have their strong beliefs for upholding some values such as justice and dissenting voices. *All About Macau* and *Macau Concealers* are considered alternative online media (Su, 2017) these media outlets provide alternative information and views different from the mainstream media and also facilitate the development of local civil society. The question that I may ask "is that enough?".

Based on the findings, I believe that activist media outlets should be developed for the local community and meanwhile investigative reports should be more detailed. With more in-depth and investigative reports I believe that they should be the means to fight against the authorities, the more investigative reports he more people can know about what is really behind the news. To some degree Sou and Choi think the potential mobilising power of the online media should be concentrated on their disseminative ability and doing more investigation of a particular issue. Moreover, online media should develop more in constructing the identity of Macau people. As mentioned by pro-democracy media outlet *All About Macau* it stresses the term of "Macau people" more when it covers topics relevant to Macau culture and heritage. I believe such topics should be paid more attention to with an attempt to strengthen local people's sense of belonging which may help the unification of the local community. To summarise, online media should play the role of promoting diversified values which are generally accepted by international community and to ensure the public's right to access information and to know what really happened.

Macau should develop its civil society with diverse values such as democracy and social justice and embedded in the local community. As some findings of this study indicate although more people are becoming more active in expressing their views and demanding justice, as well as more being willing in taking part social actions, most of the actions have been done because people's individual interests or income were damaged not because of social injustice. I believe that some universal values such as democracy, freedom and social justice should be a matter of course in a mature civil society.

Online media in Macau can have a role in the public sphere or to facilitate the discussion about such values and help to reach a consensus on what the contents of such concepts should include to fit the local community.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A：SCREENSHOTS

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Pro-democracy camp

10 *All About Macau* （*論盡媒體*）

11 *Macau Concealers*（*愛瞞日報*）

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Pro-establishment camp

12 *UTV* （澳門網絡媒體）

13 *True. Love Macao*（真·愛澳門）

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONS SPECIALLY-DESIGNED FOR INDIVIDUAL MEDIA

Macau Concealers

1. Being a media outlet with close connections to a local political group How do you balance the political group's interests and public interest?

2. How to attract more readers?

3. How to survive?

4. How to evaluate the impact of your media on society?

5. How do you define your media's role in developing civil society in Macau?

6. What do you think about the ecology of online media?

7. Do you think the colonial background of Macau affects the landscape of online media? How and why?

8. Can you evaluate the relationship between your medium and social movement/NGOs?

All About Macau

1. Do you worry about survival?

2. How to survive?

3. How to attract more readers?

4. How to evaluate the impact of your media on the society?

5. How do you define your media's role in developing civil society in Macau?

6. What do you think about the ecology of online media?

7. Do you think the colonial background of Macau affects the landscape of online media? How and why?

8. Can you evaluate the relationship between your medium and social movement/NGOs?

UTV

1. Why focus on video?

2. Why do you prefer producing contents that are so-called positive or pro-establishment?

3. How do you define your role when facing the role of supervising the government?

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4. How do you evaluate the impact of your media on society?

5. How do you define your media's role in developing civil society in Macau?

6. Do you worry about survival?

7. How can you survive?

8. How will you attract more readers?

9. Why does your media seem to prefer promoting Macau government rather than criticising it?

10. What do you think about the ecology of online media?

11. Do you think the colonial background of Macau affects the ecology of local online media? How and why?

12. UTV's first video was released on YouTube in 2011 but on its Facebook page the first video was released in 2015, can you explain why?

13. Can you evaluate the relationship between your medium and social movement/NGOs?

True. Love Macao

1. Why post such much so called positive and pro-establishment news?

2. How do you define your role when supervising the government?

3. How do you evaluate the impact of your media on society?

4. How do you define your media's role in developing civil society in Macau?

5. *True. Love Macao* was founded in 2004 but the first post was only published in May 2014, what are reasons for that?

6. Why does your media seem to prefer promoting Macau government rather than criticising it?

7. What do you do think about the ecology of online media?

8. Do you think the colonial background of Macau affects the landscape of local online media? How and why?

9. Can you evaluate the relationship between your medium and social movement/NGOs?