

SUMMARY

THE UMBRELLA REVOLUTION IN HONG KONG. REASONS, COURSE, CONSEQUENCES

This publication analyses direct and contextual causes of the Umbrella Revolution from the perspective of collective action theory, relative deprivation, social identity theory, resource mobilization, modernization, and – with respect to the effects of the “revolution” – a socio-political cleavage. Its aim is to verify the hypothesis that deepening the socio-political cleavage in Hong Kong is an important effect of the so-called Umbrella Revolution, and the outbreak of protests itself can be an example of a scenario of social discontent due to the feeling of relative deprivation supported by favourable circumstances regarding resource mobilization and social identity. The author assumed that at present in Hong Kong there is a widespread sense of deprivation related to two main areas: political values (expectations to democratize the election law – not without reason the assumptions of modernization theories will have considerable explanatory power in this regard), and welfare values (sense of “dilution” of special economic status and cultural identity of the Hong Kong people). In the case of the former, progressive deprivation appears (i.e. one of the three forms of relative deprivation), that is a situation where due to the decision of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress limiting the democratization process, which was the direct cause of the protests, the degree

of meeting the political needs of the disappointed Hong Kong society has begun to noticeably diverge from the gradually growing aspirations of the so-called pro-democracy community. As to the welfare values, decremental deprivation seems more relevant. It refers to the situation when expectations remain unchanged, but the possibilities of satisfying the socio-economic needs of a part of the society have considerably decreased and a sense of threat to own cultural identity has increased. The author, bearing in mind the objections to the theory of relative deprivation since the 1970s, believed that without considering other social theories, such as the resource mobilization theory modified by Bert Klandermans, it will be difficult to explain the transformation of social discontent in Hong Kong into the process of public opposition. For this reason, he assumed that favourable conditions such as the already existing “mobilization structure” (a network of pro-democracy social organizations), a defined political appeal and a sense of community between young Hong Kong residents based on shared emotions also led to the outbreak of protests.

Data necessary for analysis were collected, among others, during the research conducted in Hong Kong in April 2014, in November 2015 and in September 2016. There was mainly qualitative research conducted: free and expert interviews with academic staff, journalists and local politicians, focus group interviews and in-depth interviews. They were extended with quantitative research in the form of questionnaires filled in by students. In addition to traditional source criticism, an important method of obtaining data was also the analysis of existing sources, including the results of surveys on socio-political values and attitudes (World Value Survey, AsiaBarometer, East Asia Value Survey), public opinion research reports in open access (including the Hong Kong Transition Project, Public Opinion Programme), and Asian Barometer data (East Asia Barometer) obtained thanks to courtesy of the employees of the Center for East Asia Democratic Studies.

The publication begins with the presentation of the broad historical and political context of events that have taken place in Hong Kong

in recent years. The transfer of authority over the region to the People's Republic of China was a multifaceted process, and it has caused many changes within the political and social system. The democratization of the region has been a very important element of the political agenda in recent years. In accordance with the key role of the social structure in generating conditions for development of relative deprivation and collective perception, and a sense of delegitimization of the system for the transformation of frustration into collective activities, the focus of the further part of the study is placed on the social situation in Hong Kong after the region was taken over by the People's Republic of China, and then the course of the protests in 2014 is presented.

The second chapter analyses the protests from the perspective of Ted R. Gurr's relative deprivation theory and other social science theories. In the last part of the study, the socio-political cleavage in Hong Kong is examined with respect to the organizational and ideological issues, indicating, among others, the development of the so-called radical democrats, nativist and localist groups. Moreover, the process of changing political attitudes in the region is discussed.

Transl. *Izabela Ślusarek*