



SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

SUPPORTING HONG KONG FROM A DISTANCE

An interview study with members of the Hong Kong diaspora
in Sweden on their transnational engagement towards the
Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020

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Abstract

In the summer of 2019, Hong Kong experienced a challenging and turbulent uprising that pushed the city to the verge of revolution. The aim of this study is to investigate transnational engagement amongst members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden. The study's qualitative material is obtained through semi-structured interviews with members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden. I apply a theoretical framework consisting of my theoretical perspective: transnationalism and diaspora, a number of analytical tools: economic, social and political remittances, Van Hear's (2014) three social spheres: the household/extended family sphere, the known community sphere and the imagined community sphere, and two theoretical concepts: capacity and desire. Consequently, I address the following research question: how, and why, do members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage transnationally in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020? The main findings of this research are that economic, social and political remittances are transnationally transferred towards the three social spheres to a varying extent and travel both from host to home country, and vice versa. The most common type of engagement through which members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage transnationally in the protest movement is by arranging and participating in politically motivated demonstrations. Members of the Hong Kong diaspora engage because their capacity to do so is increased in Sweden, but also as they experience strong expectations on themselves to support the movement. Additionally, sentiments of guilt and pride are driving them to engage in the protest movement.

Key words: *transnationalism, diaspora, Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020, Sweden, remittances, social spheres, semi-structured interviews*

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1. Introduction

In the summer of 2019, Hong Kong experienced a challenging and turbulent uprising that pushed the city to the verge of revolution (Lee et al. 2019, 22). The scope, scale and duration of the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020 are unprecedented in the city. Panoramas of hundreds of thousands of protestors in black clothing filling the streets, infinite rounds of tear gas fired by the police, pro-democracy protestors and pro-government supporters covered in blood, and burning buildings are all eye-catching events that have been broadcasted by mass media and been followed globally (Wan Chan and Pun 2020, 33). Even though the protest movement rose up from opposition against a single policy initiative, the protestors' collective incentives for political reform derived from mounting and wide-spread grievances towards Hong Kong's political system (Lee et al. 2019, 23; Ting 2020, 362). As the protest movement successfully portrayed their struggle as pro-democratic and transmitted their grievances to the international community, more people would align themselves with the movement (Lee et al 2019, 26). Today, many violent conflicts do not only relate to local security matters but also to how the conflict is understood by ethnic communities living overseas. This is apparent as conflicts directly affect the lives of members of diaspora communities in distant locations that share ethnic ties with the population involved in the conflict. Thus, addressing diasporas residing beyond the particular site where a conflict is unfolding and acknowledging their role in relation to the conflict, is required to attain broader knowledge of many conflicts (Shain 2002, 115). Over recent years, research has proven that diaspora communities, through remittances and other types of transnational engagement, can contribute to both stability and instability in their "homelands" (Lyons 2007; Lum et al. 2013; Horst 2008). The relationship between diasporas and their homeland offer the former with unique capacity and expertise to influence the affairs of their country of origin (Lum et al. 2013, 201). In addition to this, transnational communities might also strive for political change indirectly by working with different actors in the host country, and in this way intensify pressure for political change in their homeland. While it has been increasingly acknowledged that diasporas' transnational political engagement plays an essential role in their homelands conflicts, research describing *how* and *why* is still limited (Horst 2008, 324 & 334). In order to produce knowledge on this, I address these questions in my research by conducting qualitative interviews with members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden regarding the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020.

1.1 Aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to investigate transnational engagement amongst members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden. In order to analyze the material obtained through semi-structured interviews, I apply a theoretical framework consisting of my theoretical perspective: transnationalism and diaspora, a number of analytical tools: economic, social and political remittances, the household/extended family sphere, the known community sphere and the imagined community sphere, as well as two theoretical concepts: capacity and desire. To meet my study's aim, I address the following research question and sub-questions:

1. How, and why, do members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage transnationally in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020?
 - a. What types of transnational remittances are directed towards the household/extended family sphere, the known community sphere and the imagined community sphere?
 - b. Why do members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage transnationally in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020, and how can their engagement be understood by the analytical tools of capacity and desire?

In this study, members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden are defined as: individuals who are born in Hong Kong but live in Sweden today, and that in one way or another maintain transnational ties or engagement towards Hong Kong.

1.2 Delimitations

For the sake of delimitating this study, it is necessary to briefly discuss the time period of the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020. Although March 31 of 2019 has been pointed out as the starting date of the anti-extradition bill protests (Lee et al. 2019, 2; Singh et al. 2019), it is complicated to determine an end date of the protest movement. Even if the covid-19 pandemic, at the time of writing, has hampered the movement, dedicated protestors (in much smaller numbers) are continuing to demonstrate their discomfort (Griffiths 2020). Because the

protests are truly recent (or ongoing) events, in this study I therefore refer to the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020 without a fixed termination date.

This study focuses on remittances and transnational engagement which are intended to support and inspire the protest movement and its goals, and which are sent by members in the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden who are self-proclaimed sympathizers of the pro-democracy camp and thus in favor of the protest movement. Essential to note, however, is that the protest movement is a polarized issue and that not all people from Hong Kong support the protest movement, as there are many Hongkongers who live abroad that sympathize with the pro-Beijing camp and oppose the protest movement (Haas 2019). Despite this fact, this study does not intend to investigate what types of remittances and transnational engagement members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden might transfer towards the movement with the intention to counter and destabilize it. Comparing transnational actions targeted *against* the movement with the more supportive ones might have been interesting, as a means to understand the role the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden plays in relation to the protest movement more comprehensively. This aspect could be advanced by future research but is not included in the scope of this study due to time constraints. Continuing on the track of comparisons, this study solely focuses on the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden. In a different scenario, comparing transnational engagement from a democratic country as Sweden with engagement from a less democratic country could also have generated interesting findings, as a democratic environment can increase migrants' capacities to involve themselves in homeland politics (further elaborated in section 3.2).

1.3 Relevance to Global Studies

Despite the euphoria around globalization, it is far from all that have benefitted from its effects. The phenomena of globalization have produced new risks and uncertainties for already less affluent people. Nevertheless, the force of globalization has also given rise to large changes in the ways in which people live, as well as generated new opportunities (Mervyn 2013, 3). Today, diasporas are increasingly viewed as influential political actors. There is a growing importance of diaspora politics, which refers to populations residing in one country transnationally engaging with politics in their homeland. The reason behind this is partly greater changes

associated with globalization, as globalization, through contributing to an increase in international migration, has facilitated different types of diasporic political engagement that transcend international borders (Adamson 2016, 291). My study is of relevance to Global Studies as it pays attention to the interconnectedness between transnational diasporic engagement and globalization, by investigating transnational engagement amongst the members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden. Moreover, diasporic transnational engagement towards the homeland's politics, the topic of my study, is also closely intertwined with how globalization has accelerated the development of new technologies, global media and communications on the Internet, which have enabled diasporas to engage in transnational politics in real time (Adamson 2016, 291). Similarly, obtaining 'communication power' through the new paradigm of information technology is also a pivotal aspect for social movements to create a network society, and thus generate resistance (Castells 2010, 384-389).

Essential to the field of Global Studies, is that the global does not just mean referring to something "big". Instead, the local and the global are both of significance to each other and are deeply interwoven with one another. This entails that global processes are not only brought about in large and vibrant cities and multinational corporations, they also rise from small villages, communities, workplaces, families' homes and are performed by ordinary people (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017, 4). These understandings are important to the topic of my study, as a local protest movement on a national level in Hong Kong has become a global issue. The force of globalization has not only resulted in the international migration of Hongkongers to Sweden, but also facilitated members of this diaspora to transfer remittances and transnational engagement towards the protest movement. As seen in my study's case, with the transnational engagement by members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden, transnationalism is closely interrelated to 'glocalization' – the combined ideas of globalization and localization (Robertson 1995, 29-32). While the protest movement initially started locally, globalization facilitated its spread to the global arena, and ultimately to the local context of Sweden. In a globalized world, all processes are interconnected.

2. Background

Hong Kong is a ‘Special Administrative Region’ under the People's Republic of China. Hong Kong is ruled by the principle ‘One Country, Two Systems’, which entitles Hongkongers with some democratic rights. Despite this, Mainland China’s increased pressure on Hong Kong has led Hongkongers’ freedoms to gradually decline (Cheung and Hughes 2019; Yeung 2018, 447). As a response to this, Hong Kong’s Umbrella Movement of 2014 was until recently the most important pro-democracy protest on Chinese soil since the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989 (Rühlig 2017, 794). This, however, was before the uprising of 2019 – which took protests in Hong Kong to a new dimension. In this chapter, I present the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020 and discuss migration from China to Sweden.

2.1 The Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020

In February of 2019, Hong Kong’s government revealed its plans to amend their laws which would allow Hong Kong to surrender fugitives to jurisdictions such as Mainland China. (Lee et al. 2019, 2). Even though clear messages of disagreement regarding the proposed extradition bill echoed from different sections of the Hong Kong society, those warnings were ignored by the government (Lee et al. 2019, 23; Purbrick 2019, 467). The protest march on June 9, where over one million Hongkongers participated, was a strong indication of the broad and diverse public opposition against the bill. This was only a foretaste of what was about to come (Purbrick 2019, 467-468). Even though many of the protests were carried out by tranquil tactics such as sit-ins and flash mobs, it was the violent confrontations that had a decisive impact on the protest movement (Lee et al 2019, 18). The excessive use of force from the Hong Kong police against the protestors was condemned and described as violations of international human rights law and standards. Critique raised by international actors monitoring the protests was based on leaked footage of police without visible police identification who were harassing journalist and medical personnel, and unlawfully using batons, rubber bullets, pepper spray and tear gas against protesters. The police’s repressive methods of handling the protests shocked many people in Hong Kong and resulted in widespread local and international criticism. While some of the protestors responded the police with more violence, they were a clear minority of the largely peaceful protestors. Instead, many protestors countered the police’s violence with

innovative means of protection such as swimming goggles or gas masks to stand against tear gas, pepper spray and to cover their identities, the infamous umbrellas to protect against police assaults and mobile phones to communicate and swap intelligence (Purbrick 2019, 470-473). On June 15, due to the government's faulty management of the protests, a young man committed suicide. The following day, approximately two million Hongkongers flooded the streets of Hong Kong demanding the complete withdrawal of the bill (Lee et al. 2019, 2-3; Purbrick 2019, 471).

Possibly, the protest movement reached its peak on July 1. Some of the protesters breached into Hong Kong's Legislative Council (LegCo) when the police had withdrawn. Some of the frontliners destroyed furniture, vandalized portraits and also presented a manifesto that encompassed their five demands, including the complete withdrawal of the bill, investigation into police abuse of power, and universal suffrage for both the LegCo and the Chief Executive (Lee et al. 2019, 10; Purbrick 2019, 471-472). Lastly, it is worth mentioning the governments difficulty in understanding how the protestors organize themselves, since this is a key aspect of the movement. The protest movement can be understood as an open platform and is characterized by its leaderless and decentralized nature. The movement benefitted from protestors great usage of the Internet and social media, as this served the purpose of not only organizing action but also grow support (Lee et al. 2019, 2; Purbrick 2019, 474-475). On September 4, after three months of no political solutions, Hong Kong's Chief Executive Carrie Lam finally announced the complete withdrawal of the extradition bill. However, the government continued to ignore the other demands, which according to many Hongkongers, was too little, and too late (Lee et al. 2019, 484; Purbrick 2019, 11).

2.2 Migration from China to Sweden

Migration from mainland China to Sweden was rarely practiced from 1949 when the People's Republic of China was established to the end of the 1970s, this since China initially had strict travel controls even within China. During this time, most of the Chinese migrants who arrived in Sweden came from Taiwan or Hong Kong. These numbers were however small. Instead, Chinese migration to Sweden should mainly be seen as a recent phenomenon. The Chinese migration to Sweden increased significantly in the mid-2000s. For this reason, there were in

2011 a total of 25 00 Chinese-born (including Taiwan and Hong Kong) persons living in Sweden. This increment of migration was, among other factors, a consequence of intensification of globalization. Accompanying family members and refugees had been the usual groups of migrants, however, increasing levels of globalization opened up for different reasons to migrate such as marriage, labour and studies (Axelsson et al. 2013, 13-14). Knowledge about university education without tuition fees and possibilities of studying in English in Sweden have spread among Chinese students and have thus contributed to Chinese students migrating to Sweden (Hedberg and Malmberg 2008, 40). As a result of this, there were in 2019 a total of 35 282 persons born in mainland China and 604 persons born in Hong Kong who reside in Sweden (Statistics Sweden 2019).

3. Previous research

In this chapter, I present and discuss theoretical understandings from previous research that are of relevance to my study. These understandings are drawn from the research fields on social movements, migration, and diasporic transnationalism. Following this, I reflect upon my contribution to the research field.

3.1 Transnational political actors

An important theme within the social movement field is the role of transnational political actors. Here, the literature stresses that within today's global context, diaspora and migrant populations have taken on the role as economic, cultural, and political agents for change in both their home and host countries (Biswas 2004; Sökefeld 2006; Underhill 2019). Examining diaspora experiences and networks in political terms instead of economically or ancestrally enable us to understand the formation of diaspora as an issue of social mobilization (Sökefeld 2006). This opens up for new and important ways of analyzing diasporas, as they are brought into the global polity and thus as transnational political actors. This is fundamentally important to be able to understand social movements within an increasingly globalized context, and to acknowledge the diversity of actors who mobilize for social change as a response to injustice (Underhill 2019, 367). Furthermore, scholars scrutinizing transnational political actors such as diasporas have widened their definitional boundaries of what ought to be classified as movement participation, this in order to include people who may view themselves as participating in social action through different and nontraditional ways (Bayat 2002; Ollis 2011; Underhill 2019). In so doing, the literature not only underlines the importance of adapting social movement research to our contemporary context but also open up for new spaces and performances of social action. Therefore, a wide-ranging conception of social movement is crucial to permit and respond to the advancements and creativity of people who wishes to produce social change (Underhill 2019, 372).

3.2 Transnationalism and emotions

Previous research from the migration field has explored the interconnectedness between transnationalism and emotions (Hage 2002; Wise and Velayutham 2017). Here, it has been

stressed that emotional dynamics are entwined with transnational practices, and that advancing our understandings of this enables us to see what motivates or compels actors' transnational engagement. By applying theoretical understandings of transnational affect, it is suggested that emotions reproduce and redirect transnational social fields. In this way, it is highlighted that affects and emotions as shame, pride, honor and guilt are linked to the flow of different types of remittances, such as phone calls and text messages. Thus, emotions produce an intensification or reduction in the capability to act transnationally (Wise and Velayutham 2017, 116-117 & 127).

3.3 Diasporas and their host countries

Diaspora groups can play many different roles with reference to their home countries. Interest in the country of origin can derive from a longing to still feel part of the homeland. Alternatively, from a longing to support the homeland's development, political change or simply from motivations to aid family or friends still living in the homeland (Biswas 2004, 271). Moreover, diasporas possibilities to influence their homelands are dependent on what type of country the diaspora is located in. Diasporas' potentials to influence their home countries are likely to be reduced if the diaspora is situated in an authoritarian country of settlement. However, a host country which is characterized by democracy and multiculturalism may offer opportunities for expression and secure social spaces. A life in the diaspora, therefore, can provide increased possibilities to actively select whether to engage with people and politics "from back home", or to avoid it (Orjuela 2017, 69 & 73). Furthermore, parts of the research field on diasporas have argued that members of the diaspora usually take on hard-line positions, and that they, compared to people in the homeland, are more prone to support violent struggles against the power holders. In other terms, they become long-distance nationalists who promote violent uprisings without having to experience the consequences of the violence they advocated for (Anderson 1992; Collier and Hoeffler 2004). However, the view of diasporas as hardliners has been questioned by newer research suggesting that members of diasporas who engage in homeland affairs tend to develop into more moderate actors, this since they regulate or even mirror their activism to the political system and societal norms of the host country. Instead, it is questions such as the integration of the migrants to the new host country and opportunity

structures, both in the new countries and globally, that contribute in shaping how the conflict back home is understood by the diasporas (Orjuela 2017, 69).

3.4 Diasporas and their influence

It is no novelty that many people live outside of what they perceive to be their homeland, nor is it anything new that many of them continue their engagement in homeland politics. Nevertheless, the progress in communication and transportation technology in recent decades have indeed facilitated the interaction between migrants around the globe and the homeland to take place much closer and rapidly (Orjuela 2008, 438). In her research on diaspora, Orjuela (2008) highlights four different ways in which diasporas may influence homeland political conflicts: (1) ‘Directly supporting the warring parties’, in which members of the diaspora provide financial support to e.g. opposition parties, rebel groups or other politically active actors in the homeland. The financial support can consist of direct contributions of funds or through involvement in global business or criminal networks. (2) ‘Canvassing international support’ entails that diaspora networks join different types of advocacy, political protests and propaganda to obtain legitimacy for political struggles and gain attention from the international community. International support is paramount not only for the military strength of belligerent actors but also for affecting the outcomes of potential peace settlements or political reforms. (3) ‘Influencing ideas in the homeland’ suggests that the diaspora engage in the production of media, music, film and other cultural practices and expressions. This sort of engagement tends to play a significant role in influencing the discourses and notions about the conflict and conflict resolution both among key political actors and ordinary “compatriots back home”. As previously touched upon, diasporas can also take advantage of their relatively secure position in their new setting to enter into peaceful dialogue with supporters from the opposing side. Lastly, (4) ‘Supporting development and reconstruction’ encompasses that besides sending remittances to friends and relatives, diasporas also support their home country as contributors to charity organizations, as consumers of homeland products and as investors in business in their home country. However, it is important to underscore that diasporas financial assistance do not always contribute to peaceful solutions and endings of conflict. As development might result in peaceful relations, it might as well worsen conflicts and produce new challenges (Orjuela 2008, 438-439). Examining how diaspora communities contribute to an intensified

conflict, political change or to peace is a delicate matter. This is evidential as the literature rightfully explain that diasporas are tremendously diverse within themselves. A great amount of people who may be classified as diaspora do not actively or routinely engage in their homelands politics. Other traits such as class, gender, generation, education and age are also immensely important in shaping whether or not members of the diaspora involve themselves with their homeland (Orjuela 2008, 439).

3.5 Hong Kong diasporas

In order to acquire a better understanding of the study's aim, it is of relevance to discuss previous research on Hong Kong diasporas and their ties to their homeland. In 1994, Skeldon famously confirmed that there was a culture of migration in Hong Kong that normalized international migration. Skeldon also emphasized that Hong Kong migrants could be viewed as 'reluctant exiles' seeking political security (Skeldon 1994). During the early 2000s, these understandings were some of the more prominent ones within the literature on migration from Hong Kong. However, more recent research findings on migration from Hong Kong to Canada, has challenged Skeldon's portrayal of Hong Kong migrants as reluctant exiles to claim that for many Hong Kong migrants, it is the other way around. These newer findings rather point towards the understanding of the migrants as willing to emigrate from Hong Kong, since they view Canada as a place for improved prospects for their families. These Hong Kong migrants tend to become reluctant exiles in later stages of their lives as they once again return to Hong Kong for economic reasons (Kobayashi and Preston 2007, 165). The findings also stress the interconnectedness between transnational practices among young adults in the Hong Kong diaspora in Canada, and their emerging identities. These results suggest that many of the young adults claimed national identities to both Hong Kong and Canada, as they had been growing up with one parent in each country and therefore developed transnational ties to Hong Kong (Kobayashi and Preston 2007, 154 & 163-164). With regards to how my study position itself in relation to previous research, my study does not particularly address the literature concerning identity building in relation to migration from Hong Kong. However, this part of the literature has been thoroughly studied and are related to my study as it incorporates Hong Kong diasporas transnational ties to their homeland.

In their comparative analysis, Dunn and Kamp (2015) examine the experiences of Hong Kong transnationals in two different countries, Australia and Canada. Their results underscores similarities when comparing the two Hong Kong diasporas, especially in terms of transnational communication with their homeland as both diasporas use telephone calls and texting as forms of maintaining ties to Hong Kong. Owing to the comparative nature of the analysis, these results may reveal a global trend among Hong Kong diasporas (Dunn and Kamp 2015, 36 & 39-40). Furthermore, literature from the research field on diasporic transnationalism has highlighted that the Hong Kong diaspora in the United States has preserved a close connection with family, relatives and friends in Hong Kong. Important about these findings is that a higher frequency of social contact with family and friends, increased the likelihood of both transnational engagement in homeland politics and engagement in politics in the country of settlement. The findings also showed that many in the diaspora had closely been following the political development in the city via news. By following the development, members of the diaspora became aware of gaps in the economic development in Hong Kong, this in turn increased their probability of remitting money to Hong Kong. Lastly, the findings in this research also indicated that pre-emigration activism augmented migrants' likelihood of participating in homeland politics. Sustaining transnational social contacts in the homeland enabled members of the Hong Kong diaspora in the United States to involve themselves in homeland political issues (Lien 2010, 467-469 & 473-475).

3.6 Placing my study in the research field

There appears to be no extensive amount of research scrutinizing the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden and how members of that particular diaspora engage in transnational activities towards their country of origin. The number of Hongkongers who reside in Sweden, as we have seen in this study's background, is not extensive and could therefore be an explanation to why this has been understudied. Even though the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden is considerably low in numbers, I find it necessary to examine how smaller diasporas respond to political conflicts in their homeland. Hence, I consider it to be important and valuable to fill this gap in the research field. Particularly since, as you soon shall come to see, members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden have engaged in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020 with remarkable and intriguing types of engagement. Consequently, I intend to contribute to the research field on diasporas and transnationalism by filling this research gap with my study.

4. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this study consists of my theoretical perspective: transnationalism and diaspora. In addition to this, the theoretical framework also consists of a number of analytical tools, namely: three types of remittances (economic, social and political), Van Hear's (2014) three social spheres (the household/extended family sphere, the known community sphere, and the imagined community sphere), as well as two theoretical concepts: capacity and desire. In this chapter, I describe the different parts of the theoretical framework in the same order as they were just presented.

4.1 Transnationalism

Since the introduction of 'transnationalism' to migration studies, it has become widely acknowledged among scholars that many migrants maintain a variety of close ties to their homelands at the same time as they are incorporated into their new host country. As migrants became part of their new societies, transnational migration scholars established that the migrants simultaneously continued to be active in their homelands affairs as they participated in familial, economic, political, social and religious cross-border processes (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, 129-130). Transnationalism has been used to refer to migrants' everyday practices that internationally transcend the borders of sovereign states. These may comprise political participation in both home and host country, exercising support and solidarity within kinship networks and endorsing the exchange of cultural customs and performances (Faist 2010, 11-13). Transnationalism entails a myriad of forms in which transnational activities take place. Thus, transnationalism may encompass single or multiple trans-border activities, regular or encouraged due to a specific situation. Transnational activities can be undertaken by individuals, migrant families or ethnic groups, and can be directed to people both in the home and host country (Morawska 2007). Inspired by Vertovec, I make usage of the following definition of transnationalism in my study: 'multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states' (Vertovec 1999, 447).

The discussion now turns to critique of the concept transnationalism. Parts of the critique has pointed out that migrants' transnational practices vary significantly from each other, and that

this would implicate too broad generalizations concerning migrants (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, 131). Furthermore, some scholars have criticized transnationalism by highlighting that migrants always have maintained ties to their homelands (Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004, 1177-1179). Others have argued that transnational ties among second generation migrants, would gradually fade away (Portes et al. 1999, 230-233). This criticism, however, has in subsequent scholarship been addressed. The responses to the criticism include not only clarifying the social spaces where transnationalism occurs, but also elucidating the social structures it produces. It also involves advances on the concepts variations and dimensions, as well as comparison between contemporary trans-border activities with preceding sorts of migration and actions (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, 131).

4.2 Diaspora

We now turn to the concept of ‘diaspora’. Even though the difference between the concepts of transnationalism and diaspora is that the latter one refers to a community or group, transnationalism refers to the transcending processes committed by member in the diaspora. Consequently, literature has established that the two concepts of transnationalism and diaspora cannot be separated in a meaningful way (Faist 2010, 12-13). This notion is also applicable to my study.

In this study, diaspora is defined in the following way: ‘the term diaspora broadly refers to the spread of migrant communities away from a real or imagined ‘homeland’ (Van Hear 2014, 176). Furthermore, in most of the interpretations of the concept of diaspora we can distinguish three characteristics. These characteristics can be subdivided into older and more recent usages. The first characteristic encompasses the causes of migration or dispersal, here, older ideas focused on forced dispersal, e.g. for Jews and Palestinians. Newer notions, however, explain that any kind of dispersal can lead to the formation of diasporas, such as the Mexican labour migration diaspora. The second characteristic connects cross-border experiences of homeland with the country of destination. Older ideas highlight the importance of a return to an imagined homeland. Newer ones tend to disregard from the return, and instead stress the migrants’ lateral ties across borders. The final characteristic regards the incorporation of migrants into their country of destination. Previous notions of diaspora suggested that migrants maintained their

ties with their homeland because they never fully integrated socially, politically, culturally or economically to their new host country. In contrast, newer understandings of diaspora highlight cultural hybridity and migrants' ability of simultaneously staying interested and affectionate for both their home and host country (Faist 2010, 12-13). Today, diasporas challenge the traditional notion of the nation-state's boundaries, this since they reside outside their home state but at the same time demonstrate their concern for it (Kapur 2014, 484).

With time passing by, new generations within the diasporas will have different perceptions towards both their home and host land (Van Hear 2014, 179). This process has been a focal point for the critique against the diaspora concept. The critique emphasizes that not only will diasporas be different in their formation, such as students, labor migrants, marriage migrants, asylum seekers and refugees but also that they are different in terms of gender, class, religion, and age. Diasporas heterogeneity could therefore, according to the critique, generate problems within the diaspora itself. This because affluent members of the diaspora would have the possibility to engage in transnational activities more than less affluent ones – thus becoming a question of equity. As a response to this, scholars examine diasporas' acts by taking its heterogeneity into account and bearing in mind different domains within the diaspora itself (Van Hear 2014, 185-186).

In this study, I make usage of the concepts of transnationalism and diaspora as my theoretical perspective. Thus, the concepts of diaspora and transnationalism are hereinafter applied as my research's perspective.

4.3 Analytical tools: three types of remittances and three social spheres

In this section, the three different types of remittances (economic, social and political) are first described. Subsequently, the three social spheres (the household/extended family sphere, the known community sphere and the imagined community sphere) to which the remittances can be aimed towards, are explained.

4.3.1 Three types of remittances

Remittances are often thought of, and defined as economic transfers which follow unidirectional routes from a migrant worker to her or his sending household, community or country. It is undisputable that economic remittances play an integral role in migrants' transcending practices. However, remittances are not solely a matter of economic transfers and they are not limited to travel one-way. Instead, remittances continuously circulate and are entangled in migration and founded in the connections migrants share with their home and host communities. Looking beyond the economics of migration, to the socio-political impacts of remittance practices reveals new dimensions of trans-border activity (Cohen 2011, 104; Levitt and Lamba-Nieves 2011, 19).

4.3.2 Economic remittances

'Economic remittances' are understood as the transfer of money from a migrant to his or her home country. The money can be transferred in different ways, through banks, agencies, social networks, via online services, or by professional couriers. The economic remittances can be sent by different sorts of migrants: male and female, old and young, legal or undocumented, long term and short term, high skilled and low skilled. A large proportion of migrants send money to their families in their homeland for basic subsistence, remittances are thus of great value to the families and communities that receive them. In the last decades, economic remittances have grown substantially, this has resulted in that economic remittances can today impact countries development as a whole. Economic remittances may also stimulate change within different sociocultural institutions such as local status hierarchies, consumer habits and gender relations. Therefore, the effects of economic remittances sent by migrants may both have micro and macro consequences (Vertovec 2004, 985-986).

4.3.3 Social remittances

'Social remittances' consist of ideas, norms, practices, behaviors, identities and social capital that flow from a migrant's country of settlement to its country of origin (Levitt 1998, 927; Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, 132). The exchange of social remittances occurs via interchanges of letters, audio or video telephone calls, e-mails, blog posts or different types of communication through social media. Social remittances are transferred between individuals, within organizations or between freer informally-organized groups and social networks, which may or may not be

connected to formal organizations (Levitt 1998, 936; Levitt and Lamba-Nieves 2011, 3). An example of a social remittance is when migrants speak directly to their family members regarding politics and motivate them to strive for change (Levitt 1998, 936). The numbers who engage in regular transnational performances may be rather small. Those who actively engage in informal and occasional transnational actions, such as social practices as a consequence of political or economic difficulties, are much greater (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, 132). Importantly, the impact of social remittances can both be positive and negative. What is learned or experienced in the host society is not necessarily beneficial and may therefore have a negative effect in the country of origin (Levitt 1998, 944).

4.3.4 Political remittances

‘Political remittances’ are the flow of political notions and standpoints. Migrants’ transnational remittances of political nature encompass different activities such as membership in political associations, supporting political campaigns in their homeland, lobbying the authorities in one country to try to influence politics in another (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, 136). Members of diasporas can also undertake political remittances through voting, return as candidate themselves, or if a return is not possible, try to influence politics in their homeland via financial donations to political parties or activist and advocacy groups. Additionally, they can establish a channel for the flow of notions to try to politically influence family and friends in their country of origin, in this way diasporas can have an impact on policy changes in their country of origin. If political remittances are used to fund political parties, extremist groups, or subnational protest movements, they may have direct political consequences. Their indirect political effects are, however, equally important (Kapur 2014, 484 & 491; Faist 2010, 23).

4.4 Van Hear’s three social spheres

Van Hear’s theory of the three social spheres focuses on diasporas’ engagement from affluent countries to conflict-ridden societies. The three social spheres are (1) ‘the household/extended family sphere’, (2) ‘the known community sphere’ and (3) ‘the imagined community sphere’ (Van Hear 2014). Breaking down the different social spheres will in the analysis enable us to understand how the remittances and the transnational engagement are directed towards Hong Kong.

4.4.1 The household/extended family sphere

Engagement aimed towards the household/extended family sphere is mainly personal and private. Engagement towards this social sphere is expected to be the most common of the three spheres, this since it entails basic relationships with friends and relatives (Van Hear 2014). In this setting, remittances are sent to assist family members to survive and cope with milieus of conflict. Moreover, money that is sent back may be of usage for everyday needs, such as housing, schooling, health care or to escape conflict zones. Members of the diaspora may also participate in important family occasions, as births and marriages. In conflict situations, such engagement might be conducted through online services or telephone (Van Hear 2014, 181-182; Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 173).

4.4.2 The known community sphere

Engagement directed towards the known community sphere occurs in spaces where a migrant is living or has lived and amongst people he or she knows or knows of. The transnational remittances are targeted towards schools, workplaces, shops, political or social associations or other sorts of organizations or institutions. Compared to the household/extended family sphere, activities are aimed towards larger groups or collectivities. One example of engagement towards a collectivity is the support for insurgent groups or uprisings, in form of funds to purchase weapons. Remittances aimed towards the known community sphere in conflict contexts are not only of economic and material effect, more importantly, they can contribute to the reconstruction of the social fabric which might be damaged by the conflict. Even though the possibilities of engagement may reduce in conflict settings, these possibilities are today enhanced by social media and flexible travel alternatives (Van Hear 2014, 182; Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 173).

4.4.3 The imagined community sphere

Benedict Anderson, the founder of ‘the imagined community’ (Anderson 1991), argued that nations are socially constructed communities, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of that community. He also stated that there is no logical reason why the imagined community should not be expanded beyond the nation-state’s boundaries – to co-nationals (Anderson 1991). To the discussion on the imagined community, Van Hear and Cohen adds

that the notion ought to be expanded to collectivities such as co-ethnics and social movements. Hence, the imagined community sphere is the larger, more general sphere which refers to the nation as a community. Therefore, engagement directed towards the imagined community sphere implicates membership or involvement in political parties and movements, support for insurgence or uprising and contributions to oppositional groups. Additionally, it may involve public demonstrations or lobbying influential people (such as politicians and journalists) in the country of settlement, in the homeland or in the international environment. In recent time, this has increasingly been undertaken in terms of engagement in political, social or cultural discussions online. The sphere of the imagined community is usually the most dynamic of the three spheres. It also tends to be the sphere which least engagement is directed towards because it requires extensive levels of social mobilization, thus demanding more from the members in the diaspora. Lastly, initiatives by different actors in the country of origin, who also imagine a nation transcending the state's boundaries, may reach out and encourage their co-nationals in the diasporas to demonstrate loyalty to certain issues (Van Hear 2014, 182-184; Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 173-174).

Noteworthy, the three social spheres, that work as analytical tools, often overlap and interplay. For example, what is aimed towards the imagined community sphere could also be influenced by what is occurring in the household/extended family sphere, and vice versa (Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 174).

4.4.4 Theoretical concepts: capacity and desire

In order to obtain a broader understanding of why members of the Hong Kong diaspora engage transnationally in the Hong Kong's protest movement of 2019-2020, the theoretical concepts of 'capacity' and 'desire' are now discussed (Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 174). The capacity to engage is dependent on the person's income, having the freedom to express itself and the security status in the country of origin and the country of settlement. The capacity to engage is also intertwined with political knowledge, as this can facilitate engagement such as lobbying and speaking in public (Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 174). Examining how the members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden view their own capacities of engagement, may reveal their possibilities or what is hindering them from engaging in transnational activities. Furthermore, a 'portfolio of obligations' entails different morally requirements and obligations which can be

perceived by members of the diaspora. When a member of the diaspora is too caught up with its “new life” in its country of settlement, the portfolio of obligations towards their homeland may turn into a psychological burden (Van Hear 2014, 184).

The desire to engage in transnational activities is characterized by a person’s private motivations. Here, a person may be motivated by the desire to protect his or her friends, relatives or family. The motivation can also originate from deeper political and humanitarian concerns to protect a certain group of people, their society or nation (Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 174). Finally, this study focuses solely on the interviewees’ articulations of what they do and will therefore make no claims of whether or not their engagement has a positive or negative impact on the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020.

5 Methods

The methods of this study consist of semi-structured interviewing and qualitative content analysis. Thus, in this chapter I introduce semi-structured interviewing as the method that enabled me to collect my material and qualitative content analysis as the method applied to analyze the collected material. Additionally, I describe the interviewees from the semi-structured interviews and discuss the importance of ethical consideration with regards to researching a sensitive topic deeply entangled with Mainland China.

5.1 Semi-structured interviewing

Semi-structured interviewing is designed to elicit subjective expressions from individuals regarding a particular event or situation they have experienced related to the research topic. Semi-structured interviews tend to produce knowledge that is of political character (McIntosh and Morse 2015, 1). Semi-structured interviews are carried out by the usage of an interview guide which is similar to a list of questions. However, semi-structured interviewing is a flexible method, signifying that the researcher may change the interview guide during the course of action of the interview, and adapt its open-ended question depending on the interviewees' responses (Bryman 2012, 471). Thus, performing the semi-structured interviews in a flexible manner is crucial as the main emphasis lies on how the interviewee understands the subject, despite employing a preconstructed interview guide (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, 31). Furthermore, qualitative interviewing results in rich and detailed answers from the interviewees' emic perspectives (Bryman 2012, 470). Because of this, conducting semi-structured interviews for my study allowed me to obtain in-depth thoughts from the interviewees that were necessary to understand how, and why, they transnationally engage in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020. Rather than conducting semi-structured interviews, it could be argued that I could have conducted participant observation as this qualifies the researcher to see through others' eyes (Bryman 2012, 493-494). However, this was in practice not feasible since the interviewees transnational engagement is spread across time and geographical locations, thus making it unmanageable for me to carry out participant observation.

5.1.1 Selection of interviewees

For collecting material to the study, I have conducted semi-structured interviews with a total of 17 individuals. Twelve of these individuals are living in different cities in Sweden and the remaining five reside in Hong Kong. While the aim of this study is to investigate transnational engagement amongst members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden, I have carried out interviews with Hongkongers living in Hong Kong as well, in order to gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the protest movement. Interviewing five Hongkongers who live in Hong Kong that could share their experiences of witnessing the protests first-hand, was completed in order to enhance my understanding of the context that the twelve Hongkongers who reside in Sweden have aimed their transnational engagement towards. Regardless of where they live today, all of the interviewees in this study are born in Hong Kong, as this was the criteria I applied when searching for interviewees. With that being said, the twelve interviewees who live in Sweden have done so for different amounts of time. In my search for interviewees, I applied what Bryman (2012) calls ‘snowball sampling’, entailing that I initially relied on my personal network to find a few interviewees. In the following, my interviewees assisted me in finding more Hongkongers for my research. Thus, the interviewees in my study are both male and female and their ages range from approximately 20-50 years old (the exact age is not presented for the sake of anonymity). It is of high importance to underline that this study’s selection of twelve interviewees from the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden are not representative for the whole Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden. While this study’s selection of interviewees indeed enables me to answer to the study’s research questions, the selection cannot account for the entire diaspora, but rather give an indication of how it might engage towards the protest movement.

5.1.2 Course of action

Conducting semi-structured interviews face-to-face can be advantageous as the presence of the interviewer provides structure to the interview situation (McIntosh and Morse 2015, 7) In this study, however, administrating the interviews face-to-face was not feasible, not only because the geographical dispersal of the interviewees and time constrains of the study but also due the ongoing covid-19 pandemic. Alternatively, I conducted all the semi-structured interviews for this study through video calls on WhatsApp, as WhatsApp is a relatively secure communication application (Blake 2019). While video calls allowed me to access interviewees in distant

locations, it also permitted me to see the interviewees. This facilitated me to both observe the interviewees non-verbal communications (McIntosh and Morse 2015, 7) and discern discomfort that arose from certain delicate questions regarding Mainland China. When visually noticing this unease, I immediately offered my emotional support and explained that we could disregard these questions. Thus, I was able to conduct the interviews in a more ethical way because of the fact that I could see the interviewees. Furthermore, all of the interviews were carried out in English and were held between February 14 and March 25 of 2020. With the approval of the interviewees, the interviews were audio-recorded with a computer program that records sound, as this permits for more thorough examination of what the interviewees express (Bryman 2012, 482). However, no video-recordings were organized with the intention of preventing any potential security risks.

The principle of ‘lack of informed consent’ stresses that research participants ought to be thoroughly notified with information about the research project, in order for them to make an informed decision of participating or not (Bryman 2012, 138). In compliance with this, I commenced the interviews with underscoring several aspects for the interviewees: the voluntary nature of the interview, informing the interviewees of their freedom to cancel the interview at any time upon any discomfort, notifying the interviewees that their answers would be included in my research, but also that I would remove their names for securing their anonymity. In order to attain full consent, a direct approval from the interviewees were to be given before starting with the interview guide. With regards to transcription of material, factors of mishearing and fatigue can have disadvantageous impacts on transcribing large amounts of material from interviews. Acknowledging the significance of these factors is necessary to ensure high quality on the transcribed material (Bryman 2012, 486). Thus, I manually transcribed the majority of the parts of all the interviews, as I strived to bring myself as close as possible to the material to identify key patterns.

5.1.3 Securing safety of the interviewees

In order to protect the interviewees from any potential harm and to secure their anonymity, I have taken several measures. As previously mentioned, the interviewees were conducted via WhatsApp, as this has been acknowledged as a relatively secure application for communicating (Blake 2019). While the study’s data has been stored safely on my private computer during the

research process, the complete data (which include audio recorded material and transcripts) will be deleted once I finish the study. Furthermore, all of the interviewees' contact details will also be deleted. To secure the anonymity of the interviewees, I have removed their names and their exact ages from the study. In the analysis, the interviewees are referred to in numerical format and in gender neutral terms such as 'he or she' and 'his or her'. I have aimed to provide the reader with as little personal information about the interviewees as possible, for the sake of protecting the interviewees from any potential harm. As previously illustrated, I have also secured informed consent, entailing that all the interviewees have been fully aware of the research project and decided themselves to participate in it. All of the interviews have been conducted in a safe and respectful manner. These measures have been taken as I am aware of the potential risks and repercussions that are closely associated with conducting research concerning Mainland China.

5.2 Ethical considerations and critical reflections on the method

The study's focus now turns to discussing ethical considerations related to interviewing. The ethical principle of 'harm to participants' is essential to consider when conducting qualitative interviewing. This as the principle includes both anticipating and protecting against eventual consequences that might be harmful for the interviewees that participate in the research projects. The principle also involves maintaining and securing the confidentiality of the material that derive from the interviewees (Bryman 2012, 136). These ethical details are in a similar way explained by the Swedish Research Council, through emphasizing that removing personal information once finalizing the interview is of great importance. This precautionary measure is to be taken, in order to make it as cumbersome as possible to link a particular answer to a specific individual (Swedish Research Council 2017, 41). These ethical understandings are not only stressed on a high level of abstraction in the literature, in contrast, they are of high relevance in the practical scenario of performing qualitative interviewing. This can be verified by my study, to say the least. During one of my study's semi-structured interviews, one of the interviewees expressed her fears of what might happen to her if authorities in Mainland China would detect her support towards the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong, and explicitly requested me to delete her contact details immediately after finishing the interview. Following her request, I deleted all of her contact details. This specific example from one of my study's

interviews demonstrates the practicality of the principle harm to participants, and that acknowledging and reflecting upon ethical considerations while executing qualitative interviewing is of fundamental value.

While qualitative interviewing may give voice to the many, it is just as important to discuss some of the critique against the method of interviewing. The critique against the method accentuates that interviewing can be of exploitative nature (Kvale 2006, 481-482). One aspect that reflect this, is that the interviewer rules the interview. This theoretical notion can be explained by the fact that the interviewer decides the topic, poses the questions and not only chooses when to follow up on the answers but also when to end the interview. Thus, performing interviews is not a conversation between equal partners nor is it a dominance-free exchange of ideas. On the contrary, interviewing can be understood as an asymmetrical and hierarchal power relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale 2006, 484). Critique that reflect this power relationship includes that interviewing is a one-way dialogue, that the interviewer tends to have a hidden research agenda and the interviewer is entitled with the exclusive right to interpret the interviewees' answers as he or she desires (Kvale 2006, 484-485). During this study's qualitative interviews, I sought to not solely understand the method as a tool that would assist me in obtaining specific answers from the interviewees that would lead me towards my academic goals. Instead, I attempted to secure objectivity, ethicality and the interviewees' safety when conducting this study's method, and not disregard from the power dynamics that follows when exercising interview research.

5.3 Process of analysis: qualitative content analysis

The method of content analysis entails to analyze written, verbal or visual material. Employing the method of content analysis in research, allows the researcher to in a systematic and objective way investigate phenomena qualitatively or quantitatively (Elo and Kyngäs 2008, 108). Needless to say, this study employs a purely qualitative perspective in the interpretation of its material. Moreover, research making usage of content analysis concentrates on the characteristics of formulations with attentiveness of the content and contextual meaning of the text. The essential feature of content analysis is that a large amount of words from the text are classified into much smaller content categories. The categories might symbolize both manifest and latent communication. Content analysis is regarded as a flexible method of analyzing text

data (Elo and Kyngäs 2008, 109; Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1277-1278). Because of this flexibility, the method of content analysis has also received critique. The critique stress that a lack of firm definition and procedures is possibly limiting the employment of content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1277). Nonetheless, content analysis still enables researchers to develop a comprehension of the meaning of communication and to distinguish important processes. Thus, the method is more than a simplistic technique to explain data (Elo and Kyngäs 2008, 109). Instead, the method of content analysis regards the subjective interpretation of the content of material via systematically classifying process of coding and distinguishing patterns or themes. In doing so, the goal of content analysis is to produce knowledge and understanding of the phenomena that is researched (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1278). In the following, I present an explanation of how the analysis was performed, to increase the trustworthiness of my study’s findings. After I had transcribed my semi-structured interviews, I read the text material several times to develop a deep understanding of it. The expressions from the interviewees were then divided into meaning units. Subsequently, they were interpreted through my study’s theoretical framework and previous research. Next, the interpreted meaning units were classified into sub-themes and finally to themes. The process of my analysis is exemplified below with a table I have designed, which is inspired by Graneheim and Lundman (2004):

Meaning unit	Meaning unit Interpretation	Sub-theme	Theme
I follow the news about the protests very closely, it is terrible what has been going on back home. Because of this I try my best to support the movement from overseas. I have been sending money to my friends and family members in Hong Kong.	Economic remittances are transferred transnationally to the homeland and are directed towards the household/extended family sphere.	Economic remittances	The household/extended family sphere

Table 1: Examples of a meaning unit, meaning unit interpretation, sub-theme and theme.

6 Results and analysis

In this chapter, the interviewees' responses from the semi-structured interviews are presented and analyzed. This is achieved by putting the theoretical framework into practice to meet the aim of the study, to investigate transnational engagement amongst members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden, and to answer the research questions. The study's results and analysis are divided into the three social spheres. In doing so, I analyze economic, social and political remittances which are directed towards (1) the household/extended family sphere, (2) the known community sphere and (3) the imagined community sphere. Additionally, the interviewees' articulations are also analyzed from the study's theoretical concepts of capacity and desire. Besides from analyzing the interviewees' expression with regards to the study's theoretical framework, the material is also discussed in relation to previous research.

6.1 The household/extended family sphere

In this section, responses from the interviewees about their remittances and engagement directed towards the household/extended family sphere are presented and analyzed.

6.1.1 Economic remittances

When asking if, and how, Interviewee 1 tried to support the protest movement from Sweden the interviewee expressed the following:

You know, I follow the news about the protests very closely, it is terrible what has been going on back home. Because of this I try my best to support the movement from overseas. I have been sending money to my friends and family members in Hong Kong. My family runs a local restaurant in Hong Kong, but with the protests we are struggling more than ever for money. We are afraid of vandalism coming from the protests, so we needed to keep the restaurant closed for a while.

Interviewee 1's act of sending money to his or her homeland is viewed as an economic remittance which is transferred transnationally. Due to the fact that Interviewee 1 sends money to the interviewee's own family and friends, it is therefore a remittance of private character directed towards the household/extended family sphere (Van Hear 2014). Interviewee 1's expression that his or her family's financial situation has deteriorated as a result of the protests can be understood from the study's theoretical framework. This is evidential as it highlights

that economic remittances to the household/extended family sphere are sent to assist family members to cope with milieus of conflict (Van Hear 2014). Additionally, the theoretical framework stresses that economic remittances sent by migrants may have micro and macro consequences (Vertovec 2004, 985-986), in this case Interviewee 1's transnational efforts from abroad are aimed at improving the family's financial situation and is thus considered to generate micro consequences. With regards to previous research, we can establish that Interviewee 1's transnational practice of sending money to the interviewee's own family is in line with Orjuelas research (2008). Orjuela suggests that diasporas can influence homeland political conflicts through supporting development and reconstruction, in which members of the diaspora community sends economic contributions to their family and friends (Orjuela 2008, 439). Moreover, Lien's previous research (2010) exhibits that members of the diaspora in the United States were more likely to remit money to Hong Kong if they had been following the political development in the city through watching news about Hong Kong (Lien 2010, 469). As Interviewee 1 monitors the news about the protests closely and seems to be well aware of the family's financial situation, the transnational act of sending money to the interviewee's family as a result of the protests is in accordance with Lien's previous research.

When I asked if, and how, Interviewee 2 tried to support the protest movement from Sweden the interviewee articulated the following:

It is difficult to help the movement from a distance, but I try. I tried to help by buying protest items for the protestors in Hong Kong, like riot gear. I bought stab resistant anti-riot suits, body armor, bulletproof vests and gloves. I was searching desperately for these items online and found some in the end, I ordered the equipment to Hong Kong, so my friends could use it. But I would have liked to be there protesting myself.

Because Interviewee 2 has been purchasing equipment to friends for them to use it in the protests, the transnational activity is regarded to be directed into the household/extended family sphere (Van Hear 2014). Interestingly, however, Interviewee 2's practice of purchasing different types of riot gear online to friends in Hong Kong, is not viewed as a classic economic remittance. As described in the study's theoretical framework, economic remittances are usually thought of as transfers of money from a migrant to his or her home country, even though Interviewee 2's performance is related to this description, it does not match it completely. Instead, Interviewee 2's transnational act is understood as a transcending economic investment

in his or her friends' safety. Furthermore, Interviewee 2's description of trying to support the movement is relatable to previous research. In her research on diasporas different roles in Sri Lanka's violent conflict, Orjuela (2008) emphasizes that members of the diaspora can influence conflicts by directly supporting the warring parties. In doing so, they may provide financial support through direct contributions of funds to politically active actors in the homeland (Orjuela 2008, 438). These understandings on diasporic engagement, originating from previous research, are thus in agreement with Interviewee 2's decision to support the protest movement by purchasing riot gear to friends in Hong Kong. Previous research has also indicated that interest in the country of origin can emerge from a longing to still feel part of the homeland or from the motivation to aid family or friends living in the homeland (Biswas 2004, 271). Interviewee 2 expresses that he or she would have liked to participate in the protests. Because the physical distance is hindering the interviewee, Interviewee 2 instead tries to help his or her friends to participate. Consequently, I argue that Interviewee 2's transnational action may be viewed as an attempt to embody the protests through friends and thus feel connected to the homeland.

6.1.2 Social remittances

Of all the remittances that were directed towards the household/extended family sphere, social remittances were the most common. Several of the interviewees who are residing in Sweden expressed that they, in different ways, transfer social remittances consisting of ideas, norms, practices, behaviors and identities from Sweden to Hong Kong. In the following, I select and analyze some of these social remittances.

When I asked Interviewee 3 in our interview how he or she had been feeling for friends and family in Hong Kong during the protests, the interviewee responded:

My family has the same political stance as me, we are all pro-democracy. My parents are older, so they do not join the protests, especially not the radical ones. But my friends join the radical ones. During one of the radical protests in December one of them got arrested by the police. He is now in court because of the illegal things he has done in the protests, he will probably go to jail. I worry for him all the time, so I call him every day to check if he is alright and to discuss the protest movement.

It has been underscored in the study's theoretical framework that engagement aimed towards the household/extended family sphere is mainly personal and private (Van Hear and Cohen

2017, 173). Thus, Interviewee 3's effort of calling a friend every day is viewed as a transnational activity directed to a more private area, the household/extended family sphere. The study's theoretical framework also underlines that social remittances may be transferred between individuals when they for example interchange notions concerning political issues through telephone calls (Levitt 1998, 936; Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, 132). Through the usage of social remittances Interviewee 3 is, despite living in Sweden, using telephone calls to on a day to day basis discuss the protest movement with a friend in Hong Kong who is approaching his trial. This action is viewed as a transnational way of encouraging a friend to cope with the settings of conflict that he is situated in and the difficulties that awaits him. Furthermore, previous research by Dunn and Kamp (2015) is comparable to my study. From their comparative analysis, they conclude that members of the Hong Kong diasporic communities in both Australia and Canada make usage of telephone calls to maintain their ties with Hong Kong. Because of the comparative nature of their research, they suggested that their work could have revealed a global trend among Hong Kong diasporas (Dunn and Kamp 2015, 39-40). Several interviewees in my study who are part of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden, including Interviewee 3, expressed that they use telephone calls to stay in touch with their kith and kin in Hong Kong during the protests. Hence, my study supports previous research's claim of identifying a global trend. In other words, the Hong Kong diasporic community in Sweden can be added to the list of diasporic communities from Hong Kong that utilize telephone calls as a transnational practice to stay connected to their homeland.

As previously mentioned, many of the interviewees' expressions of how they engaged in the protest movement from a distance are in line with the study's theory when it comes to social remittances directed to the household/extended family sphere. The following expression is another example of this and comes from Interviewee 4. When I asked if, and how, Interviewee 4 tried to support the protest movement from Sweden, the interviewee replied the following:

The protest movement is important for me. That is why I try to support the movement even though I live here in Sweden. For example, I write protest-related posts on Instagram and Facebook to share them with my followers, I also share different news with my local friends in Hong Kong. I discuss the protests with my family and friends, how they will affect our struggle for the rule of law and democratic elections for example. In social media I also share news about the protests with my friends from Sweden.

Interviewee 4's descriptions of talking with family and friends about how the protest movement might affect Hong Kong's rule of law and democratic elections is closely related to my study's theory. This is evident as a social remittance might be transmitted from a migrant to the homeland when he or she directly speaks to family members, regarding different sorts of politics and motivate them to continue to strive for change (Levitt 1998, 936). That Interviewee 4 also communicates with his or her friends in Sweden regarding the protests, is of relevance from a theoretical perspective. In this study's theoretical framework, it has been accentuated that remittances do not solely travel one-way. Conversely, remittances are constantly circulating and can thus be directed to people both in the home and host country (Cohen 2011, 104). In view of this, Interviewee 4's protest-related communication with the friends in Sweden is seen as an act that flows in the opposite direction from how we commonly recognize remittances. Due to conflicting settings in Hong Kong, Interviewee 4 is thus transmitting his or her political standpoints from the homeland to try to influence the friends in the host land. Moreover, previous research in this study has emphasized that there in recent decades has been rapid progress in the communication technology, and that this has facilitated interaction between migrants and their homeland (Orjuela 2008, 438). These theoretical understandings from previous research are applicable to my study. Many of the interviewees in my study who are living in the diaspora benefit from social media to discuss the protest movement with family and friends, as we have just seen with the example of Interviewee 4.

6.2 The known community sphere

In this section, responses from the interviewees about their remittances and engagement directed towards the known community sphere are presented and analyzed.

6.2.1 Economic remittances

During my interview with Interviewee 5, the interviewee pronounced that: 'I have been donating money through online channels to organizations in Hong Kong that support the protest movement, I knew the organizations beforehand from my time when I lived in Hong Kong'. Compared to the examples previously seen in the analysis, which were directed towards the household/extended family sphere, Interviewee 5's economic remittances are directed to the known community sphere. This is made evident as his or her actions are transnationally aimed

towards larger groups and collective purposes, as in this case to political organizations that the interviewee was already familiar with. The theoretical framework of this study has also highlighted that economic remittances can result in micro and macro consequences, in this case, Interviewee 5's donations to political organizations may result in macro significances for the whole protest movement (Van Hear 2014; Van Hear and Cohen 2017). By considering the study's previous research, Orjuelas work on how diasporas might influence a political conflict in their homeland is once again of relevance. Influencing the conflict through directly supporting the warring parties, in which diasporas may provide financial support to politically actors in the homeland (Orjuela 2008), is indeed comparable to Interviewee 5's transnational activities.

6.2.2 Social remittances

Interviewee 6's following statement from our interview is of interest:

I showed my support for the protest movement by doing a presentation in one of my university courses on nationalism, I used the topic of the protest movement in Hong Kong to do that. In this way I could spread awareness to my class mates.

As previously described in the study's theoretical framework and demonstrated in the analysis with Interviewee 4's practices of discussing the protest with Swedish friends, remittances can both be directed to people in migrants' home and host country (Cohen 2011, 104). Given that Interviewee 6's action of conducting a presentation in a university course on the protest movement to try to raise class mates' awareness, signifies that this social remittance is also travelling the opposite direction. The study's theoretical framework has underscored that engagement focused towards the known community sphere may occur in spaces where a migrant is living and amongst people he or she know and that the engagement can be directed towards schools (Van Hear 2014; Van Hear and Cohen 2017). These theoretical understandings are made evident in Interviewee 6's transnational activities in the university course. Furthermore, this study's previous research has indicated that a wide-ranging conception of social movement participation is decisive, as this permits us to respond to people's own advancements on how they, through new manners, try to produce social change (Underhill 2019, 372). Interviewee 6's rather non-traditional way of displaying support to the protest

movement, is one way in which members of the diaspora through their own agency and creativity can try to influence their homeland's political turmoil.

6.2.3 Political remittances

Besides from the abovementioned, Interviewee 6 did also articulate that he or she supported the protest movement from overseas in a way, that according to the study's theoretical framework, is considered as a political remittance directed to the known community sphere (Van Hear 2014). During our interview, Interviewee 6 described the following:

I am a member of Amnesty International in Lund, and we do protest-related events. We had one event, a seminar in December, to talk about the police brutality by the Hong Kong police. To the seminar we invited professors from Lund university, journalists, students and ordinary people to discuss what is going on in Hong Kong. I was responsible for the professors, since I study at Lund University. So, I show my support through this organization.

Because Interviewee 6 has managed to create relationships with professors within the university and thereby enabled the seminar to take place, this engagement in Amnesty is understood as a transnational act directed towards the known community sphere (Van Hear, 2014). However, it is also worth mentioning that Interviewee 6's activism could be considered as actions which are directed towards the imagined community sphere, since the scope of the seminar seems quite extensive. Nevertheless, Van Hear emphasize that the three social spheres tend to overlap and interplay (Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 174). This study's analysis therefore signals that when applying Van Hear's three social spheres to a material, the results may differ from case to case depending on how the researcher interprets the theory.

Another example of how the interviewees in my study engaged in the protest movement by transmitting political remittances directed towards the known community sphere comes from Interviewee 7. When I asked Interviewee 7 if, and how, he or she from Sweden tried to support the protest movement, the interviewee expressed the following:

I work as a designer, so I try to use my professional skills for supporting Hong Kong. I design propaganda and posters for the movement. Since the movement is leaderless, we use social media to boost the movement. Since I cannot really be a frontliner I work with the movement from a distance. My parents are very pro-government, that is why I work in secret from Sweden. I have friends from my old university and other universities in Hong Kong who tell me what they need, they lead and organize many of the protests in Hong Kong. I am using my capabilities to create graphics and content because we are striving for something which is not too much to ask for.

First and foremost, it is important to acknowledge that Interviewee 7's engagement in the protest movement is fairly intriguing. Interviewee 7's transnational efforts are unequivocally of political nature because they encompass the flow of political notions and standpoints from host to home country. This is also evident as this study's analytical tool of political remittances points out that migrants' political remittances may entail supporting political struggles in their homeland (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, 136). The reason why I in this study consider Interviewee 7's transnational action to be focused towards the known community sphere, is because of the contact with people in the interviewee's old university in Hong Kong. This is the case as the theory maintains that engagement to this social sphere occurs in spaces where a migrant is living or has lived and amongst people he or she knows or knows of (Van Hear 2014). Findings from previous research on how members of the Hong Kong diaspora in the United States engage in their homeland, ascertains that pre-emigration activism augmented migrants' likelihood of participating in homeland politics. The findings also suggest that sustaining transnational social contacts in the homeland enabled migrants to involve themselves in homeland issues (Lien 2010, 473-475). These theoretical findings are of high relevance to my material, given that they are in line with Interviewee 7's expression of making use of university contacts to create propaganda in Sweden and thus support the protest movement back home. That Interviewee 7 states that he or she works in secrecy from Sweden due to having parents who are pro-government, is also relatable to previous research. Previous research namely conveys that migrants living in democratic countries may be offered greater opportunities for expression, since they no longer are under direct threats of violence in their homeland (Orjuela 2017, 69 & 73). Thus, Interviewee 7's life in Sweden has possibly increased, or at least changed, the possibility of engaging in Hong Kong politics.

6.3 The imagined community sphere

In this section, responses from the interviewees about their remittances and engagement directed towards the imagined community sphere are presented and analyzed.

6.3.1 Economic remittances

During my discussion with Interviewee 7 about his or her relationship with the protest movement, the interviewee stated the following:

One thing that we actually can do is to boycott Chinese companies. In Hong Kong we from the protest movement usually support the yellow ribbon, the yellow one is for democracy you can say, and not the blue one which is for supporters to the police and the government. So, my idea is to create a mobile application or website where we mark restaurants here in Scandinavia with either yellow or blue ribbon, so we can know who supports who. This whole idea is about taking the local Hong Kong phenomena of yellow and blue ribbons internationally, so foreigners can decide who to support economically.

Interviewee 7's transnational notions are focused towards the imagined community sphere because they are aiming at a larger and more general audience to support the nation, in this case Hong Kong, as a community (Van Hear 2014; Van Hear and Cohen 2017). Even though Interviewee 7's description of how he or she wishes to support the protest movement does not include any economic remittances per se, this creative notion is still economically characterized. In this way, the interviewee's thoughts are not in agreement with how the study's analytical tool of economic remittances define an economic remittance. However, Interviewee 7's expression does match the analytical tool in terms of that economic remittances may stimulate change within the area of consumer habits. And, as we have previously discussed in the analysis, that economic remittances may have macro consequences (Vertovec 2004, 985-986). This entails two results. Firstly, this study's analysis demonstrates that the definitional boundaries of an economic remittance ought to be widened if research wishes to respond to migrants' creative forms of contributing to their homeland. Secondly, despite being rather ambitious, Interviewee 7's transnational notion of marking restaurants in Scandinavia with yellow or blue ribbons could in theory implicate changes within the host country's consumer habits. This could in turn, if the initiative would grow substantially or spread regionally, generate minor impacts for Mainland China, or at least, catch its attention. Hence, this small agency-based initiative in Sweden could work in favor for the protest movement and Hong Kong. Even though these are purely theoretical assumptions, they are important to highlight since they symbolize that transnational activism undeniably can influence the conflict settings in migrants' homeland.

Before moving on to analyzing more of the material from the semi-structured interviews, it is worth comparing Orjuelas previous research (2008) with Interviewee 7's expression. Orjuela underscores that members of diasporas may influence conflicts in their homelands by supporting development and reconstruction, this involves that migrants support their country of

origin as consumers of homeland products and as investors in business in their homeland (Orjuela 2008, 438-439). These theoretical understandings accurately mirror the transnational ideas of Interviewee 7, through which the interviewee tries to affect consumer habits of Hong Kong products and increase the support of their businesses. However, Interviewee 7's economic notion consists of *both* increasing consumerism of Hong Kong products and support of their businesses, and decrease consumerism of mainland Chinese products and decrease support of their businesses. Therefore, my study's results expand on Orjuelas research and thus contributes itself to the research field on diasporas transnational engagement towards their homelands.

Including Interviewee 7, several of the interviewees in my study who live in Sweden articulated that they with regards to the protest movement intentionally support businesses from Hong Kong and boycott mainland Chinese businesses. Another of these examples comes from Interviewee 2:

My family runs a local food shop in Hong Kong, during the protests we offered free food for the protestors, so we were and still are part of the yellow ribbon economy. I also supported the movement from overseas by spending my money in the yellow economic circle. I searched for Hong Kong shops and restaurants in Stockholm, it was difficult, but I spent my money there instead. Reducing my consumption in the blue economy will in the long run hopefully have an impact on China, if a lot of us do it.

Despite the similarity, Interviewee 2's expression differs from Interviewee 7's statement. This is the case since Interviewee 2 is practicing transnational activities of economic character, while Interviewee 7 solely has developed transnational notions of economic character and not transformed them into practices, yet. What they both have in common, though, is that they are directed towards the imagined community sphere, this because Interviewee 2's transnational actions also are aimed towards the larger and more general sphere which observes the nation (Hong Kong) as a unified community (Van Hear 2014; Van Hear and Cohen 2017). In addition to this, the study's theoretical framework underlines that the imagined community sphere is usually the most dynamic of the three spheres, and that it also tends to be the sphere with least engagement directed towards it because it demands more from the members in the diasporas (Van Hear 2014; Van Hear and Cohen 2017). Interviewee 2's effort, to simultaneously search for Hong Kong shops and restaurants in Stockholm and avoid mainland Chinese ones, shows

that transnational engagement focused towards the imagined community sphere requires extensive levels of commitment.

Before the analysis moves on to political remittances directed to the imagined community sphere, one last example from the material of an economic remittance to this sphere is presented and analyzed. The following statement comes from Interviewee 3:

I have donated money online to a pro-democracy organization in Hong Kong. The organization was helping people to escape from Hong Kong, these people had been doing illegal things during the protests and needed to run away from Hong Kong to Taiwan. Most of them were frontliners, but I do not know them. I donated a few hundred Hong Kong dollars, but with all of us we reached a huge amount of money, around ten million Hong Kong dollars.

Interviewee 3 has been donating money to a pro-democracy organization which aids people who have participated in the protests to escape from Hong Kong, the donation, however, is to someone the interviewee does not know. The interviewee's commitment towards a faceless recipient indicates that the economic remittance is directed towards Hong Kong's struggle as a whole and thus towards the imagined community sphere (Van Hear 2014; Van Hear and Cohen 2017). As described in the study's analytical tool of economic remittances, in the last decades economic remittances have grown substantially, which has increased their probabilities of generating extensive consequences (Vertovec 2004, 985-986). These theoretical understandings are applicable to Interviewee 3's transnational engagement. The interviewee's testimony reveals that massive amounts of money are being collected online to not only aid Hongkongers from their verdicts, but also to demonstrate that the movement can provide a safety net to those who participate in the protests. Hence, I argue that Interviewee 3's transnational engagement contributes to encouraging more frontliners to continue to risk their lives for the sake of Hong Kong.

6.3.2 Political remittances

From this study's material, the most common sort of political remittance that was directed towards the imagined community sphere was participation in different types of public and political demonstrations. This is apparent as the majority of the interviewees that reside in Sweden shared experiences of them participating in public gatherings in the different geographical locations of Stockholm, Gothenburg, Växjö and Copenhagen.

Interviewee 2: I went to demonstrations in Stockholm and Copenhagen to show my support for the movement, and also to inform others who were watching us about Hong Kong's fight for democracy.

Interviewee 8: I participated in a manifestation in Stockholm to show my support for the movement, we were around 50 people. Suddenly a bunch of pro-Beijing protestors arrived to counter our manifestation, and they were many more than us. I felt that it was my obligation to participate in the manifestation, and more so when the others arrived.

Interviewee 3: I traveled to Gothenburg in October to join a demonstration which was arranged to support our movement. Another time I traveled to Copenhagen to join a similar demonstration.

Interviewee 1: I was once in Copenhagen for a rally, for a gathering to support Hong Kong.

Interviewee 6: I participated in a protest march in Copenhagen in December. We were around 40-50. During the march I felt that we were trying to inform the people around us what was going on in Hong Kong.

Interviewee 9: Together with my friends, we started holding manifestations in September and went on every month. So, we held manifestations and rallies for Hong Kong in Stockholm. I recently went to one in Växjö as well.

Interviewee 7: I have been collaborating with my Hong Kong friends here in Stockholm to support the movement back home. We have arranged four different manifestations in Stockholm, the first one was a collaboration with the youth liberal party¹.

Applying the study's theoretical framework enables us to understand why these numerous examples from the interviewees are understood as political remittances focused towards the imagined community sphere. Engagement directed towards the imagined community sphere may encompass that members of the diaspora involve themselves in public demonstrations in their country of settlement or in an international environment (Van Hear 2014; Van Hear and Cohen 2017). The interviewees' participation in, and in some cases even arrangement of different sorts of demonstrations in different cities is thus viewed as transnational engagement aimed towards supporting the imagination of Hong Kong as a unified community and nation (even though it is legally a special administrative region under China). Since the theory also explicates that political remittances are the flow of political notions and standpoints from one country to another (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007), the interviewees' public engagement is understood as a politically motivated and transnational supportive response to Hong Kong's protest movement of 2019-2020.

¹ Liberala ungdomsförbundet.

Turning the attention to the study's previous research allows for new interpretations of the interviewees' engagement. Canvassing international support, has been stated as one example of how diasporas can influence homeland disturbances, this entails that diaspora networks join e.g. political protests to obtain legitimacy and attention from the international community. The attention and support from different state and non-state actors from the international community can affect the outcomes of potential peace settlements or political reforms (Orjuela 2008, 438-439). These understandings from previous research are comparable to the interviewees' participation in public demonstrations, as some of them emphasized that they felt that they were appealing to the audience around them to understand and acknowledge their message. Because of the high frequency of involvement in public gatherings by the interviewees, I argue that the most common sorts of transnational engagement through which the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden respond to the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020 is by arranging and participating in politically motivated demonstrations.

The two following expressions from Interviewee 7 and Interviewee 9 are possibly the most remarkable forms of transnational engagement towards the protest movement that emerged from the semi-structured interviews:

Interviewee 7: Me and my friends in Stockholm have recently connected with Hongkongers in Denmark and Norway, so we started a Nordic union for Hong Kong. I suggested that we should invite legislative council members from Hong Kong to have some lobbying here in the Nordic countries. We tried to convince our contacts in Finland as well, but they declined because they said that maybe it was not secure to do it. In the end the delegation from Hong Kong came to Sweden, Norway and Denmark. It was difficult to arrange because of the Coronavirus. In the delegation there were two legislative council members, one representative from a union, one frontliner and one journalist from Hong Kong. They stayed three days in Stockholm, we held a manifestation, a seminar and also a mini-hearing with Swedish parliament members. We invited members of the moderate party², the liberal party³, some left party members⁴ and also persons from the Swedish department of foreign affairs. One of the legislative council members told me that it is good that ordinary people like us are doing extraordinary things.

Interviewee 9: Me and some mates have created a political activist group. We are eight organizers, and around 20 in total. We hosted a delegation with some legislative council members from Hong Kong, and we had a mini-hearing with them in the Swedish parliament. Besides that, our group do

² Moderaterna.

³ Liberalerna.

⁴ Vänsterpartiet.

our best to spread awareness. We utilize flyers and banners to try to spread our message, I take care of the graphic painting since I work with editing and I also write some of our content.

According to the study's theoretical framework, engagement aimed towards the imagined community sphere may consist of membership in political movements or associations or of lobbying influential people such as politicians and journalists in the host or home country (Van Hear 2014; Van Hear and Cohen 2017). Additionally, it underlines that political remittances can include activities such as lobbying the authorities in one country to try to influence politics in another (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007). Because Interviewee 7 and Interviewee 9 are both members of small activist organizations (and even contributed to their establishment) which are using flyers and banners to spread awareness of the Hong Kong protests to the Swedish population, their acts are viewed as political remittances aimed towards the imagined community sphere. On top of this, Interviewee 7 and Interviewee 9 have successfully managed, during a full-scale outbreak of a pandemic, to enable a Hong Kong delegation, consisting of among others two legislative council members, to enter in discussions about the protest movement with Swedish politicians in the Swedish parliament.

The analysis of Interviewee 7's and Interviewee 9's articulations have, through the application of theory and previous research to this study's material, demonstrated how political notions have undergone a complex trajectory to be translated into transnational engagement. Political standpoints and notions that originate from Hong Kong's protest movement have on a local level been picked up by members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Stockholm. These notions and standpoints have then been developed and transferred to a regional level (Interviewee 7's Scandinavian union for Hong Kong). Subsequently, these political notions have been transformed into engagement which has resulted in them being handled on a parliament level. The next level of this multifaceted complex trajectory could be that the pro-protest notions would be transferred back to Hong Kong by the Swedish politicians, and that they would have if not direct, indirect effects. My study cannot evaluate this whole transnational cycle, since it does not cover the last part of the cycle – if engagement by members of diasporas really have an impact in their homeland. What it can tell, however, is that reflection upon this whole trajectory allow for deeper understandings of how diasporas response to conflict settings through transnational engagement and how these activities are practiced and maneuvered.

It is also important to, briefly, account for the part of this study's material that indicated that not all members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage in the protest movement. This is of relevance as a few of the interviewees living in Sweden expressed that they do not engage in the movement from overseas, as they are afraid of eventual repercussions or simply that they do not have time or feel like it. Interviewee 10, who identify as a high-income earner, articulated the following:

The reason why I do not engage in the protest movement is because I do not have time. I have an extra heart for Hong Kong, but my daily life here in Sweden takes up too much time.

It is of relevance to analyze Interviewee 10's expression in relation to the critique that the concept of diaspora has received. As mentioned in the study's theoretical framework, the concept has revived critique suggesting that affluent migrants would have more possibilities to engage than less affluent ones (Van Hear 2014, 185-186). As Interviewee 10 describes itself as a high-income earner but as someone who does not engage transnationally towards the homeland – the critique is not in line or applicable to my study's result. Interviewee 10's expression is one example that displays that not all of the interviewees from this study engage in transnational activism towards the protest movement. Nevertheless, as the analysis has demonstrated, the majority of the interviewees described that they do engage.

6.4 Expectations and sentiments

In this section, responses from the interviewees about expectations on their engagement in the protest movement and sentiments of their engagement towards the protest movement are presented and analyzed.

6.4.1 Expectations expressed by members of the diaspora

Several of the interviewees communicated that they from Sweden felt comfortable expressing their political standpoints on the protest movement, and that they at the same time felt pressure from Hong Kong to engage in the movement. The two following expressions illustrates this:

Interviewee 6: What I have heard from my friends in Hong Kong and from what I observe in social media platforms, people in Hong Kong wants us Hongkongers in the diasporas to support the movement from overseas. It is sort of an obligation to do something for Hong Kong. In Sweden I

feel safe, I can express myself politically without fear, that is why I organize seminars and participate in marches.

Interviewee 3: People in Hong Kong are happy with what we are doing from aboard, but they want us to do more. We have an online platform, it is called LIHKG. Since we have a lot of Hongkongers living over the world, the platform is used to encourage people overseas to engage in activism. It is through this channel that we arrange 20+ protests at the same time in different cities around the globe. It is because of that encouragement on that platform that I went to Copenhagen to the demonstration.

The fact that Interviewee 6 experienced that Sweden facilitated himself or herself to express politically about the protest movement, can be understood from the study's theoretical concept of capacity (Van Hear and Cohen 2017). The capacity to engage depends on the person's, among other aspects, freedom to express itself and the security in the country of settlement (Van Hear and Cohen 2017,174). Thus, the theoretical understandings of capacity are applicable to the study's material. Furthermore, the above stated expressions (representing several of the interviewees), exposes that several of the interviewees who are living in Sweden feel clear expectations on themselves to engage in the protest movement by the people who live in Hong Kong. This result can be analyzed through the study's theoretical understanding of a portfolio of obligations (Van Hear 2014), which entails that members of the diaspora perceive different morally requirements and obligations. The portfolio of obligations towards the homeland may turn into a psychological burden when a member of the diaspora is busy with his or her "new life" in its country of settlement and does not involve itself in the homeland (Van Hear 2014, 184). Hence, my study establishes that members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden do not only experience an obligation from Hongkongers living in Hong Kong to support the movement, but also that their portfolio of obligations towards their homeland is fueling and accelerating their concrete actions towards the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020.

6.4.2 Expectations expressed by Hongkongers living in Hong Kong

Similar to the previous part on expectations, this study's material also showed that several of the interviewees who live in Hong Kong as a matter of fact have expectations on their fellow compatriots who reside in Hong Kong diasporas.

Interviewee 11: I hope our Hongkongers overseas can do something. What they absolutely cannot do is to use mainland Chinese products and businesses. They should instead support the yellow economy, not spend money on the blue economy.

Interviewee 12: Hongkongers abroad should show their support to the protest movement. I do not want them to come back to Hong Kong, not even for vacations, if they do not care about our democracy and the protest movement, they should not be Hongkongers anymore if they do not care. I tell all my friends and relatives overseas to do something.

These two expressions can be considered in relation to the study's theoretical framework. This is evident as the analytical tool of the imagined community sphere stresses that, initiatives by different actors in the country of origin, who imagine the nation as transcending the state's borders, may reach out and encourage their co-nationals in the diasporas to demonstrate loyalty to certain issues (Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 174).

6.4.3 Guilt and pride

Amongst the many sentiments about the protest movement that were shared by the interviewees who reside in Sweden, guilt and pride were the most common. On the one hand, several of the interviewees stated that they felt guilty for living in Sweden during the period of the protests or that they would have been experiencing sentiments of guilt if they would not have engaged in the protest movement from Sweden. On the other, several interviewees also communicated that their engagement towards the movement had generated sentiments of pride for them. The two following communications illustrates examples of the interviewees' sentiments of guilt:

Interviewee 9: Sweden is such a nice place to live in, everything is so well put together. So, when the protests in Hong Kong started I felt so guilty. I felt guilty watching the protests happen and being here enjoying all the good and democratic things you can enjoy here in Sweden. If I would not have done anything to support the movement, I would have been ashamed of myself.

Interviewee 2: If I would not have done something for the movement I would have felt so much guilt, oh my God. If I would have been partying or something and not caring for the movement I would have been feeling extremely guilty. I am not supposed to have fun when my brothers are sacrificing themselves for our cause. Even though I could not join them physically, I needed to do my part from Sweden. When I saw the protests on the news I really wanted to go back. I just wanted to be part of the movement. I felt so useless when all of my friends were fighting.

Based on these expressions, the interviewees' portfolio of obligations (Van Hear 2014) towards their homeland once again seems to be of importance, or burden. That the interviewees feel guilty for living outside of Hong Kong at the wrong time and that if they would not have

engaged from a distance they would also experience sentiments of guilt, indicates a psychological burden. In other words, the members of the diaspora experience sentiments of guilt about not being able to participate in their homeland's political struggle. Thus, the interviewees own perception of their responsibility towards the protest movement does not seem to decrease because of their distance to Hong Kong, on the contrary, it appears to increase. Moreover, these communications are also relatable to Wise and Velayutham's previous research on the relationship between emotions and transnationalism. Their research highlights that affects and emotions as guilt and pride are interconnected with different types of remittances. This previous research also focusses that emotions can intensify or reduce capabilities to act transnationally (Wise and Velayutham 2017, 116-117 & 127). Hence, in conformity with Wise and Velayutham, I argue that sentiments of guilt amongst the members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden are augmenting their transnational engagement towards the protest movement.

Lastly, the two following articulations illustrate the part of the material which suggested that members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden experienced sentiments of pride with regards to their engagement towards the movement:

Interviewee 5: Since the movement started and when the bill was completely withdrawn I felt pride. I felt like, oh, finally we are able to change something. And when I saw the younger generation mobilize I felt proud, I saw hope in them. I think we should be inspired from the local patriotism the Hongkongers have demonstrated.

Interviewee 1: I have been feeling very proud for the protest movement like, okay, I can do something from Sweden for my people of Hong Kong. I want to show support. I want to feel like I am still part of the movement. I want to feel that I am still connected to Hong Kong, I want to feel solidarity to my people.

The analysis last articulations from the interviewees can be understood from the study's theoretical concept of desire (Van Hear and Cohen 2017). The desire to engage in transnational activities is characterized by a person's private motivations. Here, a person may be motivated by the desire to protect his or her friends, relatives or family, or by deeper political concerns to protect a certain group of people, their society or nation (Van Hear and Cohen 2017, 174). Interviewee 5 and Interviewee 1's expressions (representing several of the interviewees), illustrate that their sentiments of pride are produced when they engage in activism which is focused towards their homeland and the future of Hong Kong. Thus, these expressions

contribute to the understanding of why members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage transnationally in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020. That several of the interviewees during the semi-structured interviews shared that their engagement had generated sentiments of pride, is also in line with Wise and Velayutham's previous research. This since their research emphasize that emotions reproduce transnational social fields (Wise and Velayutham 2017, 116-117). Therefore, as with the sentiments of guilt, I claim that sentiments of pride are also increasing the diaspora member's engagement towards the protest movement.

7. Summary of results and analysis

In this chapter, I summarize the study's results and analysis. The summary is structured in a similar manner as the previous chapter, with the study's analytical tools of the three social spheres dividing the findings. Additionally, the results and analysis of the study's findings on expectations and sentiments are summarized.

7.1 The household/extended family sphere

Based on this study's analysis, social remittances by members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden were the most common type of transnational engagement that was directed towards the household/extended family sphere. These remittances included discussing the protest movement through telephone calls, social media or face to face with friends and family members in both the homeland and host country. Economic remittances focused towards the household/extended family sphere did also exist, yet to a minor extent than social remittances. These included sending money to family and friends and investment in friends' safety through the purchase of riot gear. I argue that the transnational act of purchasing riot gear may be viewed as an attempt to embody the protests through friends and thus feel connected to the homeland. Political remittances towards the household/extended family sphere did not appear in the material.

Previous research (Orjuela 2008; Lien 2010; Biswas 2004) was in line with, and deepened, the analysis of the different remittances directed towards this social sphere. Interestingly, even though Dunn and Kamp's research (2015) was comparable and useful to my study, my findings expand on their research. This since my analysis displays that the Hong Kong diasporic community in Sweden can be added to the list of diasporic communities from Hong Kong that utilize telephone calls as a transnational practice to stay connected to their homeland. Hence, my study contributes to the research field in terms of adding a new layer to existing research on diasporas transnational engagement towards their homeland.

7.2 The known community sphere

The analysis has demonstrated that all three of the different types of remittances (economic, social and political) were directed towards the known community sphere. Political remittances by members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden were the most common type of transnational engagement that was directed towards this sphere. Political remittances to this sphere included designing protest-propaganda in secrecy from the host country, which were then used in the protests in Hong Kong. Thus, the analysis exhibited that the life in Sweden for a member of the Hong Kong diaspora has possibly increased, or at least changed, its possibility of engaging in Hong Kong politics. Political remittances to this sphere did also include making usage of university contacts in Sweden to enable seminars about the protest movement taking place in Sweden. Here, the analysis stressed that remittances which in this study were considered to be focused towards the known community sphere, could also be understood as remittances more compatible and focused towards the imagined community sphere. Consequently, the analysis highlighted that applying Van Hear's three social spheres to a material may produce different results depending on how the researcher interprets the theory.

An economic remittance focused towards the known community sphere appeared once in the material and consisted of a donation of money to an organization in Hong Kong that support the protest movement. A social remittance (traveling from home to host country) directed towards the known community sphere did also appear once in the material, it involved the realization of a presentation on the protest movement in a university course. Parts of this study's previous research (Orjuela 2008; Orjuela 2017; Lien 2010; Underhill 2019) were of high relevance to the analysis of the remittances that were focused towards this sphere. In this case, therefore, my study places itself in the literature field in proximity with this previous research.

7.3 The imagined community sphere

With regards to all of the study's material, political remittances directed to the imagined community sphere by members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden were the most common of all types of transnational engagement towards the protest movement. With reference to the analysis, political remittances were also the most common type of transnational engagement that was aimed towards the imagined community sphere. The majority of the political

remittances to this sphere consisted of participation in different types of public and political demonstrations. Because of the high frequency of involvement in public gatherings by the interviewees, I argue that the most common type of transnational engagement through which the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden respond to the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020 is by arranging and participating in politically motivated demonstrations. As of my knowledge, no other research has disclosed this finding. In this way, my study fills this research gap in the literature field. Political remittances aimed towards the imagined community sphere did also consist of engagement in small activist groups in Sweden intending to spread awareness of the protest movement in the host country. But also, of lobbying Swedish politicians through enabling a Hong Kong delegation, consisting of among others legislative council members, to enter in discussions about the protest movement with the politicians in the Swedish parliament.

Economic remittances focused towards this sphere did also exist, as several members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden articulated that they, in different ways, try to support the protest movement by intentionally supporting businesses from Hong Kong and boycotting mainland Chinese businesses. Here, my study expands beyond Orjuela's previous research (2008), as the analysis of this study demonstrates that members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden *both* increase their support of Hong Kong businesses and simultaneously decrease their support of mainland Chinese businesses. Through expanding on Orjuela's research, my study contributes itself to the literature on diasporas transnational engagement towards their homelands. Economic remittances to this sphere did also entail donation of money to organizations in Hong Kong. The analysis highlighted that the definitional boundaries of an economic remittance ought to be widened if research wishes to respond to migrants' creative forms of contributing to their homelands' conflicts and that transnational activism undeniably can influence the conflict settings in migrants' homelands. Social remittances towards the imagined community sphere did not appear in the material, as we have seen however, this result might be influenced by how I interpret Van Hear's theory of social spheres. Additionally, results from the analysis also demonstrated that not all members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage in transnational practices towards the protest movement. Nevertheless, the majority of the interviewees from this study described that they indeed have engaged.

7.4 Expectations and sentiments

The study's analysis has demonstrated that several of the interviewees, from Sweden, felt safe with expressing their political standpoints on the protest movement. This result was in the analysis linked to the study's analytical tool of capacity (Van Hear and Cohen 2017), which explained that the interviewees felt comfortable expressing themselves about the protest movement because their democratic capacity, in terms of freedom of expression and secure location, increased by residing in Sweden. The analysis did also show, however, that several of the interviewees who are living in Sweden also felt clear expectations on themselves to engage in the protest movement, as they articulated that they felt pressure from Hong Kong to engage in the movement. Hence, the analysis established that members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden do not only experience an obligation from Hongkongers living in Hong Kong to support the movement, but also that their portfolio of obligations towards their homeland is fueling and accelerating their concrete actions towards the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020. Despite not being included in the study's scope, the analysis indicated that Hongkongers who live in Hong Kong have expectations on their diasporas to engage in the movement.

Lastly, the analysis also presented that guilt and pride were the most common sentiments expressed by the interviewees who are living in Sweden, with regards to their transnational engagement towards the movement. On the one hand, sentiments of guilt were explained by several of the interviewees through e.g. feeling guilty for living in Sweden during the period of the protest movement or that they would have been experiencing sentiments of guilt if they would not have engaged in the movement from Sweden. This result was in the analysis interpreted as a psychological burden amongst members of the diaspora, about not being capable of participating in their homeland's protest movement. Thus, the analysis highlighted that the interviewees own perception of their responsibility towards the protest movement does not seem to decrease because of their distance to Hong Kong, on the contrary, it appears to increase. On the other, several of the interviewees did also communicate that their engagement towards the movement has generated sentiments of pride, that they feel pride when they engage as they still feel that they are part of the movement and still feel connected to Hong Kong. These sentiments of pride were in the analysis explained by the study's analytical tool of desire (Van Hear and Cohen 2017), which explained that the interviewees' sentiments of pride are produced

when they engage in activism which is focused towards their homeland and the future of Hong Kong. By analyzing the interviewees' sentiments of guilt and pride through Wise and Velayutham's previous research (2017), a common factor of the two sentiments were identified. This factor includes that both sentiments of guilt and pride amongst members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden are augmenting their transnational engagement towards the protest movement. In this way, my research position itself in proximity with Wise and Velayutham's research.

8. Conclusion

This chapter will conclude and finish my study. In doing so, I intend to reflect upon my study more generally. Consequently, this chapter firstly explicitly answers the study's research questions. Secondly, I discuss the theoretical implications of my findings. Lastly, I discuss how my study may be of relevance to future research and provide examples of what future research could investigate.

8.1 Answering the research questions

The aim of this study has been to investigate transnational engagement amongst members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden. I have investigated this by conducting semi-structured interviews with members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden and with Hongkongers living in Hong Kong. I have applied a comprehensive theoretical framework of transnational nature to answer the study's research questions: 1. How, and why, do members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage transnationally in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020? Through different types of economic, social and political remittances and engagement, members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020 by encouraging and supporting family members, relatives, friends and protest-related organizations in Hong Kong. Thus, they try to influence the protests movement by aiming their engagement directly towards Hong Kong. They also engage in the protest movement indirectly in their host country, through different types of economic, social and political remittances and engagement by reaching out to friends, university professors, politicians and the general audience in order to raise political awareness amongst the Swedish population, and also by taking economic measures in Sweden to try to affect Mainland China's influence in the movement. In other words, how the members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage in the protest movement is by transnationally transferring economic, social and political remittances towards the three social spheres that travel both from host to home country, and vice versa. There are several underlying aspects why members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020. They engage because their capacity to do so is increased in Sweden, they also engage because they experience strong expectations on themselves to support the movement. Additionally, sentiments of guilt and pride are driving them to engage in the protest movement.

a: what types of transnational remittances are directed towards the household/extended family sphere, the known community sphere and the imagined community sphere? In my study, social remittances by members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden were the most common type of transnational engagement that was directed towards the household/extended family sphere. Economic remittances focused towards the household/extended family sphere did also exist, yet to a minor extent than social remittances. Political remittances towards this sphere did not appear in the material. Further, my study has demonstrated that all three of the different types of remittances, economic, social and political, were directed towards the known community sphere. Of these three, political remittances by the members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden were the most common type of transnational engagement that was focused towards the known community sphere. While economic remittances aimed towards the imagined community sphere did exist, social remittances aimed towards this sphere did not appear in the material. With that being said, political remittances were the most common type of transnational engagement that was aimed towards the imagined community sphere. With regards to all of the study's material, political remittances to this sphere were also the most common of all types of transnational engagement that was aimed towards the protest movement. The majority of these political remittances to this sphere consisted of participation in different types of public and political demonstrations. Hence, I argue that the most common type of transnational engagement through which the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden respond to the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020 is by arranging and participating in politically motivated demonstrations.

b: why do members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage transnationally in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020, and how can their engagement be understood by the analytical tools of capacity and desire? The members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden engage transnationally in the Hong Kong protest movement of 2019-2020, because their democratic capacity, in terms of freedom of expression and secure location, is increased through residing in Sweden. Another reason why they engage is because they sense expectations on themselves to engage in the protest movement. Members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden do not only experience strong expectations from Hongkongers living in Hong Kong to support the movement, but also, on a personal level, they experience that their portfolio of obligations

towards their homeland is fueling and accelerating their concrete actions towards the protest movement. Further, they also engage because sentiments of guilt are augmenting their involvement. Hence, the diaspora member's own perception of their responsibility towards the protest movement does not seem to decrease because of their distance to Hong Kong, on the contrary, it appears to increase. A final reason why they engage in the movement is because they experience sentiments of pride, which is intensifying their engagement. When members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden go from desiring to engage in the movement, to actual engagement in activism focused towards the protest movement and the future of Hong Kong, their actions produce sentiments of pride.

8.2 Theoretical implications of my findings and future research

With regards to theoretical implications of my findings, it is important to discuss Van Hear's theoretical notions. Even though Van Hear's theoretical understandings enabled me to understand and analyze my material, I claim that the operationalization of the theory may be ambiguous. As previously mentioned, this became evident in the analysis when Van Hear's three social spheres were put into practice. Here, I indicated that depending on how the researcher interprets the theory, the results and findings may differ from case to case. It is of equal importance to remind ourselves that Van Hear explicitly reflects upon this dilemma, stressing that the three social spheres tend to overlap and interplay. Nevertheless, taking this aspect of interpretation of the theory into account is necessary for future research which intends to make usage of Van Hear's theoretical notions. Furthermore, another theoretical implication of my findings concerns economic remittances. Even though the study's definition of what constitutes an economic remittance facilitated to understand the material, it could not be applied in all cases. Thus, this research underscores that the definitional boundaries of an economic remittance ought to be widened in order to respond to migrants' new and creative forms of contributing to their homeland. This theoretical implication of my findings is also crucial for future research to take into consideration when examining similar questions.

It is important to discuss the theoretical implications of my findings in relation to previous research. My study places itself in proximity in the research field with previous research by: Lien (2010); Biswas (2004); Orjuela (2017); Underhill (2019); Wise and Velayutham (2017).

However, my research findings expand beyond Orjuela's (2008) research. In relation to Orjuela's research, my findings reveal that members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden perform consumer activism aimed towards the movement through supporting Hong Kong's yellow economic circle from overseas, and simultaneously engage in economic consumer resistance against Mainland China from Sweden. In this way, my findings contribute with new layers to existing research on diasporic transnationalism. Interestingly, my study's finding which demonstrates that the most common type of transnational engagement through which the Hong diaspora in Sweden respond to the protest movement is by participating in political demonstrations – does not draw upon previous research. Instead, the theoretical implication of this particular finding is that it fills a research gap in the research field and that it contributes with understandings to the understudied subject of transnational engagement towards Hong Kong by members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden. My study's theoretical contributions to the research field enhance our understanding of local-global processes that are reflected in the transnational engagement towards Hong Kong's protest movement of 2019-2020 by members of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden.

Lastly, the discussion turns to a few examples of what future research may investigate. As my study of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden might be applicable to other Hong Kong diasporas, I hope that my study can inspire future researchers to examine how Hong Kong diasporas in other countries transnationally engage in the protest movement of 2019-2020. Furthermore, I encourage researchers to continue to investigate the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden, to cover a larger number of individuals and themes. Since at the time of writing, the transnational engagement of the Hong Kong diaspora in Sweden is an understudied topic. Future research could combine a qualitative approach with a quantitative, in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of the diaspora's engagement. Additionally, future research may further examine the expectations that Hongkongers residing in Hong Kong have on the engagement in the protest movement by compatriots living in diasporas. Finally, future research may scrutinize if Hong Kong diasporas' different types of transnational remittances and engagement towards the protest movement have been fruitful and have had an effect in their homeland. This as transnational engagement and activism undeniably *can* influence conflict settings in migrants' homelands.

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