Defining nation and crafting dignity in a metropolis as sanctuary
Negotiating emerging nationalism(s) with cosmopolitanism in Hong Kong

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1. Research aim
The Umbrella Movement in 2014 witnessed the birth of nationalism in Hong Kong. While this former British colony was said to be apolitical and cosmopolitan in the past 150 years, what accounts for the potential birth of nationalism and how we can make sense of it sociologically? This paper utilizes two approaches to discuss how nationalism and cosmopolitanism interact with each other and to see how Hong Kong society is now heavily energized and torn between two shearing, growing national movements — individualistic and civic sense of nationalism among the Hong Kong new generation versus collectivistic and ethnic sense of official nationalism promoted by the Beijing and Hong Kong government. On the one hand, the paper utilizes the approach of mental sociology suggested by Liah Greenfeld, an important scholar in the field of sociology of nationalism, to discuss how “nation” can be defined properly without losing its essential meaning derived from its historical origin — “nation” equals “elite” and “people” to give birth to a modern, sovereign community — and to see how “dignity” is understood in the context of Hong Kong recently. On the other hand, the paper conceptualizes cosmopolitanism as a sanctuary system, with reference to the idea of “mu’en” suggested by Amino Yoshihiko, a Japanese historian, that a city-state like Hong Kong is a charted asylum which was once protected by the balance of power and was cut-off (at least superficially) from the politics in the outside world.

2 Data & Methods
This paper, employing the ideas of “dignity capital” suggested by Liah Greenfeld (2016), examines the underlying emerging national emotions, sentiments, and ideas among interviewed younger generation that gave birth to this curious new dignified political and cultural identity in Hong Kong. The current research is now finished its first stage of pilot study of interviewing a group of individuals from localist-national activists in Hong Kong and thus will report on individuals’ views towards how their dignity is experienced and defined.

3 Results and Conclusion
The case of the current Hong Kong may serve as an undergoing cultural ecology for comparative-historical sociological analysis of cosmopolitanism and nationalism—two different possible paths to modernity. The youth generation in H.K. is now dignified to craft for a new, fundamental national identity that separated themselves from the Chinese civilization. It suggests that how nationalism(s) is contained by cosmopolitanism and in what sense cosmopolitanism may give way to nationalism.