

# HONG KONG UNIVERSITIES

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## Navigating in Unknown Waters

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# Debate on Post-1997 Hong Kong

**Becoming Chinese** versus **Remaining Global**



**"A Chinese global city"**

(Chiu and Lui, 2009)



**"A global frontier"**

(Duara, 2016)

# Debate on Post-1997 Hong Kong *Theory 1*

Becoming Chinese



Rise of China



Increasingly dependent on China



Deeper integration



# Debate on Post-1997 Hong Kong *Theory 2*



CUHK – Defusing the tensions between the pro-Beijing and pro-Taipei camps and containing communist influence in Hong Kong and Asia (Wong, 2005; Chou, 2010)



HKUST – Global knowledge networks, British colonial legacy, and Chinese traditions (Postiglione, 2013)

**Remaining Global**



**Political ambiguity**



**Cultural proximity to both East and West**



**Connector between China and the world**

# Interviews with University Leaders

- Awareness of the importance of the Chinese national development to Hong Kong's higher education
- Cultural broker, tripartite partnership, leaning toward both China and the Western world

# Latest Developments

- The 2019–2020 protests
- The national security law in 2020
- **The political ambiguity is likely to fade from the territory**
- **The sustainability of the cultural proximity**
- **The associated internationalism and mediating role**



~~Political ambiguity~~



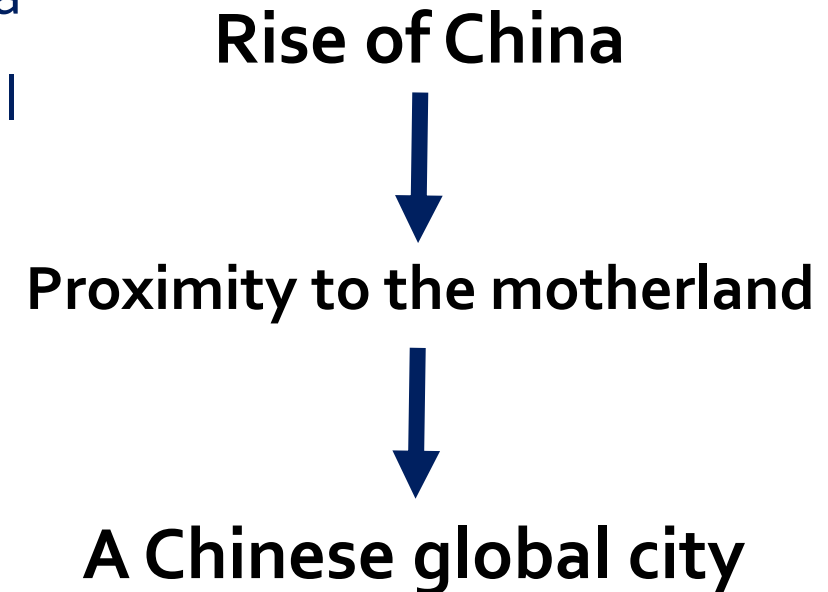
Cultural proximity?



~~A global frontier~~  
Connector?

# Latest Developments

- Hong Kong's global status is dependent on its geographical and political proximity to China
- An optimistic scenario is that Hong Kong will remain important as and when **China continues to grow and open up**
- *Hong Kong as a stepping stone for mainland Chinese students*



# Latest Developments

- Intercity competition
- What is the competitive advantage of Hong Kong over other Chinese cities?
- A pessimistic view is that a deeper integration and the deteriorating global profile will only speed up the process in which Hong Kong's status as China's global city will be **replaced by other Chinese cities**, like Shenzhen and Shanghai
- *Higher education and technological innovation*

## Hong Kong v Shenzhen: the battle for supremacy

After months of protests in the former British colony, Beijing is boosting its rival's status



Shenzhen, home of China's tech industry, has now surpassed Hong Kong in GDP, but Hong Kong still leads as a financial centre



# THANKS!

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