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HONG KONG BECOMING CHINA: THE TRANSITION TO 1997

從世界角度研探
香港回歸中國

HONG KONG'S REUNION
WITH CHINA
Global Dimensions

白傑瑞 鄧特抗 主編

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Editors



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Introduction

Transforming Hong Kong's Global Identity

*Gerard A. Postiglione and James T.H. Tang,
with Ting Wai*

Unless it maintains its special international status and global linkages after July 1, 1997, Hong Kong could very well become just another city in South China. For the most part, this status was not bestowed, but rather earned through tough competition with other international players. Hong Kong won a significant slice of world trade, adeptly turned itself into a leading global banking center, and took advantage of its location to become a key communication and transportation hub. As the territory returns to Chinese sovereignty, competitor cities from Seoul, to Shanghai, Singapore, and Sydney are watchful of the "one country, two systems" transition process and prepared to capitalize should Hong Kong falter. Whether by virtue of Beijing's manipulation or by its own hand, Hong Kong could lose its competitive edge after 1997 and gradually slide backward toward international oblivion.

Although already highly international, Hong Kong cannot rest on its laurels if it is to meet the challenges of becoming a successful Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China while at the same time maintaining as well as strengthening its global position. It is still well situated to take advantage of many new opportunities of global networking. Its extensive international experience provides valuable wisdom and skills to do this. With about 1,800 multinational companies, Hong Kong remains one of the most open economies in the world for international business ventures. It is still an economic powerhouse with a global influence that seems far out of proportion to its size. But will it remain so? Part of the answer lies in the economy.

Hong Kong is certain to face novel and formidable economic challenges as its international proxy moves from London to Beijing. As the territory's political master, Britain had an important role in bringing Hong Kong into the international economy. Hong Kong adapted well to its affiliation with the Western world under British sponsorship. However, readaptation will be required as China replaces Britain in this role. The Basic Law defines how to some extent, though gray areas abound. What will happen, for example, if multinational companies with offices and commercial interests in Hong Kong (as well as Beijing) become dissatisfied with their treatment by the SAR government? Will they use a back door to Beijing, where the rule of law greatly differs from that in Hong Kong, to get what they want? If so, this could foster a different form of internationalization, perhaps more like mainland China's, than the kind traditionally at work in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong must exact the competition; continue to attract investments, including those from the increasingly globalized overseas Chinese business community; proceed to restructure its domestic economy; and position itself between East and West, North and South, and China and everywhere. Yet economy is still only one, albeit important, dimension of Hong Kong's global future. Among the other key issues are political changes, the continuation of its legal structures and laws, an international and free media, cultural identity, how knowledge is to be disseminated, as well as migration of Hong Kong people, and relationships with other international actors in the global community.

No other place in the world has been so successful at internationalizing without nationalizing. Even while separated from China during the colonial period, Hong Kong achieved a greater degree of participation in the international community than many other countries of the world. Yet it is questionable whether this will continue under the People's Republic of China's special brand of sovereignty. Operating in the international sphere required that Hong Kong have a great deal of autonomy. While much autonomy has been promised, there are certain to be differences from the form of autonomy practiced in pre-1997 Hong Kong. While this does present the PRC with an exciting task for the actualization of its sovereignty, Hong Kong is not an entirely new challenge. The PRC has shown its ability to permit and contain various levels of regional autonomy since its establishment in 1949. It has many decades of experience with its five autonomous provinces, including Xinjiang and Tibet. In these regions it has shown itself to be extremely uncompromising on the question of sovereignty. The PRC has spared no effort to ensure national unity in a world that has seen the disintegration of many major countries by the hand of separatist movements, including the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. There is little doubt that the Chinese government would not hesitate to take tough actions in Hong Kong should it perceive that Chinese sovereignty is at stake.

The aspiration of Hong Kong people for a high degree of autonomy within the global community is not altogether different from that of other groups. The

struggles waged by cultural minorities in Quebec and Basque country have consisted of demands for limited autonomy and self-rule or similar status within the boundaries of the larger federal structure—demands that fall short of pursuit of complete autonomy with the status of a full international entity on par with a state. However, different dynamics are at work in Hong Kong. The majority of the people are ethnic Chinese, and their cultural identity is highly problematic and complex.¹ The Hong Kong case has to be understood in the context of its specific historical legacy and the political circumstances of the territory.

Historical Legacy

During more than 150 years of British rule, Hong Kong has remained a largely Chinese society, and though a colonial territory, it has enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. Chinese society managed to prosper there without excessive intervention from the colonial administration. The original goal of the British occupation was to establish a stronghold on the coast of Southern China to protect British military, commercial, and political interests in the Far East with little intention of transforming local social structure into a British community. To a large extent, the British government has maintained “indirect rule” over Hong Kong society.

Traditionally, the governor, as the highest official sent to Hong Kong by London, enjoyed a wide range of power. Until 1985, he appointed all the members of the Legislative Council. Constitutionally speaking, parliamentary acts passed in London imposed restrictions on the colonial legislature; however, in practice the legislation of British Parliament for Hong Kong was limited to a few areas such as defense, aviation, nationality, and treaties.² The governor seldom exercised what one would consider dictatorial power, and the colonial administration was known for practicing limited government, especially concerning the matters in Chinese society. British colonial governance has been generally lenient, if discriminatory at times.

The administration's economic policy has been characterized as *laissez-faire*, and despite trends toward “minimum noninterference” and “selective intervention,” the government has avoided excessive intervention in the economic development of Hong Kong. Nevertheless, through land sales and other means, the government has exerted a fair amount of control over the economy. At the same time, colonial administrators have incorporated local Chinese elites, especially business people and professionals, into the establishment. As long as the administration had the support of Hong Kong's Chinese, and refrained from being too intrusive into the local Chinese community, the legitimacy of the colonial regime was not directly challenged.³

Since 1949, Hong Kong and China have followed divergent paths. As the mainland turned socialist under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, Hong Kong continued with its commercial activities and prospered as a free port. By the 1970s, Hong Kong had undergone economic restructuring and successful

industrialization, resulting in its becoming one of the four Asian newly industrializing economies (NIEs), which together led the way for the spectacular economic transformation of East Asia. Since then it has taken the lead in its economic development with little guidance from Britain.

Pragmatic Nationalism

Nationalism has not been a significant element in the social psyche of the Hong Kong Chinese. While they often express a sense of pride over achievements by ethnic Chinese all over the world, they generally choose not to identify with the communist regime in Beijing. Thus, it is not surprising that the political identity of Hong Kong Chinese has been somewhat problematic, as reflected in survey results consistently indicating a strong sense of Hong Kong identity. A 1985 survey reported the proportion of respondents who identified themselves as Hong Kongers rather than Chinese was 60 percent; only 36 percent regarded themselves as Chinese. A 1988 survey found that the proportion of people who identify themselves as primarily Hong Kongers had increased to 63.6 percent, with only 28.8 percent regarding themselves as Chinese.⁴ Though without a political entity (nation and state) with which to identify, the sense of belonging to Hong Kong has been surprisingly strong. Nevertheless, few if any would entertain the idea of self-determination. Frustration of circumstance has been accepted along with the notion of a "borrowed place on borrowed time."⁵

Long known for their pragmatism and value system based on "utilitarian familism," only in the decade leading to the return of sovereignty have Hong Kong people shed their characteristic political apathy and sole devotion to creation of wealth. Apart from the generation born and bred in Hong Kong after the Second World War, most Hong Kong citizens were migrants who left or "escaped" from China. For this group, Hong Kong was merely a convenient refuge and therefore their political demands were limited. It is hardly surprising that developing a sense of belonging to a place ruled by foreigners proved to be difficult, and thus they did little to challenge colonial rule. Deprived of national identity, Hong Kong's main attractions were political stability, economic prosperity, and social and cultural freedom. Although there were occasional outbursts of anticolonial feelings, and demonstrations against the government, in general Hong Kong people developed a positive attitude toward the honesty and efficiency of the Hong Kong government, and saw the function of government in an instrumental and pragmatic light.⁶ In a society where Chinese nationalism was not politically charged, Hong Kong people operated with flexible identities and integrated more easily with those from other parts of the world. Industrious and willing to face challenges of discrimination in foreign lands, many Hong Kong Chinese succeeded in their adopted land after emigration and could therefore claim to be "global people" who see the world as a "global village." Without a strong sense of national identity, Hong Kong people were left with a sense of

political impotence, and disbelief in rewards for political actions. Their views toward the territory's links with the outside world were dominated by pragmatic consideration with a focus on economic rather than political relations. Excellent communication networks and information flows with the rest of the world have not increased Hong Kong people's interest in world affairs or in domestic development of the neighboring Asian countries. During the 1990–91 Gulf War, the main concern was over the economic implications of the conflict for Hong Kong properties prices and other investments, rather than the conflict itself. The international news pages in the Chinese-language newspapers of Hong Kong are dominated by translations of reports from major Western news agencies. Those who work for the international desk are usually translators rather than journalists. In-depth analysis and assessment of current affairs from local perspectives are generally lacking. The outlook of Hong Kong people, therefore, is not necessarily highly international.

Hong Kong Chinese have been said to "participate less in almost all forms of conventional and unconventional participatory actions."⁷ Aside from periodic protest action against China since 1989, and voting in district- and territorywide elections, the scope of their political action has been limited. Naturally, there has been a strong sentiment of political powerlessness in efforts to challenge the colonial or Beijing governments.⁸ The colonial government generally succeeded in resolving domestic political conflicts, and avoided antagonizing the mainland government across the border. At the same time, the colonial administrators managed to maintain an efficient and clean government, especially since the 1970s. With an often inefficient, and repressive government in China, Hong Kong Chinese seemed contented with a stable and prosperous life even though they were under colonial rule.

Thus, the outlook of the Hong Kong people has been shaped by colonial history, Chinese culture, limited political participation, and the commercial nature of Hong Kong. Since 1949, Hong Kong and China have followed distinctly different paths of development. Although the Chinese government has always insisted that Hong Kong is part of Chinese territory, temporarily administered by the British for historical reasons, the two have not shared a view of common destiny. Since the 1980s, economic changes in China have narrowed the gap between the PRC and Hong Kong as the two economies have become increasingly integrated. Their relationship, however, remains largely one of convenience. Politically and socially they are still poles apart. It is challenging to imagine how the vehemently nationalistic outlook of the PRC government will be harmonized with the more moderate and global/pragmatic outlook of the people of Hong Kong.

Limits on International Participation

Hong Kong entered a turbulent period in the 1980s, when the British and Chinese governments began negotiations on the territory's future. As Hong Kong

prospered and a new generation of Hong Kong Chinese born and bred in the territory came of age, the stage was set for the Sino-British negotiations and the subsequent agreement to return sovereignty of Hong Kong to China under the "one country, two systems" formula. After the conclusion of the Joint Declaration in 1984, the population of Hong Kong began to become more concerned about how they should be governed than any time in the territory's political history. The political process gradually became more democratized, which opened up the political establishment and placed pressure on the administration to be more accountable to the public. The legitimacy of the colonial administration become increasingly challenged. The problems of sovereignty transfer also generated heated political debates, and Hong Kong people became more aware of their political rights and obligations. In 1991, direct elections to the Legislative Council were introduced for the first time;⁹ in 1995, Hong Kong people saw their first fully elected legislature.⁹ Recent studies have suggested that a new political culture is emerging in the territory, and that people are prepared to defy the Chinese and Hong Kong governments during election times.¹⁰

Some scholars, however, identified ambiguities in the emerging pattern of political attitudes in Hong Kong, arguing that in spite of the demand for democratic reform, public commitment to democracy in Hong Kong was instrumental and partial.¹¹ As the transfer of sovereignty approached, the Chinese identity among Hong Kong people appears to have become stronger. In a 1995 survey, the proportion of Hong Kong Chinese who identified themselves as Hong Kongers decreased from the 1980s to 53.7 percent, and those identified themselves as Chinese increased to 34.2 percent. Although the Chineseness of Hong Kong is a complicated subject, the people of Hong Kong seem to share an increasingly strong desire for political rights and participation. The 1995 survey indicated that among those who identified themselves as Chinese, attitudes toward questions such as state power and the right to demonstrate were not significantly different from those of the "Hong Kongers."¹² The political adjustment and accommodation during this political transition is clearly not a straightforward process. Yet political activism is rising, and political attitudes of the Hong Kong people have undergone significant, if still ambiguous, change.

Hong Kong also gradually acquired a higher degree of autonomy in the management of its external affairs. Since 1969, Hong Kong was empowered to sign bilateral agreements with foreign countries, and from 1973 onward it could even sign multilateral agreements. At the end of 1974 the Hong Kong government was permitted to freely dispose of (and invest) its currency reserves, which were originally deposited in the form of pounds sterling in Britain. As a result of the 1985 Hong Kong Act, and the Hong Kong (Legislative Powers) Order in Council issues in 1986, the Legislative Council of Hong Kong assumed the authority to amend or repudiate any acts implemented by the British Parliament in relation to Hong Kong, and to pass laws with extraterritorial application on matters such as shipping and aviation. In fact, Hong Kong's relations with London were far

from smooth. Britain was party to the imposition of textile quotas on Hong Kong textile and clothing exports as early as the late 1950s, and its positions on international trade matters from the 1960s to the 1980s were often in conflict with those of Hong Kong. The Hong Kong government succeeded in reducing the proportion of its burden for the expenditure of the British Army stationed in the city from 75 percent to 65 percent in 1988. As a nonsovereign international actor, Hong Kong has participated autonomously in a large number of international organizations. In 1986, Hong Kong became a contracting party to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and a founding member of the World Trade Organization in 1995. By 1990 it established its own shipping registry. It joined the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) together with Taiwan and mainland China in 1991. By 1992 the territory was a member of 1,573 international organizations, compared to China's 1,729. The number of international organizations that located their headquarters/regional headquarters in the territory was 77, compared to 49 in China (see Appendix 1).¹³

The Beijing government has promised Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy and the right to maintain links with the outside world after the transfer of sovereignty. The principles concerning Hong Kong's external relations as expressed in the Joint Declaration are spelled out in the Basic Law (Articles 150 to 157 are in Chapter 7, on external relations). Accordingly, Hong Kong would enjoy autonomy in the management of its own external relations over economic and cultural matters, but not in national defense and diplomatic relations. Such protection, however, is limited by other provisions in the Basic Law that guarantee the political dominance of the central government over the Special Administrative Region.

According to the Basic Law (Article 23), Hong Kong can use the name "Hong Kong, China," to participate in international organizations and can be a signatory to international treaties. In addition, "the Central People's Government shall, where necessary, facilitate the continued participation of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in an appropriate capacity in those international organizations in which Hong Kong is a participant in one capacity or another, but of which the People's Republic of China is not a member." However, in cases where the central government believes participation is "not necessary," Hong Kong will have to withdraw its membership from such organizations. Similarly, "international agreements to which the People's Republic of China is not a party but which are implemented in Hong Kong may continue to be implemented in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The Central People's Government shall, as necessary, authorize or assist the government of the Region to make appropriate arrangements for the application to the Region of other relevant international agreements." Moreover, Beijing can request Hong Kong to enact laws on its own to prohibit foreign political organizations from conducting political activities in the city, and to prohibit local political organizations from establishing ties with foreign groupings.

In April 1997, the Hong Kong SAR's Chief Executive-designate, Tung Chee-wah, proposed legislative changes to the Public Order and Societies ordinances. These changes would prohibit political parties from receiving donations from foreign nationals and grant the police authority to reject applications for public demonstrations on the ground of national security. The proposal, in the form of a consultation document, generated heated debates about political freedom in the territory.

In any case, the Beijing government, under the authority of Article 18 of the Basic Law, can, "in the event that the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress decides to declare a state of war or, by reason of turmoil within the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region which endangers national unity or security and is beyond the control of the government of the Region, decide the Region is in a state of emergency, in which case the Central People's Government may issue an order applying the relevant national laws in the Region."

The Hong Kong SAR's international activities will have to be pursued within the framework set by China's foreign policy priorities and relations with others. Mainland China-Taiwan relations, for example, will possibly impose constraints on the international presence of Hong Kong. It has been suggested that Hong Kong's participation in international organizations, including nongovernmental organizations, should be based on the principle of one China—that is, if a particular international organization accepts the People's Republic of China as a member, then Hong Kong should withdraw its membership.¹⁴

In fact, the Beijing government seems to have ignored the importance of the changing political attitude of Hong Kong people—rising political expectation and participation with a stronger sense of political inefficacy. The director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office of the State Council of the PRC, Lu Ping, points out:

Hong Kong should and must continue to maintain her status as an economic and financial center, international business center, and international transportation center. But, Hong Kong in any case should not become a political center, let alone an international political center. If Hong Kong becomes a field where international political forces confront and enter into rivalry, it will bring disaster to the six million people living there.¹⁵

The Bill of Rights, passed by the Legislative Council in June 1991, is also a major point of contention. According to Article 39 of the Basic Law, "The provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and international labor conventions as applied to Hong Kong shall remain in force and shall be implemented through the laws of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region." The Bill of Rights passed in 1991 consisted of relevant provisions in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.¹⁶ Beijing has rejected the bill, contending that the protection of rights and freedoms of the Hong Kong

people is already provided for in the Basic Law. Chinese officials were also dismayed at what they regarded as the supremacy of the Bill of Rights in Hong Kong laws, as legislation not consistent with the bill had to be modified. In October 1995, Chinese officials declared that those laws inconsistent with the Basic Law have to be repealed after 1997.¹⁷

Beijing's reaction to the 1990 British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act and the 1991 Bill of Rights demonstrated distrust. In an attempt to restore confidence to post-Tiananmen Hong Kong, the British government decided to grant the right of abode to fifty thousand Hong Kong families. Beijing rejected the scheme as an attempt to extend British colonial influence beyond 1997 and, moreover, declared that ethnic Chinese in Hong Kong who acquire British nationality will continued to be regarded as Chinese nationals if they stay in the SAR, thus denying them British consular access privilege.

Beijing's opposition to Governor Chris Patten's 1992 proposal to introduce a larger element of representation to the Legislative Council resulted in the breakdown of Sino-British talks over constitutional arrangements for Hong Kong. In 1995, the first Legislative Council fully elected by the people of Hong Kong was formed. The Chinese side abolished it in 1997, and replaced it with a "provisional legislature" until the first SAR legislature could be elected. Patten's proposal for political reform was considered part of a Western strategy for fighting against China. With the end of Cold War, the West has come to be seen as using Hong Kong as a pawn in the Sino-American trial of strength, thus placing Hong Kong at the so-called center of struggle in the post-Cold War period.¹⁸ In May 1993, the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee of Chinese Communist Party delivered a document entitled "On the United States Plan of Confrontation against China," the main theme of which is that Washington intends to infiltrate and subvert China through ideological and economic means. Specifically, the document accuses the United States government of attempting to "intervene in Hong Kong affairs publicly, openly support the changes of British government's policy against China, and intend to turn Hong Kong into a place of international political confrontations and a springboard for Britain and United States against China."¹⁹ The selling of advanced military aircraft to Taiwan by both France and the United States in 1992 is seen as part of this grand strategy. The Chinese leadership is highly suspicious of international interests in the territory.

Many Western countries, however, have expressed a strong concern about Hong Kong's transition. For example, the United States Congress passed a *U.S.-Hong Kong Policy Act* in 1992 which requires the administration to report regularly on developments in Hong Kong (see Appendix 2). In March 1997 the United States House of Representatives passed the *Hong Kong Reversion Act* which links Hong Kong's autonomy to economic rights under American law. Also, the Clinton administration adopted a higher profile on the Hong Kong question in 1997, and placed Hong Kong high on the agenda of Sino-U.S. relations.

Whether or not Hong Kong can successfully maintain its international status and external links depends partly on Beijing's perceptions of the world. The

internationalized economy of Hong Kong, however, guarantees global interest in the years to come. This may force China, as a Chinese proverb says, "to spare the rat to save the dishes," and help maintain Hong Kong's international status. Yet China remains concerned about foreign involvement in Hong Kong as a source of instability in Hong Kong as well as in China. Beijing will be watchful of Western actions, and is prepared to defend the principle of mutual nonintervention.

Internationalization at Risk?

The issues surrounding Hong Kong's global position and international links grow complex by the day as the process of Hong Kong's transformation from a British colony to a Chinese unfolds. This volume sets out to address a number of questions relating to this process. How international is Hong Kong? What are its international and global dimensions? How important are these dimensions to its continued success? How will these dimensions change, especially beyond the sphere of economics? Is Hong Kong's internationalization, defined in terms of its willingness to embrace international values and its capacity to maintain its international presence, at risk? The volume addresses these questions as they pertain to the changing situation, relations between mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong; the positions of Australia, Canada, and United States on Hong Kong; internalization of international legal values; Americanization vs. Asianization; linkages to the world through Guangdong; strategies to emigrate overseas; cultural internationalization; media internationalization; and universities within the global academy.

Hong Kong's global situation needs to be understood within the framework of the actions of major international players. For example, the important but unstable relationship between the United States and China may very well be further complicated by the Hong Kong factor. U.S. interests in Hong Kong are substantial, with 1,200 American companies and 36,000 American citizens residing there. Moreover, 10 percent of the work force is employed by American firms in Hong Kong. It can, therefore, be expected to speak on issues of stability, fairness, and rule of law. Aside from having the largest American Chamber of Commerce operating in Hong Kong, the United States has a consulate that hopes to maintain its economic services, as well as cultural and even military activities (sixty-six naval vessel port calls each year, including aircraft carriers and submarines). U.S. policy toward China, including relations with Taiwan, can be expected to have an increasingly strong effect on American interests in Hong Kong, which was much less a possibility under colonial administration. A key factor, as Ming Chan notes in Chapter 1, will be how Hong Kong people will deal with an ongoing, sometimes subtle, sometimes overt, crisis of confidence in their new status, and whether they will take sides in policy conflicts between the United States and China.

Regardless of how the United States deals with the Hong Kong SAR, there

will be increasing limitations of Hong Kong's internationalization. Serious problems remain in the reunification due to obvious differences in size and economic disparity and bureaucratic mentality between the PRC and Hong Kong. Ming Chan astutely argues for "an enlightened, positive, and sensitive global perspective on Hong Kong's status transformation."

Hong Kong's global situation must also be understood from the point of view that it is one among different "Chinese actors" in the international arena. From this perspective, the limitations of its internationalism become clear. In Chapter 2, Byron Weng adeptly contrasts the international images of these three actors and their relationships with one another. Internationalization becomes a process in which both mainland China and Taiwan are attempting to internationalize Hong Kong in their own way. Citing evidence that Hong Kong is arguably a quasi-state, Weng skillfully demonstrates how its international dimensions are bound up with its relationship to the other two Chinese actors (mainland China and Taiwan) and their triangular relationship within the global community. While it is assumed that these dimensions are important to its continued success, it is clear that changes in these dimensions after 1997 will have much to do with the increasing interdependence among the three actors. At risk is not only Hong Kong's internationalism, but also its way of life, to which the international community can lend support by playing a monitoring role. Yet it remains to be seen how much of a role the international community will play in Hong Kong's future. As many countries now find their elections being monitored, the global community may take great interest in assuming a monitoring role in Hong Kong's unfolding democratization. Beijing may very well accept external monitoring as long as it is not interference. What is certain, as Weng predicts, is "greater triangular interdependence." Hong Kong may even play a part in shaping the manner in which China solidifies its position in the family of nations. While Hong Kong is unquestionably international, its global dimensions are inextricably bound up with the policies of three major Western countries: Australia, Canada, and the United States. As Kim Nossal observes in Chapter 3, Hong Kong's continued success is dependent on how the international cards are played by these three countries. Yet involving the international community in its development is a sensitive issue. Should such involvement become significant, there is little question that these countries, key players in their own right, will continue to be major destinations for Hong Kong emigrants. At the same time, these Western countries also have major interests at stake in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, as Nossal notes, their views of China inevitably affect their attitudes toward Hong Kong—attitudes that have swung between taking individual approaches and taking a more galvanized approach. At risk is Hong Kong's global position, which could very easily be lost if the major Western countries, including the United States, do not play their cards right.

The United States is by far not free of competition for China's attention. Japan and other countries in the region will become more influential in shaping

Hong Kong's development. In fact, the East Asian region is likely to exert an increasing influence on Hong Kong's development in comparison to Britain or the United States. For Lai On-Kwok and Alvin So, as they argue in Chapter 4, Hong Kong is international insofar as the major economic projects affecting it are international. But the international projects have been sponsored at different times by the United States, Japan, and other Asian newly NIEs, as well as by the emerging economies of the region, including China. These economic projects have extended Hong Kong's global dimensions through forms of capital accumulation, export-led industrialization, and the international division of labor. In short, these dimensions are the basis of Hong Kong's continued success. From this economic standpoint, the internationalization of Hong Kong is hardly at risk; however, that internationalization is now increasingly driven by Asia, rather than United States or Japanese. While the future seems to promise an expansion of this Asianization, there are forces that could slow it down, including divisions in Asia along religious, political, and cultural lines as well as around security issues.

Lai and So trace the process that led colonial Hong Kong to its status as an NIE in the global arena and how that process was brought about through a series of projects backed at different periods of time by different international economic players. From the 1940s to the 1960s, the only significant international sponsor was the United States. Beginning in the late 1970s, they argue, Japan's economic project in the region sponsored a trajectory for Hong Kong's participation in the global economy that differed significantly from U.S. sponsorship. Moreover, by the late 1980s, the larger Asian project including Taiwan, Singapore, and Korea, as well as mainland China and other developing economies in the region further shaped Hong Kong's internationalization. In general, these major economic projects are reflected in a shift away from Americanization and toward Asianization.

The most significant economic project for Hong Kong is the one involving its hinterland, which borders the PRC. This project is important not only because of the major implications of the hinterland for the restructuring of Hong Kong's economy, but also because it is focused on Southern China, the region through which Hong Kong will rejoin China. The implications here are far-reaching, especially in cultural terms, because these southern regions share a common heritage. As Graham Johnson shows in Chapter 5, each side of the border is having a major social and cultural influence on the other. Already a prominent member of the global economy, Hong Kong, as much as Beijing, has become the sponsor for South China. Guangdong is Hong Kong's link into the mainland Chinese economy, and Hong Kong is Guangdong's link into the global economy (with the rest of South China riding its coattails). Since most of Hong Kong's people come from the Pearl River Delta, by far the most dynamic part of southern Guangdong, extensive social networks have developed that span and link the regions.

The social and cultural aspects of this phenomenon cannot be underestimated, for fundamental issues of identity are being brought into question. As Johnson

remarks, "Hong Kong constitutes a distinct local variant of Chinese culture. Its distinction reflects, in part, responses to the pressures of world systems." The risk for Hong Kong is that in exerting its strong cultural influence on Guangdong, it has planted seeds for social transformation that Beijing is not prepared to accept. This may necessitate reining in Hong Kong's influence, not at the Shenzhen border, which would be futile given the strength of the cultural bond with the adjoining regions, but rather shielding Hong Kong from the "culturally corrupting" forces of the international community. Thus, a key question concerns the degree to which certain international values have become anchored in Hong Kong.

The rule of law, an independent judiciary, a bill of rights, and other legal provisions are good indications of Hong Kong's international legal personality. It already has a well-developed international legal framework and is a "respectable player in the international arena"; however, the question remains whether or not Hong Kong can maintain its international legal personality. To do so, according to Roda Mushkat in Chapter 6, it must "internalize" existing legal values and legal arrangements. Aside from interference by the PRC through legislative infiltration, another threat to its solid international legal basis is its parochialism. Unless that legal personality can be securely anchored in indigenous values and culture, it will quickly erode. International isolation would certainly spell doom, but even a slight move to cordon off the global community could begin to undermine the integrity of the legal system. Maintaining at least a degree of integration with the key international players is essential.

The cultural problematic of Hong Kong's identity is yet another key dimension in its internationalization. Culture becomes influenced by, and in turn shapes, the economy. Moreover, the economic give-and-take between Hong Kong, its adjacent regions, and the rest of the world is characterized by cultural penetrations with repercussions for sociocultural life in Hong Kong. Rather than selective assimilation, there is a mechanism of cultural indigenization at work in Hong Kong. To better understand this mechanism, Hoiman Chan in Chapter 7 presents two programs for Hong Kong's cultural internationalization, one normative and one partial. These represent two alternative stages upon which Hong Kong's "cultural drama is enacted." The former program is confident as it combines cosmopolitanization and indigenization processes. The latter crumbles under the weight of China's mammoth influence so that Hong Kong can no longer to hold its own in cultural terms.

It appears that the internationalization of Hong Kong culture has until now been ephemeral and incomplete. Interestingly, this is exemplified in the emerging preference of many multinational companies in Hong Kong to hire university graduates from mainland China rather than from Hong Kong, not only because of their superior language skills in Mandarin as well as English, but more importantly for their more international outlook. Thus, some argue that only with strong national sentiments can one come to possess the foundation to develop a

meaningfully grounded international perspective. The cosmopolitanism of Hong Kong, then, has been a filter, albeit an incomplete processor, for the creation of a localized culture that is at once global and rooted in indigenous values. The result, however, is cultural disorientation. As Chan notes, "The cultural vision of 'Greater Hong Kong' is fast waning, because the cultural stamina of Hong Kong has failed."

A major ingredient in Hong Kong's cultural internationalization has been the continual emigration flow to other countries, with its accompanying current of return migration. Overseas Chinese will continue to play a key role in Hong Kong's internationalization. Yet the emigration problem is not fully settled. Economic growth rivaling that of most Western countries has resulted in Hong Kong's no longer continuing to be a stepping stone to still healthier economies in the West but rather a terminus. Moreover, the economic growth of South China, from where most immigrants come, outstrips that of Hong Kong, while Hong Kong's economic development now outstrips the West's. While it is virtually impossible to put aside political considerations of 1997 and how they affect emigration in the years ahead, the equation for potential emigrants from Hong Kong is more complex than before. While political change from sovereignty retrocession has brought measurable levels of anxiety, there can never be total certainty about the future. Thus emigration patterns will not only be a barometer of anticipated anxieties, but also a result of actual changes. Moreover, further emigration cannot ignore the role of social class as it enters the analysis of Hong Kong's global migration patterns. As Wong Siu-lun and Janet Salaff note in their detailed studies of families in Hong Kong in Chapter 8, "when people move, they mobilize forms of resources." These resources are not distributed evenly across social groups. Network capacities are influential and network capacities to and through South China to other global destinations are now more valuable than ever before. The risk to internationalism here is only indirectly implied. It is one in which choices to emigrate depend on social networks. Furthermore, those networks that get one in the "back door" for quick approval of emigration applications are the most valuable. In such cases, the internationalization of Hong Kong via emigration could become increasingly regulated.

Two of the most highly internationalized dimensions of Hong Kong are its media and higher education systems, which share a concern for freedom of speech. For the media the issue is press freedom; for universities it is academic freedom. Media internationalization in Hong Kong is ubiquitous. Changing this would alter the essential character of Hong Kong. Moreover, media internationalization is inextricably intertwined with the transfer of economic information essential to Hong Kong's continued success in international competition. Unlike other forms of internationalization, the media easily reaches into the homes of the citizenry not only through newspapers, but now through televisions and computers. The media has not only brought the world to Hong Kong but has also brought Hong Kong to the world. It is perhaps the greatest challenge to Beijing's

patience with Hong Kong's freedoms. The risks are self-evident. Even before the transfer of sovereignty, limitations on media freedoms were made known as they apply to reporting on Taiwan and other sensitive national issues. Nevertheless, as Joseph Man Chan asserts in Chapter 9, "As evidenced by the diversity of reports produced by international media in Beijing now, there is no reason to believe that their counterparts in Hong Kong will [uniformly self-censor] in 1997." Strength in numbers could be significant in that some international media will not bend to pressure, and this in turn makes it "easier for the local media to speak their mind." This phenomenon may hold true for the academic world as well.

While the international and local Hong Kong media have been locked in debates about their future freedom to report on events, the same has not been true for Hong Kong's academic community. It is difficult to find a case of a professor's job being threatened because of critical scholarship that either the Hong Kong or Beijing government would not permit. Since 90 percent of the doctorates of the university professoriate were earned outside of the territory, the academy in Hong Kong could be considered China's most international sector. This sector has become increasingly integrated into the global academy through its participation in all forms of academic activity, as well as through the value it places on academic freedom. The degree of academic freedom will certainly be related to the degree to which the academic profession in Hong Kong maintains a viable international dimension. While the composition of the profession is relatively international in character, its potential for maintaining that international dimension is less certain. As Gerard Postiglione notes in Chapter 10, Hong Kong is not at the bottom of the international rankings in measures of academic freedom. Yet given the fact that Hong Kong has long touted its freedom of speech, it is worthy of concern that it ranks below its East Asian neighbors Japan and South Korea on the question posed to its academics of whether academic freedom is strongly protected in its society.

Despite the problematic nature of the territory's transition, as manifested in a multitude of dimensions—political, economic, legal, media, cultural, educational—Hong Kong will continue to be highly international. The global outlook of Hong Kong people will for a long time to come be problematic. That outlook has always been limited by Hong Kong's not being a nation, and this will not change. The aspiration to be different and special, as well as a desire for international recognition, were fully demonstrated when thousands of Hong Kong people rushed to the streets to greet the territory's first Olympic gold medalist, Lee Li San, in the summer of 1996. Yet only a couple of months later, the people of Hong Kong were out in force to protest against the Japanese claim that the Diaoyutai Islands are part of Japanese territory, and to demand that both the Beijing and the Taipei governments take tough actions against Japan.

Nevertheless, it is hard to see how its international participation and saliency in the global arena will remain unchanged now that Hong Kong is part of China rather than Britain. Political dimensions of its international character will be

projected through Beijing rather than London, while economic dimensions of its international character are expected to continue largely as before. Yet these two dimensions are inseparable in reality. This volume has set out to achieve the modest aim of highlighting selected aspects of the extensive scope of Hong Kong's international and global dimensions. The volume, however, does not attempt to address the conceptual problem of distinguishing between "internationalization" and "globalization."²⁰ As the literature on the subject often uses these terms interchangeably, so will the chapter contributors. We recognize, nevertheless, that internationalization is based in processes involving the state, and since Hong Kong is not a state, this places legal limits on its international status. Thus the term "global" seems more suitable for Hong Kong's situation. Still, it becomes impossible to ignore the fact that the bulk of Hong Kong global activities intersect the international system, including state to state relations. Therefore, although Hong Kong is not a sovereign state, it is an international player. If we shift the focus to its society, in which no national identity is institutionally fostered, "global" seems more fitting to describe the disposition of Hong Kong people, even though a large number of people with foreign passports again reinforces its "international" dimension.

As Hong Kong transforms from a colonial dependent territory to a Chinese Special Administrative Region, its international status will be more connected to China's position in the world. The nature of Hong Kong global linkages are shifting as the political identities of Hong Kong people inevitably become more nationalized. But a mix of pragmatic nationalism and globalism is likely to continue to characterize Hong Kong's outlook as the China-Hong Kong reunion takes place. A Hong Kong that is part of China, but with its global linkages intact, could be a great asset to both China and the world. It is therefore not in China's interest to turn the city into just another Chinese city, or to discourage the international community from recognizing the SAR's special international status. In the final analysis, Hong Kong must rise to the enormous challenge the reunion brings.

Notes

1. The reunion of Hong Kong with China as a Special Administrative Region has generated heated discussion in the local intellectual community. See the June, July and August issues of the Chinese-language Hong Kong journal *Ming Pao Monthly* in 1996. See also Gerard Postiglione, "National Minorities and Nationalities Policy in China," in Berch Berberoglu, ed., *The National Question: Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Self-Determination in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995).

2. A brief and succinct summary of the role of the British government in managing Hong Kong affairs can be found in Norman Miners, *Government and Politics of Hong Kong*, 5th ed. (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1991), Chapter 16, pp. 214-225. See also Ting Wai, "The External Relations and International Status of Hong Kong," Occasional Papers/Reprint series in *Contemporary Asian Studies*, University of Maryland School of Law, May 1997.

3. On the question of legitimacy, see, for example, discussions in Ian Scott, *Political Change and the Crisis of Legitimacy in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 322-335.

4. See Lau Siu-Kai and Kuan Hsin-Chi, *The Ethos of Hong Kong Chinese* (Hong Kong:

The Chinese University Press, 1988), p. 2; Lau Siu-Kai, Lee Ming-Kwan, Wong Po-san, and Wong Siu-lun, *Indicators of Social Developments: Hong Kong 1988* (Hong Kong: Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1991), pp. 177–178.

5. Richard Hughes, *Borrowed Place, Borrowed Time*, 2d ed. (London: Deutsch, 1976).

6. The most serious challenge to the colonial government in recent history were the riots in the 1960s, when pro-Beijing groups demonstrated against the government in Hong Kong. See Lau and Kuan, *Ethos*, pp. 80–93, and Lau et al., *Indicators*, 1991, pp. 186–194, for survey data and analysis of the attitude of Hong Kong people toward government. On Hong Kong's global and local identities, see also Ting Wai, "The External Relations," and James T.H. Tang, "Hong Kong's International Status," *Pacific Review* 6, 3 (1993).

7. See Lau Siu-Kai and Kuan Hsin-Chi, "The Attentive Spectators: Political Participation of the Hong Kong Chinese," *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies* 14, 1 (Spring 1995), p. 4.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 15.

9. The sixty members of the Legislative Council, however, were elected through three different types of constituencies: geographic constituencies, functional constituencies, and an election committee formed by members of the regional/urban councils and district boards.

10. Tsang Wing-kwong, "A Defiant Electorate: A Study of Electoral Choice in the 1995 Legislative Council Election," paper presented to a conference on the 1995 Legislative Council Election, Chinese University of Hong Kong, May 17–18, 1996.

11. Lau Siu-Kai and Kuan Hsin-Chi, "The Partial Vision of Democracy in Hong Kong: A Survey of Political Opinion," *China Journal*, no. 34 (July 1995), p. 263.

12. Rowena Kwok Yee Fun and Elaine Chan Yee-man, "Political Identity and Participation in the 1995 Legislative Council Elections," paper presented to an international conference on Political Development in Taiwan and Hong Kong, Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, February 8–9, 1996.

13. Miners, *Government and Politics of Hong Kong*, pp. 215–223; *Yearbook of International Organizations, 1993/1994*, 11th ed. (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1993), vol. 2.

14. See Ming Pao, 25 July 1995, p. A4; and *Hong Kong Economic Journal*, 26 July 1995, p. 8.

15. See *Wen Wei Po*, 14 May 1993, p. 2; *Ta Kung Pao*, 14, May 1993, p. 12.

16. *Hong Kong Bill of Rights*.

17. See *Wen Wei Po*, 27 October 1995, p. A12.

18. See Jing Xiao-Ru, "The Sino-British Duel Has International Background," *Ming Pao*, 29 December 1992, p. 41; Tsang Shu-Ki, "Hong Kong Becomes the Center of Struggle of the New Cold War," *Ming Pao*, 2 December 1992, p. 41; Lee Kuan-Yew also has similar arguments, see the interview of Lee Kuan-Yew in *Ming Pao*, 18 December 1992, p. 2; *Wen Wei Po*, 18 December 1992, p. 6. See also James T.H. Tang, "The International Dimension of Mainland China's Unification Policy: The Case of Hong Kong," in Jausieh Joseph Wu, ed., *Divided Nations: The Experience of Germany, Korea, and China* (Taipei: Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, 1995); and Ting Wai, "External Relations."

19. Quoted from Chen Meng-Bin, "The United States Action of Strategic Containment Against China," *Mirror Monthly*, June 1993, p. 44.

20. Internationalization has been defined in different ways. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines it as, "make international, esp. bring (territory etc.) under combined protection etc. of different nations." But the term has also been used in the context of a world shrinking through the process of economic interdependence, the information revolution, and the greater mobility of people. See Joseph A. Camilleri and Jim Falk, *The End of Sovereignty? The Politics of a Shrinking and Emerging World* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1992). It has also been associated with relatively inward-looking societies seeking to broaden and deepen their consciousness and involvement with international affairs, e.g., Japan. See Chikara Higashi, ed., *The Internationalization of the Japanese Economy* (Boston: Kluwer Press, 1990).

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