



香港教育大學  
The Education University  
of Hong Kong

28.6-29.6.2017

「香港主權移交 20 年  
Hong Kong 20 Years  
after the Handover」  
研討會 Conference



地點 · Venue

香港教育大學大埔校園胡郭秀萍演講廳 (D1-LP-04)

Lady Ivy Wu Lecture Theatre (D1-LP-04), EdUHK



香港研究學院  
The Academy of Hong Kong Studies



大中華研究中心  
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# The China Factor in Hong Kong Elections

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Conference on “Hong Kong 20 Years after the Handover  
Education University of Hong Kong,  
June 29, 2017.

# Three Dimensions

## (1) Ideological/ Identity Dimension

- Attitude to China as Major Cleavage
- Nationalism/Patriotism/ Hong Kong Identity

## (2) Power Structural Dimension

- HK as a hybrid regime
- Changing Rules of Game
- Electoral Integrity

## (3) Organizational/Resource Dimension

- CCP + HKMWC + Pro-Beijing organizations a formidable resource network that impacted elections

# Four Analytical Periods

- Before 1997
- 1997-2008
- Post-Olympics: 2008-2016
- The 2016 Election

# Before 1997

- **Ideology/Identity**: After Tiananmen, Attitude to China the key campaign issue in 1991 & 95 elections  
(Democracy = anti-China)
- **Power Structural**: China influenced the choice of electoral system but did not have the power to choose the system (e.g. Patten's reform)
- **Organizational Resource**: Just began to prepare/rally the troops → DAB & the United Front

# 1997- 2008

- **Ideology/Identity:**
  - China factor less important in this period
  - Article 23 struggle major impact on elections (03 DC + 04 LC)
  - 03 July 1 rally a watershed in China's intervention in HK
- **Power Structural:**
  - Change of Electoral Rules in 1998 (FC, PR, Abolish UC/RC)
  - Gradual engineering and growth of United Front
- **Organizational Resource**
  - 03 a watershed → massive injection of resources

# Organizational Resource

- Leftist Unions (FTU)
- Rural groups (HYK)
- China-funded enterprise employees
- Members of “mass associations”: cultural, recreational, women’s groups, hometown associations, and others
- Residential Groups (MACs, ownership committees, & other residents groups) coordinated on regional basis
- First test of prowess in 2007 DC election



# Post-Olympic China Factor

- **Ideology/ Identity**

- China's image went down after 2008

- Rise of new HK identity: Indigenous movements & sentiments + post-materialism

- Rise of Localism & anti-China sentiments

- **Power Structural**

- Increased intervention by Liaison Office

- More electoral frauds + gerrymandering detected

# Organizational Resources

- Major Success of pro-Beijing camp in 2007 & 2011 DC elections
- Liaison Office great impact at elite level: FC elections, 2012 & 2017 CE elections
- Effective strategic coordination of pro-Beijing forces
- Maturation of the Vote-Division and Mobilizational Machine in Legco elections

# China Factor in 2016 Elections

- **Ideology/Identity:**

- First time “independence” was a campaign issue
- Created a secondary cleavage
- “Defending OCTS” major campaign issue

- **Power Structural:**

- Violation of Electoral Integrity: Confirmation Form + DQ
- Ken Chow’s case

- **Organizational Resource**

- “Usual Role” of Liaison Office, successful vote-division

# Conclusion

- China Factor ever-present in HK elections
- Organizational Resource Dimension more & more important over the years
- Deepening intervention led to localism + rise of independence ideas + anti-China sentiments
- Getting used to China's intervention?

