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Contents

Abstract 3

List of Figures 4

List of Abbreviations 5

Introduction 7

The Changing Landscapes of International Higher Education 10

The Theoretical Stage 10

The Global Reform Wave 14

GATS 16

Educational Services Industry 18

Rankings 19

New spaces of knowledge production 20

Education Hubs 21

Hong Kong 29

History 29

The National Rhetoric: The Legislative Council *Orders* a Hub 32

The Global Reality 36

Student Quotas 36

Land and Money 37

Institutional support 38

Cohesion 38

Considering Hong Kong Shue Yan University 39

Singapore 42

History 42

The National Rhetoric: The Global Schoolhouse as designed by the EDB 46

The Global Reality 53

Foreign student enrollment 53

Singapore for Singaporeans 54

Commercially viable research 54

Entrepreneurship 55

Considering the Singapore Institute of Technology 56

Discussion 59

Conclusion 65

References 67

Abstract

Internationalisation of higher education is an intersectional process happening concurrently at various spatial scales. The 'new' landscape of higher education is globalised, competitive, and economically driven. As such, education hubs are both a tool of internationalisation and a characteristic of the 'new' higher education landscape/historical period. The intention of the text is to investigate the education hubs of two regional competitors, Hong Kong and Singapore. Through an analysis of quantitative and qualitative sources as well as existing academic literature the author concentrates on the symbiotic relationship between national governments and the higher education sectors in Hong Kong and Singapore. In order to show how education hubs are used as tools at the spatial scale of nation to navigate the 'new' landscape and participate in the process of internationalisation the author juxtaposes the national rhetoric with the observable reality. A study of the Hong Kong Shue Yan University and the Singapore Institute of Technology provides examples of each government's education hub discourse in action exposing two distinct approaches with varying levels of success. The discussion is concluded with a series of potential questions for future research and best practices for policy and implementation highlighting the need to remain critical of Western designed internationalisation activities applied in non-Western settings.

Die Internationalisierung der Hochschulbildung ist ein intersektionaler Prozess der gleichzeitig auf verschiedenen räumlichen Skalen geschieht. Die so genannte "neue" Hochschullandschaft ist globalisiert, wettbewerbsfähig, und wirtschaftlich angetrieben. Darum sind *Education Hubs* sowohl ein Instrument der Internationalisierung und eine Eigenschaft der "neuen" Hochschullandschaft/historischen Periode. Die Absicht des Textes ist es, die *Education Hubs* von zwei regionalen Wettbewerbern, Hong Kong und Singapur zu erforschen. Durch einer Analyse der quantitativen und qualitativen Quellen sowie bestehender wissenschaftlicher Literatur die Autorin konzentriert sich auf die symbiotische Beziehung zwischen den nationalen Regierungen und den Hochschulsektoren in Hongkong und Singapur. Um zu zeigen, wie *Education Hubs* als Werkzeuge in der räumlichen Skala der Nation verwendet werden um die "neue" Landschaft zu navigieren und gleichzeitig im Prozess der Internationalisierung mit zu machen, stellt die Autorin die nationale Rhetorik gegenüber von der beobachtbaren Wirklichkeit. Eine Studie der Hong Kong Shue Yan Universität und des Singapore Institute of Technology enthält Beispiele des *Education Hub* Diskours beider Staate in Betrieb dadurch werde zwei verschiedene Ansätze mit unterschiedlichem Erfolg angezeigt. Die Diskussion wird mit einer Reihe von möglichen Fragen für die zukünftige Forschung und gute fachliche Praxis für Politische Strategie und Einführung abgeschlossen. Aufmerksamkeit wird darauf gelenkte weiterhin kritisch über die West-entwickelten Internationalisierungsaktivitäten die in nicht-westlichen Einstellungen angewendet werden, zu bleiben.

List of Figures

Figure 1: Internationalisation: Constantly evolving and dependant on its historical context 28

Figure 2: Hong Kong Educational Structure 30

Figure 3: Singapore Educational Structure 44

List of Abbreviations

A*STAR

Agency for Science, Technology and Research 45

APAIE

Asia-Pacific Association for International Education 34

C-BERT

Cross-Border Education Research Team 26

CREATE

Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise 45

CUEP

Committee on University Education Pathways Beyond 2015 51

EDB

Education Bureau (of Hong Kong) 29

EMB

Education and Manpower Bureau 31

ESC

Economic Strategies Committee 50

GATS

General Agreement on Trade in Services 15

HKCAA

Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation 39

HKSYU

Hong Kong Shue Yan University 39

HKTDC

Hong Kong Trade Development Council 31

HKUST

Hong Kong University of Science and Technology 30

MFA

Ministry of Foreign Affairs 46

MoE

Ministry of Education 46

MoF

Ministry of Finance 46

MoM

Ministry of Manpower 46

MOOC

Massive Open Online Course 20

MTI

Ministry of Trade and Industry 46

NTU
Nanyang Technological University 42
NUS
National University of Singapore 42
PAP
People's Action Party 42
poly-FSI
Polytechnic-Foreign Specialised Institution 56
SIT
Singapore Institute of Technology 56
SMART
Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology 45
SMU
Singapore Management University 45
UGC
University Grants Committee 31
UNSW
University of New South Wales 49
WCU
World Class Universities 45

Introduction

The research on international higher education has grown in numerous directions since the advent of the twenty-first century and continues to diversify further as academics and administrators look towards exploring the fields in which they work. As the demand for tertiary education grows on a global scale so does the necessity of this exploration along with the number of participants and stakeholders. This includes the traditional members such as students and faculty, but increasingly also management, politicians and policy writers, industry leaders, the general public, etc. The importance of international higher education research echoes throughout every discipline as it can provide an insight into the context in which each discipline is carried out. However, despite the 'international' feature many researchers take a regional approach which can be perceived from each individual's cultural and national situation. The heavyweights in the field, Jane Knight, Hans De Witt, Philip Altbach, and Jason Lane amongst others are no exception writing from a distinctly Western circumstance raising the ever elusive question, if the agreed upon procedures and environments of knowledge production are determined by institutions located in America and Europe[1] is the process we know as internationalisation simply a politically-correct westernisation? Although an ever present problematic necessary of acknowledgement and further exploration, the answer to this question, even the attempt at an answer, is however beyond the scope of this discussion. Instead, the discussion will be narrowed down considerably as it takes a regional approach through its focus on Singapore and Hong Kong. Also necessary of acknowledgement is the usage of frameworks developed by the above listed scholars and others to analyse a phenomenon occurring in a non-Western environment. As challenging as it may be, the limitations of the individual researcher in this

[1] Philip G. Altbach Paying the Professoriate: A Global Comparison of Compensation and Contracts (London: Routledge, 2012), 3.

case necessitate the use of the Western theories to discuss the topic in a Southeast Asian context. However, even researchers who are not limited by language or location build on the foundations created in primarily North American, British, and some European institutions. A prime example is the influential publication "The Internationalization of East Asian Higher Education – Globalization's Impact"[2] in which the editors and authors acknowledge that the "complex, contradictory, and expansive discourse [is] shaped by the stance of leading super-research institutions,"[3] most of which are based outside of the East Asian higher education landscape.

Going beyond a regional approach to international higher education, this discussion will be further narrowed down to a national level. Despite the ideals of global citizenship and humanitarian motivations proclaimed by corporate values, mission statements of institutions, and internationalisation experts, international higher education is still strongly bound to the nation states. Globalisation's increasing effects have not eliminated the symbiotic relationship between the state and the higher education industry but instead "countries have continued to assert their authority over any education that occurs within their domestic borders."[4] With this as the primary stepping stone the following discussion aims to isolate 'internationalisation' from international higher education and investigate how the governments of two regional competitors participate in this process using the education hub as a tool. This line of investigation is important due to its applicability. Moving from research to innovation in the field of international higher education means an influence on national education policy and a more competitive edge, for both states and

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[2] John D. Palmer et al., The Internationalization of East Asian Higher Education: Globalization's Impact (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011)
[3] Palmer et al, The Internationalization of East Asian Higher Education – Globalization's Impact, 1.
[4] Jason Lane, and Kevin Kinser. "The Cross-Border Education Policy Context: Educational Hubs, Trade Liberalization, and National Sovereignty," *New Directions for Higher Education* no. 155 (2011): 84.

individual institutions, in the knowledge based economy of the twenty-first century. The following paper will draw upon existing national policies, public opinion from global and local news outlets, academic literature, statistics, and financials in order to explore the rhetorics and realities of education hubs in Hong Kong and Singapore with the intention of identifying best practices. First, a history of internationalisation will explain the theoretical stage on which education hubs exist. Second, education hubs will be explained as both one of the characteristics of the Global Reform Wave, and a tool of internationalisation. Third, a brief history of the hub development in Hong Kong and Singapore will be chronicled. In both cases, examinations of key policies and strategies aimed at the creation of the hub will show the rhetoric and quantitative information, public opinion and expert analysis will show the reality. A brief investigation of the Hong Kong Shue Yan University and the Singapore Institute of Technology, both institutions that were born of the education hub discourse era in their respective nations, will ask how and if these two institutions are products of their respective government's education hub policies and how they are utilised to internationalise higher education. Finally, the Discussion will speculate on newly arisen questions and potential best practices.

The Changing Landscapes of International Higher Education

The Theoretical Stage

In the higher education industry internationalisation is a highly-contested term without a universally accepted definition. It is used as a 'catch-all' for any and all activity within higher education that has an international dimension. Jane Knight's definition is one of the few used consistently. She states that internationalisation is "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions (primarily teaching/learning, research, service) or delivery of higher education."[5] The accuracy of this definition lies in the choice of the words: *process, integration,* and *delivery*. They denote movement, development, growth, change; the general spirit of the suffix "–isation". However, this is also the most problematic weakness, not only of Knight's definition, but of any attempt to pin-point the precise meaning of internationalisation of higher education. By virtue of being a process it is constantly evolving and dependent upon its context.

Hans de Wit and Gilbert Mrekx illustrate the evolution of internationalisation and demonstrate its dependency on context in their *History of Internationalization of Higher Education.*[6] De Wit and Merkx trace the historical development of international education in Europe and the United States in order to reveal "the specific character of internationalisation of higher education as currently encountered."[7] According to De Wit and Merkx the 'global' has been a characteristic of the university since its earliest forms. Despite the lack of nation-states as they are known today, the authors argue that during the Middle Ages and Renaissance a "European space" with a common academic language,

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[5] Jane Knight, "Internationalization remodeled: Rationales, strategies and approaches," *Journal for Studies in International Education* 8, no. 1 (2004): 7.
[6] Deardorff et al., *The SAGE Handbook of International Higher Education.* (Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, 2012), 43- 59.
[7] Deardorff et al., *SAGE Handbook,* 43.

religion, and study and examination systems (bearing a striking resemblance to contemporary European higher education since the Bologna process and the proliferation of English) was the primary characteristic of internationalisation. However, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the emergence of nation-sates changed the character of the university and internationalisation. "Universities became institutions that served the professional needs and ideological demands of the new nations"[8] and as the nations' participation in the global arena broadened so did international studies and political sciences.

> …one can describe the period from the end of the Renaissance to the beginning of the twentieth century as being oriented toward a predominantly national higher education. The main areas of international academic attention in that period were the individual mobility of a small group of well-to-do and academically qualified students to the top centres of learning in the world, the export of academic systems from the European colonial powers to the rest of the world, the cooperation and exchange in academic research, gradually involving American higher education. This confirms the suggestion of Kerr (1994), Altbach (1998), and Scott (1998) that the focus of higher education in that period became more directed to developing a national identity and serving national needs and less to amassing universal knowledge.

The national needs in the twentieth century were heavily intertwined with World War I and II and influenced the internationalisation of higher education accordingly. Increased exchanges and cooperations, primarily between the United States and Europe, and a need for a developed foreign affairs lead nations, especially the United States, to use academia to combat political tumult and improve national security. The end of World War II caused the

[8] Deardorff et al., *SAGE Handbook,* 44.

United States to move from the periphery to the centre of the international higher education stage.

> …While the early development of international education between the two wars was focused on Europe and strongly driven by private initiative and the rationale of peace and understanding, World War II caused a radical change. Although peace and mutual understanding continued to be a driving rationale in theory, national security and foreign policy were the real forces behind its expansion, and with it came government funding and regulations.[9]

During the Cold-War era this rationale was further expanded and internationalisation became strongly politicised. The Soviet Union focused on cooperation with other socialist countries and the Third World and on its increased competition with the United States. The bi-polar world had a broadening effect on international education as now Asian, Latin American, and African nations became an ideological battle ground. The end of socialism in East Europe was accompanied by the strengthening of the European Community and a newly invigorated "emphasis on globalization of economics, social and political relations, and knowledge but at the same time by tendencies toward ethnic conflicts and nationalism and isolation."[10]

The end of the twentieth century brought with it a number of radically different and 'new' phenomena including globalisation, the development of cutting-edge information and communication technologies, and the rise of the knowledge based economy. As such, the internationalisation of higher education began to include a strong economic competitiveness rationale. It became "increasingly linked to capitalist expansion in a global

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[9] Deardorff et al., *SAGE Handbook,* 49.
[10] Deardorff et al., *SAGE Handbook,* 54

economic context."[11] Within this historical, and unquestionably Western context, we see how internationalisation is contextual to both time and space. As such, internationalisation of higher education can be seen as having traversed a variety of landscapes/historical periods in order to arrive at its contemporary form.

In the twenty first century landscape/historical period, nations and institutions conceptualise, at least in theory, the internationalisation of higher education as an intersectional process happening concurrently at various spatial scales;[12] including a variety of rationales and actors on a global stage with a need for integrated strategic development to create international relationships on more equal terms but also engage multilaterally in a competitive enterprise. It is unclear whether the 'global(ised)' and 'competitive' sections of today's internationalisation are what characterise the current higher education landscape as 'new', or whether the 'global(ised)' and 'competitive' state of the current landscape is what typifies today's internationalisation. In addition to this uncertainty over which is object and which is subject, individual institutions and nations also struggle to navigate the 'new' landscape while simultaneously attempting to internalise and operationalise this conceptualisation of internationalisation using a variety of tools and approaches. One such tool is the education hub. The hub is developed at the spatial scale of nation, in order to navigate the 'new' landscape of higher education and participate in the process of internationalisation. Therefore, it is an ideal phenomenon to study both the process of internationalisation of higher education at its current stage, and the national response to the 'new' landscape. Within this framework, the purpose of this discussion is to compare and contrast the education hub of Singapore with the education hub of Hong Kong. How have

[11] Waters, 548.
[12] Waters, 548.

the governments of Singapore and Hong Kong utilised education hubs as a tool to navigate the 'new' landscape of higher education and to participate in the process of internationalisation of higher education?

An expert evaluation is not necessary to point out that the two hubs are very different but the differences function to highlight individual characteristics and to provide a more nuanced insight. There are nevertheless certain commonalities that enable a systematic comparison. These include size, population, and GDP similarities; location in relation to the mainland; a shared history of British colonialism and Japanese occupation; and rapid economic development after World War II. Additionally, both Hong Kong and Singapore have, at least in theory, a targeted national policy for hub development and maintenance.

With these commonalities as a foundation this discussion will take a primarily qualitative approach to explore the rhetorics and realities of education hubs in Hong Kong and Singapore. First, a history of the hub development will be presented. Second, an analysis of policies and strategies aimed at the creation of the hub will show the rhetoric. Third, the reality will be considered based on quantitative and qualitative sources. And finally, a brief investigation of the Hong Kong Shue Yan University and the Singapore Institute of Technology, will show how these two institutions are illustrations of the 'new' landscape of higher education. The sources that will be used are national policies, public opinion from global and local news outlets, academic literature, and quantitative sources in the form of statistics and financials. It is important to note here the limitations of the sources as presented by language barriers and access.

The Global Reform Wave

In order to investigate how governments use education hubs as tools to navigate the 'new' higher education landscape it is important to first look more thoroughly at the current

context of internationalisation of higher education. Although researchers and professionals speak continuously of the development of new landscapes for higher education it seems that now the time has come to accept this landscape not as new but instead as the norm. Although there are still some institutions who are holding on to the old guard, it is no longer viable to think of the future of universities and national education systems in the way they were conceptualised even twenty years ago. Philip G. Altbach, Liz Reisberg, and Laura E. Rumbley discuss in the 2009 report prepared for the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, that "in the early 21st century, higher education has become a competitive enterprise."[13] The rapidly growing educational services industries are only one of the indicators of this. The 1995 General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is another along with the ever increasing importance of rankings and the innovative developments and hybrid approaches to the delivery of higher education. Globally institutions, nations, and regions have responded in kind through a variety of initiatives to deal with the realities of globalisation, massification, increased student mobility, and financing challenges. Some of these initiatives include the European Bologna process, privatisation, and new public management. These are just a few general examples, however, they illustrate how a global reform wave, or 'Academic Revolution,' occurred and we are now faced with confronting the results. Despite the institutional rigidity that has traditionally been a characteristic of the higher education sector it is critical to acknowledge that the future is here. The process of internationalisation has evolved and with it a competitive and global landscape of international higher education.

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[13] Philip G. Altbach, Liz Reisberg, and Laura Rumbley, *Trends in Global Higher Education: Tracking an Academic Revolution.* (Paris: UNESCO Publications, 2010), iiii.

GATS

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is one of the main agreements of the WTO. It is an international legal trade agreement with the aim to stimulate trade liberalisation in twelve service sectors, one of which is education. Education as a service is subsequently divided into sub-sectors.

- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Higher Education
- Adult education, and
- Other educational services

The effects of GATS are slowly becoming visible in all five of these sub-sectors but for the purpose of this discussion the focus will remain on higher education. Here it is important to note one reoccurring question, 'Did GATS cause an increase in commercial cross-border education?'[14,15] Although the discussion that arises from this is interesting I believe it to be somewhat futile. It quickly takes on a 'chicken-or-egg' dimension since it can be argued "that increased private for-profit education at national levels and the flow of students and education programs between countries came first, and only now are trade agreements recognizing education as a commodity."[16] Instead it is more important to face the reality that higher education is now subject to bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade agreements and act accordingly. A part of this reality is the knowledge that the expansion

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[14] Jane Knight, Higher Education Crossing Borders: A Guide to the Implications of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) for Cross-Border Education. (Vancouver, B.C.: Commonwealth of Learning, 2006).
[15] Toni Verger and Susan Robertson. "GATS BASICS: key rules and concepts." *GlobalHigherEd.* http://globalhighered.wordpress.com/2008/04/19/gats-basics-key-rules-and-concepts/ (accessed 23 September 2014).
[16] Knight, A Guide to the Implications of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), 61.

of the GATS effect on higher education is imminent. GATS defines four ways in which a service can be traded, known as 'modes of supply.'

1. Cross Border Supply
2. Consumption Abroad
3. Commercial Presence
4. Presence of Natural Persons

According to Sauve, each of these modes have their own sets of specific limitations. With 'Cross-Border Supply', restrictions on required academic tools and complications from the use of technology to deliver education create unique circumstances. 'Consumption Abroad' is naturally accompanied by the ever-increasing tangle of visa and immigration requirements as well as qualification recognition. 'Commercial Presence' creates difficulty in relation to transparency in regulation, funding, and policy. And finally, 'Presence of Natural Persons' is limited by all of the above.[17]

At this point in time, in the education service sector the second mode of supply is the most active in the form of students who are mobile and study in countries other than their home. However the other three modes all have great potential to grow. As information technologies and access to them expand globally the cross-border supply of education in the form of distance education, e-learning, and online universities will only intensify. Globally nations are putting more emphasis on the internationalisation of research and development. This pressure is extended into an emphasis on mobility of faculty and researchers and so the market for 'Presence of Natural Persons' mode of supply; and as

[17] Pierre Sauvé, "Trade, Education and the GATS What's in, What's Out, What's All the Fuss About?" *Higher Education Management and Policy* 14, no. 3 (2002): 26.

this paper will show, commercial presence is, if not a staple of the sector, steadily increasing.

Educational Services Industry

Related to the cause-and-effect discussion of GATS is the rapidly growing educational services industry. A vast number of enterprises and services can fall into this category. Therefore I will begin with a definition in the context of this discussion. The easiest way to define the educational services industry is to use a for-profit/non-profit dichotomy. Although this can be criticised as overly simplistic it is meant more as a guide rather than a prescription. The educational services industry's primary characteristic is its for-profit approach. This means privatised ownership, operation along traditional business principles, targeting specific customers and developing standardised products. For example, this includes large operators such as the Apollo Group, Kaplan Inc., Sylvan Learning Systems Inc., and DeVry Inc., but also smaller enterprises like Anglo Educational Services and online Universities such as Cyprus College, the London School of Business and Finance, the University of Phoenix, etc. These organisations all function under the broad umbrella of educational provider. For example, the Apollo Group is a publicly traded company with a number of subsidiaries and focuses on "servicing the needs of working adults [through provision of] higher education programs."[18] The London School of Business and Finance is a private, for-profit, multi-campus provider of business programmes and is a limited company.[19] Anglo Educational Services is also a private, for-profit company acting as a one-stop shop for accommodation, educational tours, internships, and student services.[20] The lines get a little blurred when it comes to partnerships between public and private

[18] "About," Apollo Education Group, accessed 23 January 2015, http://www.apollo.edu/about.html
[19] "About," London School of Business & Finance, accessed 23 January 2015, http://www.lsbf.org.uk/about-us
[20] "Home," Anglo Educational, accessed 23 January 2015, http://www.angloeducational.com/

institutions and for-profit additions to traditional not for-profit institutions requiring a case-by-case analysis. However, in these cases the notion of education as a commodity and the operation on a business model is often predominant and therefore I would argue that such enterprises also generally fit into the educational services industry. To illustrate we can take the case of GlobalNxt University. Although it began as a private/public partnership between Universitas 21 and Thomson Learning in 2001 the 'public' shares have since been incrementally sold-off firmly turning the result into a for-profit enterprise in the educational services industry.[21]

Rankings

Along with GATS the phenomenon of university rankings is a tangible confirmation that higher education is now firmly situated in an era of competition and academic capitalism. It is nearly impossible to find an institution that is not, in some way or other, measuring its success in comparison to others which it deems as competitors. With every new publication of rankings the criticisms of subjectivity, methodology, definitions, data collection, criteria, etc. are discussed heavily by administrators, academics, students, parents, politicians, and the mainstream media. However, despite the universally acknowledged problematic nature of rankings they are still a major concern not only for individual institutions but also for national governments. The latest edition of Times Higher Education World University Rankings, published on 1 October 2014 was met with media coverage undoubtedly worldwide but in the local context the low ranking of Austrian institutions was discussed as a political topic. It was utilised by the Rector of the University of Vienna, Heinz Engl, to speak out about low financial support and investment in development. According to Engl, although high rankings in and of themselves are not

[21] Andrew Trounson, "Manipal to control U21Global," *The Australian*, January 27, 2010, accessed January 23, 2015, http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/manipal-to-control-u21global/story-e6frgcjx-1225823749309

the goal, low rankings are considered a symptom of a larger issue that needs to be addressed at the national level.[22] This example shows that however problematic, rankings need to be considered as a vital element affecting the way administrators and academics operate.

New spaces of knowledge production

Related to both the cause-and-effect discussion of GATS and the rapidly growing educational services industry is the development of new spaces of knowledge production and a hybrid delivery of higher education. Arguably the most visible sign that a highly interconnected and globally competitive landscape is now the standard, these spaces are also manifestations of the deterritorialization of higher education. The most obvious examples of this include massive open online courses (MOOCs) and education hubs. MOOCs and hubs operate beyond the traditional brick-and-mortar constructs of higher education institutions and have also contributed significantly to the establishment of, what Jane Knight calls, the third generation of crossborder education.[23] One of the characteristics of this generation is its commercial and competitiveness model. As highly planned initiatives MOOCs and hubs theoretically widen accessibility and the rhetoric is one which highlights the 'future is now' concept.

For example, the MOOC platforms EdX, Coursera, OpenupEd, FutureLearn, and Open2Study all offer innovative, high quality, and easily accessible courses. Although most are free the push "to examine the long-term potential of MOOCs and whether this innovative new approach can engage students across the country and worldwide while

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[22] "Uni-Konferenz warnt vor weiterem Abstieg" *Kurier*, October 12, 2014, accessed October 2, 2014, http://kurier.at/politik/inland/nach-times-world-university-ranking-uni-konferenz-warnt-vor-weiterem-abstieg/88.692.074#section-88692998

[23] Jane Knight, "Education Hubs: A Fad, a Brand, an Innovation?" *Journal of Studies in International Education* 15, no. 3 (2011): 223.

helping raise degree completion, increasing learning productivity and deepening college curricula"[24] has now brought about a fee-paying option in order to qualify for transferable credit. The effects of this cannot yet be felt but speculative predictions can be made. Degree hybrids that include MOOCs are most definitely on the horizon along more competition amongst providers and accusations of further massification and commercialisation.

Education hubs are also a new space of knowledge production and perhaps one of the main indicators that the new landscape of higher education is not just developing but fully formed. The intersectional and cross-institutional nature of education hubs shows that they represent a variety of actors, rationales, and activities which have only been able to be combined successfully in a strategic configuration in the twenty-first century. When we look at some of the established education hubs we can see how globalisation, the social and political implications of a post 9/11 world, and developments in information technology have impacted crossborder delivery of higher education programmes. This strategic configuration relies on entrepreneurial approaches to university-industry cooperation leading to alternative revenue streams and a blend between well established, brand name, often foreign, institutions and emerging, usually local or regional, ones. The education hub is therefore a prime example of how converging global trends in higher education are manifesting themselves and, as I argue in this paper, how this manifestation is not only the norm in the present but will continue, and potentially intensify, in the future.

Education Hubs

Like much of the research done in the field of higher education, and specifically international higher education, the topic of education hubs is somewhat lacking in common

[24] Chris Parr, "Moocs credit given the green light," *Times Higher Education*, February 9, 2013, accessed October 11, 2014, http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/moocs-credit-given-the-green-light/2001447.article

definitions and both national and supra-nationally collected data and severely lacking in variety of interpretations and theories. Although strides have been made by a few pioneers the academic discussion is still limited both geographically and also in terms of reliable information that steps beyond policy, business, and media reports. As a true powerhouse in the field of higher education research Jane Knight has also done a superb job in laying the foundations for a closer look at education hubs. It is her definition, historical context, and typology that will be a guide in the following discussion.

According to Knight, "an education hub is a planned effort to build a critical mass of local and international actors strategically engaged in education, training, knowledge production, and innovation initiatives."[25]

- "planned effort" indicates that a hub is an intentional or deliberate project and would normally involve a strategy, policy framework, and investment. It is more than a coincidental interaction or colocation of actors working in the education and knowledge sectors but instead a number of strategically planned connections.
- "critical mass" suggests that there is more than one actor and set of activities involved. This means that a single branch campus, or franchise program, or science and technology park does not constitute a hub. But instead a variety of activities together in a planned or coordinated initiative. The concept of critical mass intentionally goes beyond a random collection of crossborder activities in order to denote that there is a key combination of actors ensuring that the impact of the whole (i.e., the hub) is greater than the sum of its parts.
- "local and international actors" indicates that an education hub involves both domestic and foreign players. They can include local, regional and international

[25] Knight, "Education Hubs: A Fad, a Brand, an Innovation?" 233.

students, scholars, institutions, companies, organizations, research centres, knowledge industries, and so on. The term actor is used in an inclusive manner so as to cover providers, producers and users of the education, training, knowledge services, and products.

- "strategically engaged" is central to the definition as it emphasizes that there is a deliberate sense of interaction or relationship among the actors. Although the nature of the engagement will differ from hub to hub, a fundamental principle is that there is added value when the actors are connected, collaborate, or share common facilities and resources.
- "Education, training, knowledge and innovation initiatives" depict the broad categories of activities and outputs of hubs. There is a wide selection of initiatives or services that are available depending on the type of hub, priorities of the individual actors, and the sponsor's strategic plan.[26]

Knight places education hubs in a historical context by dividing crossborder education initiatives, or broadly speaking, higher education internationalisation strategies, into three generations.

The first generation of crossborder education, according to Knight is that of individual mobility. It is characterised by an individual's movement from a home country to a host country. The mobility of students for purposes of study, research, exchange, fieldwork or internships; the mobility of faculty for teaching, professional development and research purposes; and the movement of scholars for establishing and maintaining international research collaborations and networks.

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[26] Knight, "Education Hubs: A Fad, a Brand, an Innovation?" 234.

The second generation of crossborder education is institutional mobility. It is characterised by the movement of programmes, institutions or companies across borders to provide education and training in a foreign host country. There is a strong correlation between this generation of crossborder education and GATS. Since the inclusion of education as a tradable service there has been an increase in branch campuses operating throughout the world.[27]

She views education hubs as the third generation but argues that this does not mean they are mutually exclusive from the two previous generations. Instead, education hubs develop both from and with their predecessors.[28] This periodization can be seen as an alternate way to trace the changing higher education landscapes discussed above.

She has also developed a convenient typology for education hubs but makes sure to highlight "that the lens used to develop this framework for the study of education hubs is higher education"[29] and that there is no linear development and no judgement on effectiveness or value.

The first and perhaps most common type of education hub is the student hub. The student hub has the training of students, both local and international as its primary goal. It also attracts foreign institutions to provide franchised and twinning programmes and set up branch campuses to increase the offers available to students. The aims of the student hub are "(a) to generate revenue from international student fees, (b) to provide increased access to higher education for local students, (c) to modernize and internationalize domestic

[27] Jane Knight, ed., International Education Hubs: Student, Talent, Knowledge-Innovation Models (Dordrecht u.a: Springer, 2014), 18.
[28] Knight, International Education Hubs: Student, Talent, Knowledge-Innovation Models, 14.
[29] Knight, International Education Hubs: Student, Talent, Knowledge-Innovation Models, 30.

[institutions], and (d) to build profile and increase competitiveness within the regional higher education sector and beyond."[30]

The talent hub, or the skilled workforce hub, also focuses on training but unlike the student hub its primary goal is to build a skilled workforce and those who travel there are encouraged to remain for employment purposes. Foreign institutions offer academic and professional development programmes to local and international students and employees often in a shared space, or zone, where they are able to share facilities and collaborate amongst themselves and with specific industries. The aims of the talent hub are to "(a) educate and train students to be skilled labor/knowledge workers for knowledge and service led economy and (b) establish geopolitical status in the region and beyond."[31]

The knowledge hub, or innovation hub, moves beyond education and training and also incorporates production and dissemination of knowledge and innovation. It is the most diversified type of hub where foreign teaching and research institutions and companies with extensive research and development divisions are incentivised, often financially, to locate themselves and collaborate with local organisations to work on research and innovation. The aims of a knowledge hub are to "(a) help build a knowledge and service-based economy, (b) educate and train skilled labor for knowledge/innovation, (c) attract foreign direct investment, and (d) increase regional or global economic competitiveness and soft power."[32]

Knight's initial work on education hubs ultimately asks if they are a fad, a branding exercise, or an innovation but she does not make a definitive conclusion citing the need for

[30] Knight, "Education Hubs: A Fad, a Brand, an Innovation?" 235.
[31] Knight, "Education Hubs: A Fad, a Brand, an Innovation?" 235.
[32] Knight, "Education Hubs: A Fad, a Brand, an Innovation?" 236.

further research and more reliable data. However, I believe that education hubs are in fact an innovation. The countries, zones, and cities that have announced themselves as education hubs are doing so as a way to compete in the global knowledge economy. The rationales behind the development of education hubs are firmly rooted in the global reform wave, discussed earlier, and the 'global(ised)' and 'competitive' characteristics of today's internationalisation initiatives. As such they are a physical incarnation of the 'Academic Revolution.'[33] The growth and existence of education hubs is confirmation that the Higher Education sector has long since entered the landscape of the 21st century.

The typology for education hubs demonstrates that they have developed in order to meet different needs and accomplish different goals. However, a comparative analysis shows that at least two common elements can be found in all hubs. First, education hubs, both functioning ones and attempted hubs, are primarily located in countries that are, discursively, non-Western, the global south, or developing. According to the Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT) at the State University of New York at Albany, evidence of education hub intent can be found in the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Bahrain, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Qatar, and the Republic of Panama.[34] Additionally, Botswana[35] and Thailand[36] have also made concerted efforts at achieving hub status. And second, hub development is often initiated or supported by government

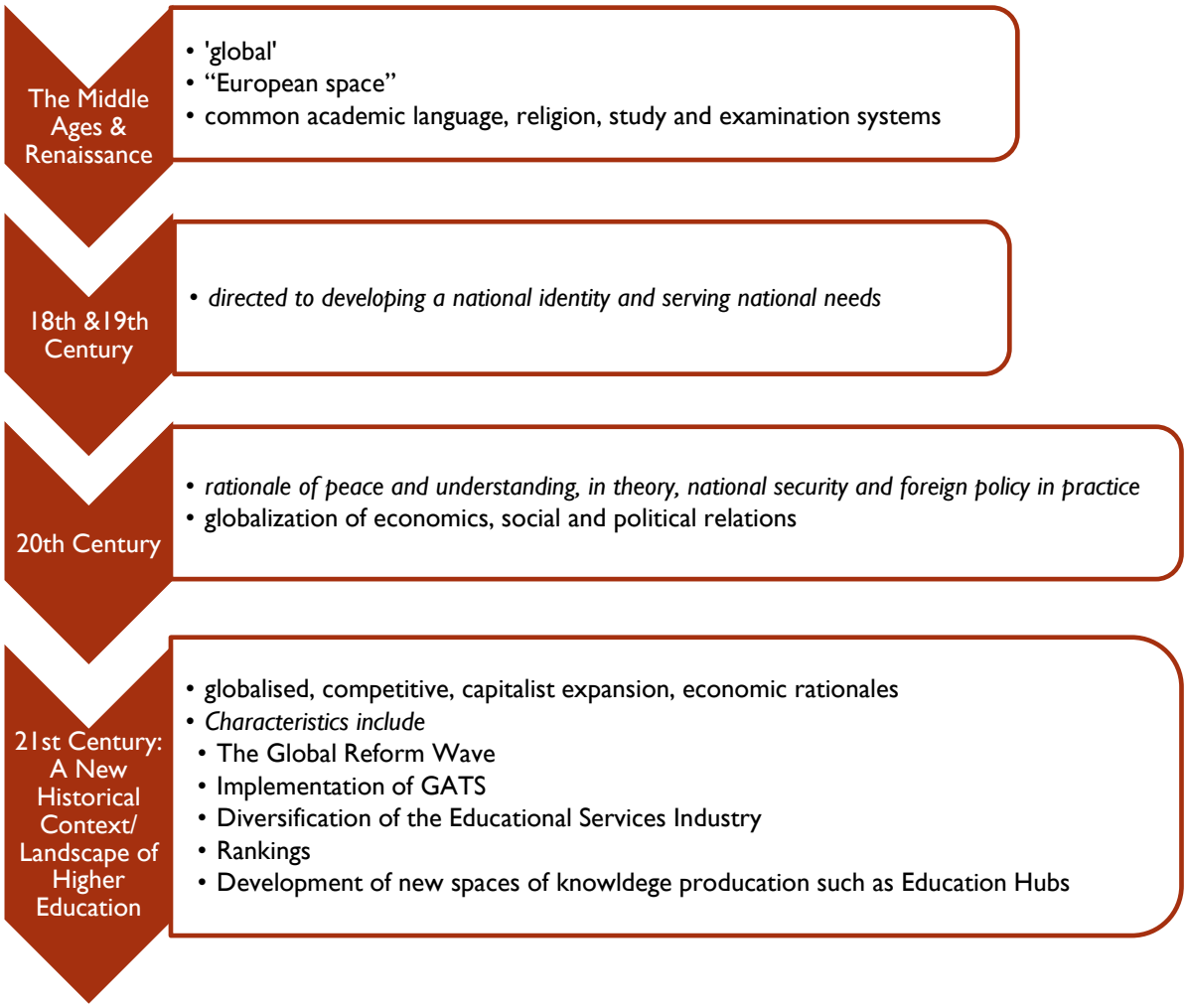
[33] Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley, Trends in Global Higher Education: Tracking an Academic Revolution.
[34] "Educational Hubs," Global Higher Education, last modified September 26, 2013, accessed September 27, 2014, http://www.globalhighered.org/edhubs.php
[35] "Botswana Education Hub Of Academic Excellence," The Economic insight, accessed September 27, 2014, http://www.theeconomicinsight.com/botswana-education-hub-of-academic-excellence/643
[36] "Thailand boosts international schools," The Pie News, last modified February 8, 2013, accessed September 27, 2014, http://thepienews.com/news/thailand-aims-be-education-hub-for-asean-region/

policies aimed at building a strategic asset in the competition for regional or international dominance of the higher education marketplace.[37]

Therefore the development of hubs can be placed in a regional and international context. Regionally hubs are developed through purposeful policies by governments who are choosing education as a way towards economic development. Internationally, hub development is one of the features of the global reform wave. The below figure shows how education hubs fit into the constantly evolving internationalisation and represent the current higher education landscape.

[37] Jason Lane and Kevin Kinser. 2011. "The Cross-Border Education Policy Context: Educational Hubs, Trade Liberalization, and National Sovereignty," *New Directions for Higher Education* no. 155 (2011): 19.

Figure 1: Internationalisation: Constantly evolving and dependant on its historical context



EDUCATION HUBS	Are a tool used for…	**INTERNATIONALISATION** Today's **internationalisation of higher education** is an intersectional process happening concurrently at various spatial scales; including a variety of rationales and actors on a global stage with a need for integrated strategic development to create international relationships on more equal terms but also engage multilaterally in a competitive enterprise.	It is unclear whether the 'global(ised)' and 'competitive' sections of today's internationalisation are what characterise the current higher education landscape as 'new', or whether the 'global(ised)' and 'competitive' state of the current landscape is what typifies today's internationalisation.	WHICH IS SUBJECT AND WHICH IS OBJECT?
	Are a characteristic of…	**THE NEW HISTORICAL CONTEXT / HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE**		

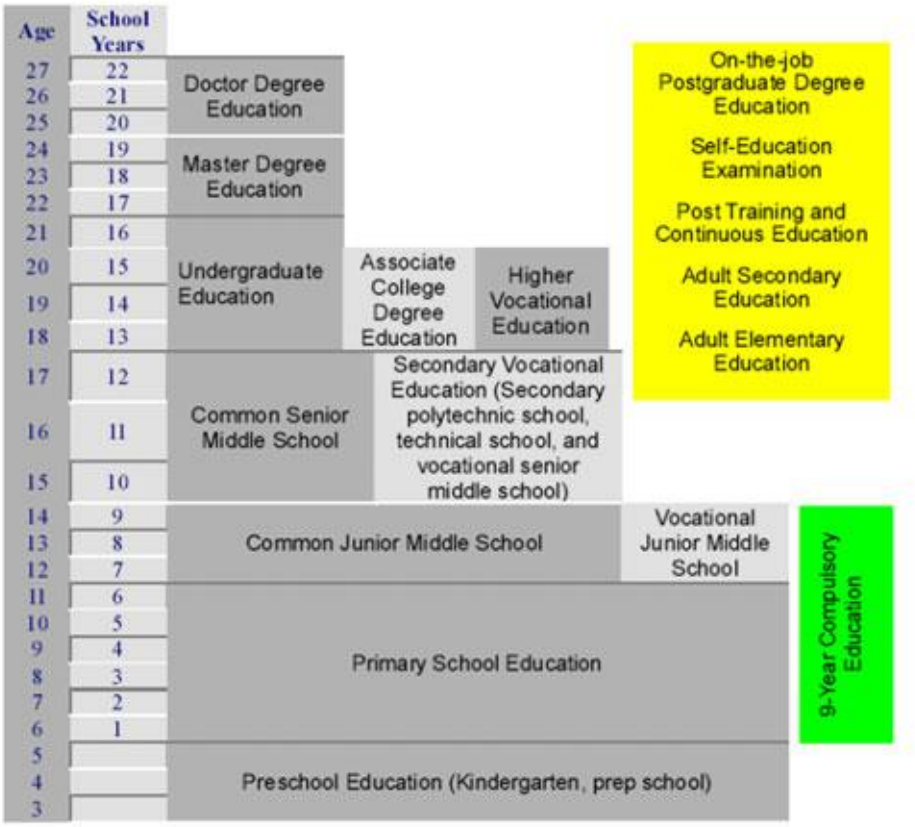
Hong Kong

History

Higher education in Hong Kong has always been a blend between British and Chinese traditions allowing for a unique approach. Independent from the national government in Beijing, Hong Kong retains its own system of education under the Education Bureau (EDB). The EDB reports to the Hong Kong government and taxpayers without interference from the Ministry of Education in Beijing. Hong Kong remains free to build bilateral relationships with other jurisdictions and nations. Hong Kong can also assume membership in other international organisations for finance, commercial, education, culture, etc.[38] However, at the turn of the 21st century Hong Kong's higher education landscape was significantly shaped by both the financial crisis of 1997/1998 and the 1997 handover from Britain to China leading to the implementation of the "one country, two systems" approach to governance. This was the starting point for Hong Kong's comprehensive education reform which began in 1999 and continues today.[39] The reforms that were implemented altered the educational structure from a British model to a 3 years + 3 years + 4 years to complete junior secondary, senior secondary, and undergraduate studies as illustrated in the following figure.

[38] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). *Lessons from PISA for the United States.* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2011), 98.
[39] OECD, Lessons from PISA, 101.

Figure 2: Hong Kong Educational Structure [40]



For higher education this resulted in a comprehensive education review which "highlighted education as a key factor to the global competitiveness of Hong Kong in its future development" [41] leading the traditionally non-intervening government to make concerted efforts to mobilise education as a key aspect of regional competitiveness. Consequently in 2000 one of the three stated policy foci was education.[42] At the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) tenth Anniversary ceremony, Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa said, "Human capital counts for more than physical and

[40] "World TVET Database – Country Profiles China," World TVET Database, last modified December 19, 2014, accessed September 21, 2015, http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=World+TVET+Database&ct=CHN

[41] Ka Ho Mok and Peter Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," in *International Education Hubs: Student, Talent, Knowledge-Innovation Models*, ed. Jane Knight (Dordrecht u.a: Springer, 2014), 83.

[42] Linda Christine Murad, "Hong Kong's Education System: Challenge for the Future," https://martindale.cc.lehigh.edu/sites/martindale.cc.lehigh.edu/files/Murad.pdf (2006), 12.

financial capital; and education background certainly counts for more than family background."[43] This line of thinking was quickly expanded and materialised into Hong Kong's education hub policy. By 2002 the University Grants Committee (UGC)'s *Report on Hong Kong Higher Education* proposed "that Hong Kong develops its capability to export higher education services and eventually becomes the education hub in the region." By 2004 the University Grants Committee (UGC) and the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) were on board to establish Hong Kong's "key presence on the world map of higher education, and that internationally competitive centres of excellence with critical mass can be established in Hong Kong."[44] The plan of Hong Kong as a regional education hub was reiterated by the EMB and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) in 2005 as a response to China's eleventh Five Year Plan, but first Five Year Plan to include Hong Kong. A diverse steering committee was created by the EMB in order to investigate the regional education hub development. On 16 October 2007 the Chief Executive ordered that the committee's recommendations be followed "to further develop Hong Kong as a regional education hub."[45] The recommendations however were made without much emphasis on how they would be carried out and no overseeing body to ensure they were being carried out at all. Instead they firmly established the hub discourse. With the global financial crisis of 2008 this discourse became more conspicuous along with discussions of the knowledge based economy and the increase in service sector significance. Since then the hub strategy has been marked by a quest for "academic excellence and high academic

[43] Murad, "Hong Kong's Education System," 13.
[44] Economic Development Board, "Legislative Council Brief – Developing Hong Kong as a Regional Education Hub" (2007): 1
[45] Economic Development Board, "Legislative Council Brief – Developing Hong Kong as a Regional Education Hub," 1.

and research quality" [46] and will be realised "through internationalization and diversification."[47]

The National Rhetoric: The Legislative Council *Orders* a Hub

It is difficult to trace the concerted effort of developing an education hub in Hong Kong to one precise policy or report. A UGC report released in 2004 specified a growing need for cooperation and mutually beneficial relations between Hong Kong, the Pearl River Delta, and Mainland China and some argue that this "report turned out to be a roadmap for Hong Kong to become a regional education hub by providing quality- assured higher education for the Mainland."[48] However, the spirit of the report was a focus on relations with China. Therefore it is more feasible to look at the results of the 16 October 2007 Executive Council meeting as a definitive starting point in the Hong Kong hub development process. In this brief "the Council ADVISED and the Chief Executive ORDERED that [specific] measures be adopted to further develop Hong Kong as a regional education hub" (emphasis original).[49]

These measures were divided into five targets.

1. Admission quota and policy,
2. Other Support Measures,
3. Promoting the Development of Private Universities in Hong Kong,
4. Employment-related initiatives, and

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[46] Ka Ho Mok and Peter Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 83.
[47] Ka Ho Mok and Peter Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 89.
[48] David Kinkeung Chan, "Internationalization of Higher Education as a Major Strategy for Developing Regional Education Hubs: A Comparison of Hong Kong and Singapore," in *The Internationalization of East Asian Higher Education: Globalization's Impact,* ed. John D. Palmer, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 17.
[49] Economic Development Board, "Legislative Council Brief," 1-3

5. Retaining Non-local Students to Stay and Work in Hong Kong[50]

And these targets were backed up by a package of proposals collectively referred to as the 'education hub policy' which "aims to attract quality non-local students to study in Hong Kong and, through this process, further internationalise our higher education sector and increase the exposure of our local students. Moreover, attracting and retaining non-local talents to live and work in Hong Kong will address the immediate manpower needs of Hong Kong, and enhance the overall competitiveness of our economy in the long run."[51]

The proposals that made up the policy primarily focused on relaxations of previously existing rules and regulations. In regards to the admission quota and policy, the 10% quota for non-local admissions to taught programmes up to the post-graduate level was doubled to 20%. Additionally this quota was applied to the UGC-funded institutions as a whole allowing for a 'roll-over' effect from institution to institution where necessary. Employment related initiatives and initiatives aimed at retaining non-local students to stay and work were also characterised by relaxation of restrictions for work-permits and immigration. The promotion of private universities was considered "in line with international trend"[52] and the proposals were to grant land at a reduced price, assist in campus development and expansion, and offer one-off grants. Similarly, the other support measures also centred on land and cost. The proposal was to establish more scholarships and increase availability of affordable student housing. The implications of the education hub policy were discussed in an Annex to the Brief, specifically the financial, staffing, economic, environmental, and sustainability implications. However, it is important to note here that discussion only touched on the surface of each issue and did not offer strategic

[50] Economic Development Board, "Legislative Council Brief," 1-3
[51] Economic Development Board, "Legislative Council Brief," 3.
[52] Economic Development Board, "Legislative Council Brief," 8.

recommendations and virtually no logistical plans were included despite a fast approaching implementation date of the 2008/2009 academic year.

In 2010, the University Grants Committee published an extensive report on the *Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong*. In this report the previously discussed orders from the Legislative Council are the focus but not in the context of education hub. Instead, the measures are described as 'internationalisation to date.'[53] The topic of Hong Kong as an education hub is discussed separately and very shortly.[54] The sense of the four paragraphs is dismissive and perhaps even somewhat defiant. First the UGC states that the term education hub has been referenced but never truly explained and "[w]ithout better definition, this term offers little guide to serious action."[55] Similarly, that Hong Kong's attempts at hub status have been lacking "clear policy, investment and collaboration between the Government and institutions over time" and there is still "a considerable distance to travel."[56] It is telling that in a report of a 152 pages a government initiative such as the education hub only receives nominal attention.

Two years after the publication of the UGC's *Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong.,* at the Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE) Conference and Exhibition 2013, Mrs. Cherry Tse, Permanent Secretary for Education, chaired the session titled "Understanding Higher Education in Hong Kong." She spoke about the "landscape of post-secondary education in Hong Kong including the

[53] University Grants Committee (Hong Kong, China), "Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong: Report of the University Grants Committee," (Hong Kong, 2010), 151.
[54] University Grants Committee, "Aspirations," 54.
[55] University Grants Committee, "Aspirations," 54.
[56] University Grants Committee, "Aspirations," 55.

Government's major initiatives to propel its development."[57] Mrs. Tse goes over the changes in Hong Kong's education system, the rationales for internationalisation, the government's role as facilitator, and how all of this is connected to quality assurance. But in this extensive opening speech she mentions Hong Kong as an education hub only once claiming that collaborations with overseas institutions "have further entrenched Hong Kong's place as a premiere hub." On the one hand, similar to the UGC's report, the very limited focus on the education hub discourse is telling. On the other hand, unlike the UGC's report, Mrs. Tse's statements give the impression that the hub is already established and performing in a globally recognizable capacity. The current policy objectives of the Education Bureau echo this confident sentiment on their website. "The Government's policy objectives are to: […] *further* develop Hong Kong as a regional education hub and provide multiple and flexible pathways for our young people" (emphasis added).[58]

These three examples have been selected to highlight the policy approach to hub development in Hong Kong and the discourse of achievement engaged in by the government and its representatives. The examples also place hub development within the context of the new higher education landscape. The national rhetoric informs on how Hong Kong contributes to, or draws from, the global reform wave by endorsing the hub as the primary globally competitive form of internationalisation. What follows is a different analysis to uncover the reality behind the rhetoric.

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[57] Cherry Tse, "Speech at the Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE) Conference and Exhibition 2013 Hong Kong Session," *Education Bureau,* 13 March 2013, accessed 1 May 2014, http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/about-edb/press/speeches/psed/2013/20130314173935.html.

[58] "Policy Objectives," *Education Bureau,* accessed 1 May 2014, http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/postsecondary/policy-objectives/index.html.

The Global Reality

The Hong Kong government's rhetoric has repeatedly been questioned and the education hub development to date is considered rudimentary despite claims to the contrary.

Student Quotas

One of the ways hub development was to be achieved was through increasing the number of international students studying in Hong Kong. As mentioned earlier the quota was doubled for the academic year 2008/2009 and statistics show that more international students have partaken in studies at all levels in Hong Kong. From 2010 to 2013 non-local student enrollment increased from 17 900 to 30 100.[59] However, as with all statistics they are often meaningless when taken out of context. In this case, although the number of international students has increased as a result of policy reform, the majority of these students, an overwhelming 90%, are from the Chinese Mainland.[60] Additionally, the number of post-graduate research students has increased only by small increments each year.[61] The increased quota strategy has therefore been questioned. Yes, more students are coming to study in Hong Kong. Between 2008 and 2010 about 9 800 of these students also made use of the specialised employment initiatives, such as the post-graduation period of residence, set up to attract foreign talent.[62] However, when the overwhelming majority of these students are from the Mainland the goal of a regional education hub and "Asia's world city" seems to have been downgraded to 'China's education gateway.'[63] Hong Kong residents tend to view this development with discontent and a certain level of apprehension

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[59] Information Portal for Accredited Post –secondary Programmes, "Key Statistics on Post-secondary Education," 7 October 2010, accessed 1 May 2014, http://www.ipass.gov.hk/eng/postsec_keystat.pdf.
[60] Ka Ho Mok and Peter Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 90.
[61] Information Portal for Accredited Post –secondary Programmes, "Key Statistics on Post-secondary Education."
[62] Ka Ho Mok and Peter Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 89.
[63] Jane Knight, "Education Hubs: International, Regional and Local Dimensions of Scale and Scope". *Comparative Education.* 49, no. 3 (2013): 385.

"[b]ut with the two political systems drawing ever closer, they 'probably can't say that publicly.'"[64]

One of the reasons the people of Hong Kong may be viewing the increase of international students, especially those from the Mainland, with apprehension is the fear that those students would be taking spots from locals. Since the number of publicly subsidised places at the city's eight UGC-funded institution is "never enough"[65] the incoming students are seen as a threat. Although an intense change in government financing was not planned when the quotas were increased, the education hub policies have been proactive to a certain extent in this case. The active support of private universities since 2007 has led to an increase of available programmes. Currently there are nine UGC funded public institutions and ten self-financing institutions. This diversification of the market has provided more spots, for both local and international students.

Land and Money

As discussed above the hub development policies are more supportive measures than specific guidelines. For example, the government's strategy for diversification of the market is to help private providers find and affordably obtain land on which to operate and to give grants where possible. However, there is no targeted soliciting of providers or foreign institutions and even if such a strategy evolved the geographical limitations cannot easily be overcome. Limited land resources and an increasingly unaffordable real estate market creates "a major barrier to education hub development."[66]

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[64] John Morgan, "Chinese assets and liabilities for Hong Kong 'hub' plans," *Times Higher Education,* 14 February 2013, accessed 1 May 2014, http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/chinese-assets-and-liabilities-for-hong-kong-hub-plans/2001484.article.

[65] Morgan, "Chinese assets and liabilities for Hong Kong 'hub' plans."

[66] Ka Ho Mok and Peter Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 95.

Institutional support

Along the same vein, implementations of the hub strategies are left to individual institutions. As are the after effects of those implementation. From an administrative point of view this seems like a very frightening situation. The increased quota for non-local students can be used to illustrate. In this case, neither the Education Bureau nor the UGC took on the additional cost but instead "the recurrent expenditure incurred in providing the extra 10% student places [was to] be met in full by institutions from tuition fees received and other income sources."[67] It seems somewhat irresponsible to ignore, or in this case, brush off, the financial, academic, and staffing implications of a 10% increase in students while simultaneously maintaining the need for this increase.

Cohesion

This is but one example of what is collectively seen as the missing key to truly establishing Hong Kong as a regional education hub; a 'master plan.' "A cohesive coherent governance policy framework needs to be in place to provide stakeholders with high-level direction and guidance, clearly established key principles and responsibilities, well-articulated fundamental goals, requirements, and limits, and an allocation of responsibilities."[68] In the national rhetoric Hong Kong is already an established and first-rate hub, but the reality on the ground is quite obviously proving that amateurs talk about strategies whereas professionals engage in logistics. The variations between the Hong Kong government's rhetoric and the observable reality are cause for further research. Is the rhetoric creating a false sense of security?

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[67] Economic Development Board, "Legislative Council Brief – Developing Hong Kong as a Regional Education Hub: Annex," (2007): 1.
[68] Ka Ho Mok and Peter Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 93.

Considering Hong Kong Shue Yan University

By looking at the case of Hong Kong Shue Yan Universiy (HKSYU) it is possible to have a more concrete illustration of the education hub policies at work.

Hong Kong Shue Yan College, founded in 1971 as an independent liberal arts institution, was the predecessor of today's Hong Kong Shue Yan University (HKSYU). The underpinning philosophy was the "creation of Confucian superior men and philosophers who are needed to lead society in establishing a rational social order based on humanism."[69] In the subsequent years the college grew and gained in prominence receiving government recognition along the way. The college also established partnerships and cooperation with overseas institutions especially in the US, Canada, the UK and Australia.[70] In 1996 "the College submitted a request to the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) for accreditation as a degree-awarding institution" and "upon completion of legal formalities, the title of Shue Yan University was granted by the Chief Executive in Council on 19 December 2006, and Shue Yan University became the first private university in Hong Kong."[71] HKSYU now offers twelve four-year honours degree programmes and one Master's programme. In 2011 the University celebrated its 40 year anniversary and was also granted land "for construction of a new research complex with additional student hostel, teaching and learning accommodation. The complex will be completed by 2015 to meet the University's urgent need for additional space."[72]

As a member of the higher education landscape in Hong Kong, HKSYU, specifically its transition to university status, can be interpreted as one of the ways the

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[69] "History," Hong Kong Shue Yan University, accessed 2 May 2014, http://www.hksyu.edu/history.html.
[70] "Academic Cooperations," Hong Kong Shue Yan University, accessed 2 May 2014, http://www.hksyu.edu/cooperation_overseas.html
[71] "History," Hong Kong Shue Yan University, accessed 2 May 2014, http://www.hksyu.edu/history.html.
[72] "History," Hong Kong Shue Yan University, accessed 2 May 2014, http://www.hksyu.edu/history.html.

education hub policies took effect. For example, constituting HKSYU as a private university was a way to diversify the higher education market in Hong Kong. As the competition for university places increased HKSYU was able to step in. The case of HKSYU is also one where the government was able to implement some of the proposals of its education hub policy. Namely the measures associated with "Promoting the Development of Private Universities in Hong Kong.[73] For HKSYU this manifested itself in the form of a land grant as a "private treaty grant at a nominal premium of HK$1,000"[74] and also one-off grant of HK$ 200 million for establishing a General Development Fund.[75] As far as government support goes, this is a substantial amount to put into a private institution. Other than the policies to promote private universities and the grants HKSYU received as a result thereof, further influences of hub development initiatives are not clearly visible. For example, on first glance the move to establish HKSYU as a full university appears like a result of targeted education hub policies. However, the proposal for this was not made until 2007 whereas the HKSYU had already been on the road to university status since 1996 and achieved it in 2006. Perhaps the case of HKSYU was what influenced the proposal that the government should promote private universities. In any case, HKSYU's establishment as a full university cannot be attributed to government education hub initiatives. Similarly, the collaborations with overseas institutions that are considered an essential part of an education hub already existed at HKSYU. Another key element of Hong Kong's education hub policy to date that already existed at HKSYU is the strong connection to the Mainland. One of the goals for HKSYU is to produce graduates who are

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[73] Economic Development Board, "Legislative Council Brief," 1-3

[74] "Land granted to Shue Yan for a new research complex," Hong Kong Shue Yan University, accessed 2 May 2014, http://stu.hksyu.edu/~newsletter/?p=1087&lang=en.

[75] Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, *"New Item "Grant to Hong Kong Shue Yan University for establishing a General Development Fund,"" 2007,* http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/fc/fc/papers/f06-36e.pdf

"[r]eady to apply their global outlook and understanding of Chinese cultural values to support the harmonious development of Hong Kong and China in the 21st century."[76] Considering this, Knight suggests that Hong Kong may in fact be an "education gateway with China more than a thriving regional student-oriented education hub."[77] However, upon closer examination of the case of Hong Kong Shue Yan Universiy (HKSYU) it becomes evident that HKSYU fits the education hub discourse only because of pre-existing conditions. Perhaps the government's education hub policies such as they are, are simply labels for already occurring phenomena developed after the fact in an attempt to capitalise on what is already happening. Alternatively, Chan and Ng argue that the Hong Kong government's education hub policies are dual and act in two different ways on the two parts of the higher education sector.

> The first part is the conventional sector, which is mainly responsible for undergraduate, postgraduate and research programmes. The other part is the emerging sector, which mainly offers sub-degree programmes and continuing education. The Hong Kong government takes the former part as 'the core' of its higher education and retains a strong steering role in it, and regards the latter part as a 'supplementary sector' and is more liberal towards it.[78]

In this model, HKSYU is a part of the second supplementary sector and therefore a more *laissez-faire* approach may be resulting in the above situation where policy is written in response to already existing trends.

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[76] "About," Hong Kong Shue Yan University, accessed 2 May 2014, http://www.hksyu.edu/about_shue_yan.html

[77] Knight, International Education Hubs: Student, Talent, Knowledge-Innovation Models, 205.

[78] David Chan and Pak Tee Ng. "Similar Agendas, Diverse Strategies: The Quest for a Regional Hub of Higher Education in Hong Kong and Singapore". *Higher Education Policy* 21, no. 4 (2008): 498.

Singapore

History

At the time of writing Singapore is enjoying some excellent publicity for its higher education due to the impressive performance on the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. Both the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) rank within the top 100. NUS at 25th and NTU making an impressive 15 spot jump to 61.[79] As discussed above, although rankings cannot be taken at face-value as indicative of quality, they have a visible impact on planning and policy. They can also be seen as results of proactive investment and successful development. In the case of Singapore an argument for correlation between high rankings and national strategizing can easily be made.

The development of Singapore as an education hub is rooted in both the city-state's identity creation and national development but it is also essential to note that this is a product of British colonialism and the post-colonial political environment. Singapore was granted self-government in 1959 and after a failed attempt to unite with Malaysia, became an independent sovereign nation on 9 August 1964. Unlike its neighbours, Singaporean independence was peaceful and left "the machinery of the colonial state […] largely intact."[80] Additionally, the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) embraced a technocratic approach to development and created strategically pragmatic policies in order to tap it's most valuable and accessible resource, its people. Government policies on human resource development focused on education and training and lead to a strong focus on the

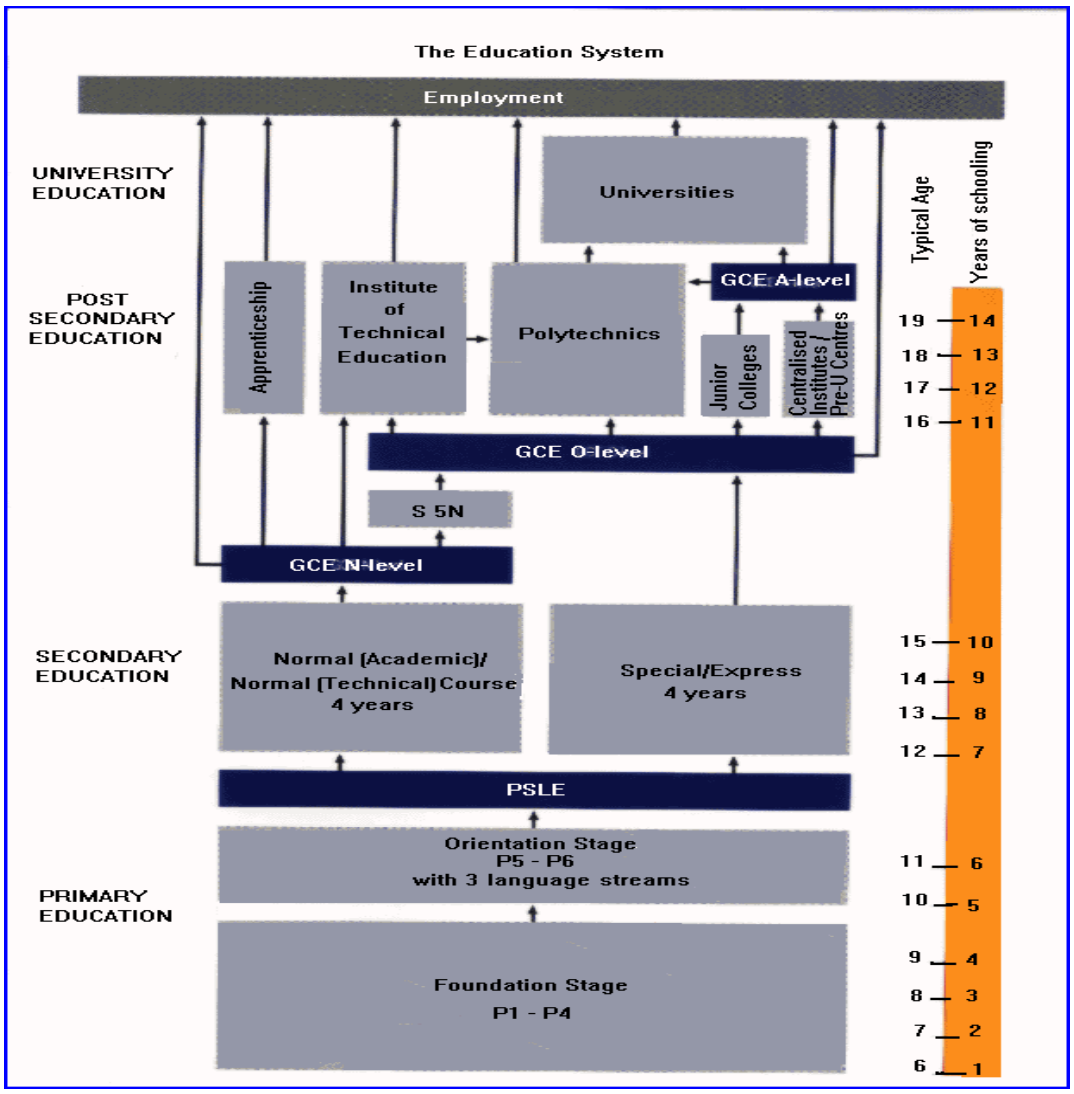
[79] Sandra Davie, "NUS, NTU improve on Times Higher Education World University Rankings," 2 October 2014, accessed 2 May 2014, http://www.straitstimes.com/news/singapore/education/story/nus-ntu-improve-times-higher-education-world-university-rankings-2014

[80] Ravinder Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," in *International Education Hubs: Student, Talent, Knowledge-Innovation Models*, ed. Jane Knight (Dordrecht u.a: Springer, 2014), 123.

education system with concessive waves of reform.[81] These reforms introduced a national system of public education by the end of the 1970s,[82] a restructuring of industrial training and increase of polytechnic institutions, the creation of the National University of Singapore in 1980, [83] and finally during the financial crisis of the mid-1980s the identification of education as a service sector with "revenue growth potential, net worth to the economy, [and] export earning potential."[84] The reforms left Singapore's Educational structure visibly influenced by the UK model as shown below in Figure three.

[81] Mun-Heng Toh, "Internationalization of Tertiary Education Services in Singapore. ADBI Working Paper 388," (Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute, 2012). http://www.adbi.org/working-paper/2012/10/12/5263.internationalization.tertiary.educ.singapore/, 3.
[82] OECD, Lessons from PISA, 7.
[83] Toh, "Internationalization of Tertiary Education Services in Singapore," 5.
[84] Kris Olds, "Global Assemblage: Singapore, Foreign Universities, and the Construction of a 'Global Education Hub,'" *World Development* 35, no. 6: 962.

Figure 3: Singapore Educational Structure [85]



The financial crisis of 1997/1998 incited a directional shift in development policy towards a service sector focus and the establishment of a knowledge based economy.[86] To combine these two characteristics of Singapore's economic development plan "the government made a concerted effort to develop Singapore as a global hub of educational

[85] "Country Basic Information: Singapore," UNESCO International Bureau of Education, last modified October 2007, accessed 22 December 2014, http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/ASIA_and_the_PACIFIC/Singapore/Singapore.htm.

[86] Olds, "Global Assemblage," 963.

excellence."[87] This effort manifested itself in a variety of initiatives and policies with the collective tagline of the Global Schoolhouse. Officially introduced in 2002 the Global Schoolhouse was the education hub building platform working from three foundational strategies.

1. Invite world-class universities to set up in Singapore
2. Attract international students to study in Singapore
3. Alter the local culture to be entrepreneurial participants in the knowledge based economy[88]

This in turn has lent itself to the creation of a three-tiered higher education system.

1. World Class Universities (WCU): foreign institutions who have been specifically invited to operate with a focus on research and development
2. Singaporean Universities: National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), and the Singapore Management University (SMU)
3. Additional Universities: five polytechnics and six other private and specialised institutions that collaborate with the WCUs[89]

In addition, publicly funded research institutions like the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), the Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise (CREATE) and the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART), as well as specific University Alliances support local and global research and

[87] Toh, "Internationalization of Tertiary Education Services in Singapore," 8.
[88] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 126.
[89] Chan, "Internationalization of Higher Education as a Major Strategy for Developing Regional Education Hubs: A Comparison of Hong Kong and Singapore," 24-25.

development along with "Singapore's key economic clusters by providing intellectual, human and industrial capital to its partners in industry."[90]

Overall, since the 2002 introduction of the Global Schoolhouse, Singapore has effectively developed into a strong regional player in the globally competitive higher education landscape, a solid example of a knowledge hub as a tool of internationalisation, and an embodiment of the global reform wave.

The National Rhetoric: The Global Schoolhouse as designed by the EDB

It is important to note that due to the dynamic, interconnected, and collaborative nature of the education hub in Singapore significant roles are played by diverse actors. Amongst the actors the primary driver however remains the government in the form of its ministries, most notably the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), and to a lesser degree the Ministry of Manpower (MoM), the Ministry of Finance (MoF), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). It is these ministries and their subsidiaries that have produced the key policies and strategies to design and deliver the education hub. Therefore they are the creators and distributors of the national rhetoric on the topic. What follows are a few examples of this rhetoric. The examples have been selected specifically to show how the state has a "constructionist disposition" where all aspects of life are under diligent and constant evaluation and revaluation; construction and reconstruction[91] and public policy can almost always be read as subsidiary to the grand scheme of economic policy.[92]

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[90] "Overview," Agency for Science, Technology and Research, last modified 2009, accessed 12 September 2014, http://www.a-star.edu.sg/About-A-STAR.aspx.
[91] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 121.
[92] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 138.

An Education Workgroup from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) was the first to champion the Global Schoolhouse platform specifically to "capture a bigger slice of US$2.2 trillion world education market."[93] In the document available on the MTI website the stated vision is "to attract an additional 100,000 international full-fee paying students and 100,000 international corporate executives for training." Education is described as "a great business opportunity for Singapore" and "an engine of economic growth" with the potential to contribute anywhere between 3% and 5% of GDP.[94] Even at this early stage the discussion about the local effects was underway. The Global Schoolhouse was espoused as "not only an export strategy" but also as beneficial to Singaporeans while at the same time being "function of talent attraction."[95] According to Knight's typology, such a determined attempt at attracting talent can be seen as a concerted effort of talent hub development.

The Workgroup put forth six targeted recommendations.

1. To leverage on the branding potential of the renowned foreign universities already in Singapore
2. To promote the tertiary segment by allowing private universities to set up
3. To develop private commercial and specialty schools
4. To attract and export corporate training and executive education
5. To grow Singapore as a regional destination of choice for high- quality preparatory and boarding school education

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[93] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, "Panel recommends Global Schoolhouse concept for Singapore to capture bigger slice of US$2.2 trillion world education market," 2003, https://www.mti.gov.sg/ResearchRoom/Documents/app.mti.gov.sg/data/pages/507/doc/DSE_recommend.pdf

[94] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, "Panel recommends Global Schoolhouse," 1.

[95] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, "Panel recommends Global Schoolhouse," 2.

6. To develop a continuum of e-learning and education support services players

And eight broad-based recommendations.

1. To establish a quality assurance system for private commercial and specialty schools
2. To build up manpower availability
3. To establish an education promotion agency
4. To streamline student visa requirements and processing
5. To set aside land at appropriate pricing
6. To export branded Singapore schools and institutions, curriculum and testing services
7. To increase the supply of student housing
8. To ensure the availability of student financing[96]

These are the foundational recommendations that have characterised the Global Schoolhouse since its inception. They have however also been revaluated and reconstructed as the governments aspirations grew and economic policies evolved for the 21st century.

In 2003 the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)'s Economic Review Committee published a report titled 'New Challenges, Fresh Goals – Towards a Dynamic Global City' "to comprehensively review current policies and propose appropriate strategies to promote the further growth and development of the Singapore economy. Members [of the Review Committee] were drawn from the private sector, the public sector, and academia."[97] The Education Workgroup, part of the Sub Committee on Service Industries, which had made

[96] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, "Panel recommends Global Schoolhouse," 2-5.
[97] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, "New Challenges, Fresh Goals – Towards a Dynamic Global City," February 2003, http://www.mti.gov.sg/ResearchRoom/Documents/app.mti.gov.sg/data/pages/507/doc/1%20ERC_Main_Committee.pdf

the above discussed preliminary recommendations, now also put forth a more comprehensive executive summary on the topic of 'Developing Singapore's Education Industry.' In the summary the above recommendations are elaborated on as is the proposed vision: "to develop a self-sustaining education ecosystem offering a diverse and distinctive mix of quality educational services to the world, thus becoming an engine of economic growth, capability development and talent attraction for Singapore."[98] Of note here is the Opportunities section of the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. All three points are of an economic nature. The opportunity of increasing GDP, the size off the global market for higher education and its growth rate, and also the growing regional demand[99] are listed as crucial motives for the development of an education hub in an effort to gain "and advantage over North East Asian competitors" in the global marketplace.[100]

In line with these recommendations the Economic Development Board selected, amongst others, the Australian University of New South Wales (UNSW) in 2005 to establish a campus with generous financial backing from Singapore. UNSW Asia was to contribute a minimum of least $S500 million a year to Singapore's economy in direct spending and aimed to take in 10 000 students in 2015.[101] However in May 2007, a short two months after it began operations, UNSW announced it was pulling out from Singapore due to low enrollment, about 50% less than projected, and an unsustainable financial

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[98] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, "Executive Summary - Developing Singapore's Education Industry, Prepared by the Education Workgroup," 2003, https://www.mti.gov.sg/ResearchRoom/Documents/app.mti.gov.sg/data/pages/507/doc/DSE_Executive%20Summary.pdf, 4

[99] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, "Executive Summary - Developing Singapore's Education Industry, Prepared by the Education Workgroup," 3-4.

[100] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, "Executive Summary - Developing Singapore's Education Industry, Prepared by the Education Workgroup,", 4

[101] Pak Tee Ng and Charlene Tan, "The Singapore Global Schoolhouse: An Analysis of the Development of the Tertiary Education Landscape in Singapore," *International Journal of Educational Management* 24, no. 3: 184.

situation.[102] The EDB had disbursed S$15 million in loans and S$17.3 million in grants to UNSW. However, the EDB made it clear it was not issuing a "blank cheque." Loans are backed by bank guarantee and grants are tied to the promised benefits a project would bring to Singapore. Although the episode was embarrassing for UNSW, the EDB was able to control the narrative to highlight that the "deal was not a free lunch. It was a hard-nosed business transaction" and UNSW was unable to hold up its end of the bargain.[103] In a reply to parliament questions on the topic Mr. Lin, the Minister of Trade and Industry said in July 2007 that this will "not dampen our aspirations to become an educational hub. Not all investment projects will succeed. But that should not stop us from constantly seeking new investment projects that can add value to Singapore."[104] Since then Singapore has successfully been hosting a number of foreign branch campuses of institutions from the United States, Australia, France, China, and India.[105]

By 2010 the Global Schoolhouse was well established and the national rhetoric continued to place education as key element in economic development. In February 2010 the Economic Strategies Committee (ESC) of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) published a comprehensive report recommending seven strategies for the next ten years to both sustain development and achieve inclusive growth. In the report the focus is on the entire city-state but education, and the principles espoused as part of the Global Schoolhouse, feature repeatedly. Of the seven recommendations, three can be viewed as descendants of the Global School house initiative.

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[102] Ng and Tan, "The Singapore Global Schoolhouse: An Analysis," 184.
[103] Ng and Tan, "The Singapore Global Schoolhouse: An Analysis," 185.
[104] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, "Minister Lim's Reply to Parliament Questions on UNSW," modified on 16 July 27, accessed 3 October 2014, http://www.mti.gov.sg/NewsRoom/Pages/Minister%20Lim's%20Reply%20to%20Parliament%20Questions%20on%20UNSW.aspx
[105] Global Higher Education, "Branch Campus Listing," accessed 21 January 2015, http://www.globalhighered.org/branchcampuses.php.

- Growing through skills and innovation,
- Anchoring Singapore as a Global-Asia Hub, and
- Making innovation pervasive, and strengthening commercialisation of Research and Development

Arguably the spirit of the ESC recommendations from early 2000s in regards to education hub development is now visible in the recommendations for all of Singapore. Additionally, the subtitle of the report, 'High Skilled People, Innovative Economy, Distinctive Global City,' reads like a game of buzzword bingo that the Singapore government began to play at the micro level with education, and which had expanded to the macro level of the entire state by 2010.

At the micro level the Global Schoolhouse spirt progressed steadily. One of the issues that had been raised in earlier stages was the effect of an education hub strategy on the local student and provider population. To address this concern and make sure the Global Schoolhouse was not viewed simply as an export strategy the Ministry of Education (MoE)'s Committee on University Education Pathways Beyond 2015 (CUEP) reported in 2012 on how to provide more and better tertiary education opportunities for Singaporeans.[106]

However, even with this local focus one of the rationales for review was to stay globally relevant.

> Reviewing our university sector at this time is particularly pertinent, given that other countries are also undertaking efforts to reform their university sector quantitatively and qualitatively. Universities all over the world are evolving to stay

[106] Ministry of Education, Singapore, "Report of the Committee on University Education Pathways Beyond 2015 (CUEP): Greater Diversity, More Opportunities, Final Report," 2010, http://www.moe.gov.sg/media/press/files/2012/08/cuep-report-greater-diversity-more-opportunities.pdf, 3

> relevant in a globalised world, and to become world-class institutions. There is therefore a need for Singapore to keep abreast of international higher education trends, and to ensure that our university sector is well-positioned to respond to future challenges and opportunities.[107]

And economically viable.

> To prepare Singaporeans and Singapore for the future economy. In an increasingly dynamic and interconnected global environment, there is a need to review our higher education policies to ensure that they remain robust enough to respond to new global challenges of greater complexity.[108]

By 2012 the Global Schoolhouse platform had again evolved. With approximately 84 000 international students officially in Singapore, the majority thereof in tertiary institutions, the platform had advanced considerably on its outset goal of 100 000 international students. Additionally the objective of having education contribute between 3% and 5% of the GDP was also starting to appear attainable.[109] In a developmentally strategic move the initiative was now "shifted […] towards building industry-relevant manpower capabilities and helping to attract, develop and retain talent for [the] economy as global competition for talent […] intensified."[110] The education sector, and specifically the Global Schoolhouse initiative, still played a vital part of economic development but was beginning to take on a new and diverse role adapted to suit global trends. This meant no longer focusing exclusively on student numbers and GDP but a holistic 'global city' approach.

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[107] Ministry of Education, Singapore, "Report of the Committee on University Education Pathways Beyond 2015 (CUEP)," 4.
[108] Ministry of Education, Singapore, "Report of the Committee on University Education Pathways Beyond 2015 (CUEP)," 27.
[109] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore News Room, "Minister Lim Hng Kiang's written reply to Parliament Questions on EDB's Global Schoolhouse initiative," 2007, http://www.mti.gov.sg/NewsRoom/Pages/Minister-Lim-Hng-Kiang's-written-reply-to-Parliament-Questions-on-EDB's-Global-Schoolhouse-initiative.aspx
[110] Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore News Room, "Minister Lim Hng Kiang's written reply to Parliament Questions on EDB's Global Schoolhouse initiative."

The Global Reality

As with any government backed initiative, the national rhetoric often differs from reality.

Foreign student enrollment

Singapore's attempt to become the "Boston of the East"[111] has been acknowledged globally by higher education experts and the media. In many cases the discourse has, on the one hand, been one lauding the city-state for its accomplishment[112] and on the other hand, reactionary to criticisms and visible fall-backs. However, perhaps the government's "constructionist"[113] method, in which public policy was designed to serve the greater good, in this case economic development,[114] has in fact caused the internationally known education hub to become a victim of its own success. With high economic performance comes an increased standard of living but also an increased cost of living. This has been recently listed as one of the reasons why foreign enrollment is no longer as high as in the past decade. Singapore has become an expensive destination and foreign students are beginning to avoid it. According to figures from the Immigration and Checkpoint Authority, about 75 000 student passes were issued by July 2014. This decrease, from 84 000 in 2012, of international student presence, some argue, is because "the country is getting more expensive to study in and jobs are harder to come by after leaving school."[115] HSBC has put Singapore in its top three most expensive destinations for international undergraduates even beating out the US and the UK.[116] In the case of student enrollment, no matter how effective initially, an education policy designed to achieve economic development may in fact be detrimental in the long run. Even though the Global

[111] Olds, "Global Assemblage," 959.
[112] OECD, and OCDE. 2011. "Singapore: Rapid Improvement Followed by Strong Performance".
[113] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 121.
[114] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 138.
[115] Pearl Lee, "Singapore losing allure as hub for education," *The Straits Times*, 20 September 2014, accessed 5 October, 2014, http://www.straitstimes.com/news/singapore/education/story/singapore-losing-allure-hub-education-20140920
[116] Lee, "Singapore losing allure as hub for education."

Schoolhouse initiative has now been diversified, student enrollment, as one of the few truly measurable aspects, will always remain a key aspect with which to measure impact. Based solely on the available quantitative data, a downturn is in progress.[117]

Singapore for Singaporeans

In the 2011 election the People's Action Party saw its support drop the lowest since independence. Although still the ruling party there is an obvious backlash against the policies reflected in votes as a record high of seats fell to the opposition. One of the primary rallying points was the strong impact of foreign talent policies, many of which are tied to the Global Schoolhouse initiative. Popular opinion is rising to champion 'Singapore for Singaporeans' due to the belief that the push to attract foreign talent has been used to supress wages and the criteria used to differentiate 'talent' is not transparent.[118] In this case the national rhetoric in which an education hub will lead to a global city is supplanted by the reality. "With many Singaporeans feeling they have lost control of their own destiny, talk of global city and diverse imported talents has all but disappeared."[119] Here it is important to keep in mind the current global climate on this topic. There is not a single developed nation where 'locals' are not using the age-old '*they're* taking all our jobs' argument to vent their frustrations.

Commercially viable research

While Singaporeans are staging a backlash against foreign talent for preferential treatment in regards to employment, another reality is the relatively low attainment of job creation and economic profit from the Global Schoolhouse initiative. The focus on research and development is facing the hurdle of moving past academia and developing into profitable

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[117] Sandra Davie, "Singapore may rue fall in foreign student numbers," *The Straits Times,* 2 October 2014, accessed 2 October, 2014. http://www.straitstimes.com/news/opinion/eye-singapore/story/singapore-may-rue-fall-foreign-student-numbers-20141002

[118] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 136.

[119] Chiang Nee, "S'pore Faces Strong Public Backlash Against Immigration," *The Real Singapore.com,* 16 March 2013, accessed 14 October 2014, http://therealsingapore.com/content/s%E2%80%99pore-faces-strong-public-backlash-against-immigration

business.[120] For education to lead to economic success commercial outcomes of research need to be viable. However, the hopes of the government on this front remain unfulfilled and the high risk and unpredictable nature of research is becoming evident. "The "bench-to-bedside" story of a seamless, joining-up of basic research, development, and commercialization in the biosciences was never plausible but was nonetheless justified as a key plank in the government's planning for the nation- state's economic development."[121]

Entrepreneurship

Singapore as a knowledge hub has also been criticised for being ineffective in creating, precisely that which is needed for dynamic economic development and a knowledge based economy, an innovative, competitive and entrepreneurial environment. The argument is that human resources developed in the "big shadow of state intervention"[122] don't have the necessary entrepreneurial culture needed to excel in a globally competitive market. Unlike the American examples the government is looking to emulate, such as Silicon Valley and Route 128, Singapore as a knowledge hub is lacking. Sidhu claims "the status-driven, disciplinary, and hierarchical culture in Singapore militates against experimentation, risk taking, and the inevitable failures that accompany innovation."[123] Despite this situation being a reality to the national rhetoric, it may be an overly simplified take, or just one side of a multifaceted story. Singapore's ever present state intervention may not be an ideal environment for entrepreneurship but it has yielded some exceptional results. In addition to the previously mentioned stark rise in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, in May 2014 Singapore became to first Asian nation to reach the top 10 of the Universitas 21 rankings. "Meanwhile, other wealthy city states such as Abu Dhabi, Dubai and

[120] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 131.
[121] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 137.
[122] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 138.
[123] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 138.

Qatar, which have invested huge sums in luring prestigious Western universities to their shores, have conspicuously failed to make the same impact on the global research stage."[124] Although stated before, it is necessary to make sure that any conclusions drawn from success in rankings need to be taken with a grain of salt.

Considering the Singapore Institute of Technology

Because the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) was established during the height of the education hub development discourse in Singapore a case study can be used to further trace the move from rhetoric to reality by asking to what extent is it a product of the government's education hub policies.

The Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) was established in 2009 as a result of the Polytechnic–Foreign Specialised Institution (poly-FSI) Initiative[125] and a commitment from the Ministry of Education (MoE) to establish a new publicly funded university "to provide a differentiated education, increase choice and diversity in the university landscape, and help supply the additional capacity needed to provide more students with a publicly-funded university education." This university was from the start meant to "distinguish itself through an interdisciplinary approach to education. Beyond discipline-specific knowledge and skills, students of the new university will experience inter-disciplinary learning through a variety of means, including coursework and projects."[126] Another key aspect of the new university was its partnerships with foreign specialised institutions.[127] And so the Singapore Institute of Technology was born and welcomed its first cohort of students in September

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[124] David Matthews. "No sleep for Singapore's universities." Times Higher Education.co.uk, 21 November 2013, accessed 3 October 2014, http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/features/no-sleep-for-singapores-universities/2009064.article.
[125] Ministry of Education, Singapore. "FACTSHEET: Polytechnic–Foreign Specialised Institution (poly-FSI) Initiative." 2009. http://www.moe.gov.sg/media/press/files/2009/05/tertiary-landscape-annex-a.pdf.
[126] Ministry of Education, Singapore, "Report of the Committee on the Expansion of the University Sector: Greater Choice, More Room to Excel, Preliminary Report," 2008, http://www.moe.gov.sg/media/press/files/2008/06/ceus-prelim-report.pdf, 3.
[127] Ministry of Education, Singapore, ""Report of the Committee on the Expansion of the University Sector," 4.

2010. Shortly thereafter the Committee on University Education Pathways Beyond 2015 (CUEP) recommended that SIT be developed into Singapore's fifth Autonomous University and in March 2014 the SIT Act passed. SIT is partnered with Newcastle University, Technical University of Munich, University of Glasgow, Trinity College Dublin, The University of Manchester, The Glasgow School of Art, DigiPen Institute of Technology, Wheelock College, University of Liverpool, and The Culinary Institute of America. These institutions all deliver specialised and industry relevant programmes and since September 2014 SIT is offering its own undergraduate degree programmes as well as an integrated work study programme and an overseas immersion programme.[128]

Even based on first impression it is easy to see that the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) could be a poster child for the Singapore government's education hub policies. SIT is a prime example of the dedication and speed with which policies were initiated. The short time between design and delivery of SIT, including a physical presence and student intake, is awe inspiring and unthinkable in most other countries. In 2008 the MoE called for an expansion of the university sector and a new publicly-funded university in order to offer "university places that are broadly aligned with Singapore's longer-term manpower needs"[129] and two short years later SIT was welcoming students to a diverse range of industry relevant study programmes. At the same time this new publicly-funded institution was to "forge a strategic alliance with a high-quality university overseas, at both the institutional and faculty level."[130] And as a result SIT now boasts partnerships and

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[128] "Establishment Of SIT - A New Applied Model." Singapore Institute of Technology, last modified 2013, accessed 13 September 2014, http://www.singaporetech.edu.sg/about/establishment-of-sit-a-new-applied-model.

[129] Ministry of Education, Singapore, "Report of the Committee on the Expansion of the University Sector: Greater Choice, More Room to Excel, Preliminary Report," 5.

[130] Ministry of Education, Singapore, "Report of the Committee on the Expansion of the University Sector: Greater Choice, More Room to Excel, Preliminary Report," 19.

collaborations with 11 overseas institutions. The features of the new university were to be an integrated, interdisciplinary approach and to provide exposure to real-world experiences.[131] As if in response to this request the SIT DNA is characterised by "Thinking Tinkerers; Able to Learn, Unlearn, Relearn; Catalyst for Transformation; Grounded in the Community."[132] In fact, the SIT Vision ("A leader in innovative university education by integrating learning, industry and community") and Mission ("To develop individuals who build on their interests and talents to impact society by providing a nurturing environment that is uniquely enriched by world-class partners") read as if written by the same MoE staff who penned the call for expansion of the university sector making it an obvious reaction to/product of the Singapore government's hub policies. When Considering the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) the centralised and consistent nature of Singapore's education hub policies become highly visible. On the other hand, Chan and Ng suggest that although SIT is a product of the Singapore government's education hub policies, their centralised and consistent character do not allow for a true 'hub'.

> So, even though a higher education 'hub' implies global connectivity and diversity, what the Singapore government hopes to develop is still a managed and regulated 'hub', with a little more autonomy than before [but instead] a 'thoroughly-regulating approach', one in which autonomy, innovation and diversity are confined within certain specified spaces and regulated by certain specified parameters.[133]

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[131] Ministry of Education, Singapore, "Report of the Committee on the Expansion of the University Sector: Greater Choice, More Room to Excel, Preliminary Report," 19-20.
[132] "SIT-DNA." Singapore Institute of Technology, last modified 2013, accessed 13 September 2014, http://www.singaporetech.edu.sg/sit-dna.
[133] Chan and Ng. "Similar Agendas, Diverse Strategies: The Quest for a Regional Hub of Higher Education in Hong Kong and Singapore," 499.

Discussion

In the following chapter I will briefly discuss the research question, offer some potential questions for further investigation, and suggest best practices for policy design and implementation.

In the above chapters I have shown how the 'new' higher education landscape of the twenty-first century should be considered within a historical progression and today's internationalisation as a product of its historical context. Therefore it is not possible to determine which of the two phenomena is object and which is subject but only that they are highly inter-dependant. Similarly education hubs are both a characteristic of the 'new' landscape and a tool used by individual governments to participate in the process of internationalisation. The education hub thereby provides an excellent opportunity to study both the process of internationalisation of higher education at its current stage and the national response to the 'new' landscape. In the case of this discussion the focus is on Hong Kong and Singapore. Or more accurately, the national governments of Hong Kong and Singapore. Although there exist various factions and opposing forces within governments who may have differing objectives, such as the various Ministries, all of these factions of the government draw their legitimacy from their relation to the nation state. Therefore it is safe to say that the governments of both Singapore and Hong Kong act in a way to maximise their power and interests. One of the ways this is done is by strategically using education hubs to participate in the process of internationalisation of higher education and to navigate the 'new' landscape of higher education.

In the cases of Singapore and Hong Kong the education hub is developed through strategic policies within a framework of economic development capitalising on higher education as a tradable service and marketable commodity. The hub is one of the measures to increase both FDI and global competitiveness of the nation-state as well as "an assertion

of soft power in the globalizing world."[134] In this trend of academic capitalism and the knowledge based economy the hub acts as both a creator and attractor of capital.[135] In so doing the hub is a way towards economic development and allows the nation-state to play an active role in the 'new' landscape of higher education. An active 'trade not aid' approach through global talent acquisition and reputation building as reflected through a rise in university rankings for institutions from both countries. However, the fickle and problematic nature of university rankings is notorious amongst higher education managers and administrators therefore they cannot be used exclusively as a measure of success. How then, if at all, can one evaluate the success of an education hub? Jane Knight similarly asks "how does one determine when a hub is merely a branding exercise? How does one distinguish between rhetoric and reality? Is there a way to objectively assess whether a hub is viable…?"[136] On a superficial level, the 'success' of a hub can be measured if the initial hub creation policies included tangible targets such as the increased international student enrollment of Hong Kong and the partnerships with foreign institutions of Singapore. It can also be argued that the specific climate in which each hub has to operate, the global reality as discussed above, means that individual sets of indicators for success need to be developed. However, on a more analytical level, the impact and effectiveness of the education hub, due to its role within internationalisation and the 'new' higher education landscape, is speculative at best.

As shown above, in Hong Kong, education hub policy was presented as a relaxation of existing rules and regulations and the discourse of achievement engaged in by the government and its representatives highlights the *laissez-faire* approach towards higher

[134] Mok and Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 239.
[135] Olssen and Peters. "Neoliberalism, Higher Education and the Knowledge Economy: From the Free Market to Knowledge Capitalism," *Journal of Education Policy.* 20, no. 3 (2005.): 330.
[136] Knight, "International Education Hubs: Student, Talent, Knowledge-Innovation Models," 217.

education as a driver of long term economic development. The concerted effort that is necessary to build a fully-functioning and effective education hub is not present. "A lack of government vision and concrete plan" has caused a delay[137] and Hong Kong's attempt at becoming a student hub may be hindered by the low number of non-local, non-Mainland enrollments.[138] However, Hong Kong does stand in a unique and strong position as its location within the Asia Pacific region and relation to China provides a very strong foundation for global competitiveness. Additionally, the higher education sector is already highly regarded with strict quality assurance measures in place, it is a safe and desirable environment with special economic privileges and its cultural duality makes it more accessible to a wider range of individuals and institutions.[139] Under these circumstances, and provided that 'a cohesive coherent governance policy framework [is put] in place to provide stakeholders with high-level direction and guidance, clearly establish key principles and responsibilities, articulate fundamental goals, requirements, and limits, and an allocate responsibilities'[140] could Hong Kong utilise the existing infrastructure and industry in order to become a fully functioning student hub and eventually diversify into an innovation hub?

Similarly, Singapore approached its education hub policy with developmental objectives at the forefront. The creation of a knowledge hub and openly stated quest for global acknowledgement as the "Boston of the East" are representative of the constructionist methods that brought the Global Schoolhouse into existence. For example, as shown above, the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) could be a poster child for the Singapore government's education hub policies. SIT illustrates the dedication and speed

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[137] Mok and Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 92.
[138] Mok and Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 97.
[139] Cheng, Cheung, and Yeun. "Development of a Regional Education Hub: the Case of Hong Kong," *International Journal of Educational Management.* 25, no. 5 (2011): 490.
[140] Mok and Bodycott, "Hong Kong: The Quest for Regional Education Hub Status," 93.

with which policies were initiated but also the extent to which they are products of close regulation and planning as well as being "bolstered by the resources of a wealthy developmental state with reserves that would be the envy of most countries."[141] Taking into consideration how almost all hub development initiatives in Singapore are "subordinate to its broader economic policy"[142] the hub success becomes more uncertain as echoed by Chan and Ng.[143] This brand of hub policy development raises the questions about the potential consequences for research and enterprise. If economic policy drives hub policy how can research be sped up to provide results that are in line with the requirements of its contemporary economic situation?

The education hubs of Hong Kong and Singapore do teach one valuable lesson to be considered in future policy developments. The role of the government, or specific governmental agencies, is vital. The nation state needs to be the number one actor and stakeholder for an effective hub policy development. Although the usage of the hub for economic development and a competitive edge in a globally marketised higher education landscape is standard the nation still remains the subject and the market the object. However, in places where this is reversed, such as the economic free zones established by Malaysia and Dubai where investment companies have created the foundational infrastructure and plan for a hub,[144] even the measurable success is not as high as that of Hong Kong and Singapore. Taking this lesson one step further, from a comparison between Hong Kong and Singapore we can see that implementation of a master plan is

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[141] Sidhu, Ho, and Yeoh, "Emerging Education Hubs: The Case of Singapore," *Higher Education: The International Journal of Higher Education and Educational Planning.* 61, no. 1 (2011): 36.
[142] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 138.
[143] Chan and Ng. "Similar Agendas, Diverse Strategies: The Quest for a Regional Hub of Higher Education in Hong Kong and Singapore," 499
[144] Jane Knight, "Comparative Analysis of Education Hubs," in *International Education Hubs: Student, Talent, Knowledge-Innovation Models*, ed. Jane Knight (Dordrecht u.a: Springer, 2014), 203

key. Policy needs to be written in realistic way so that it can trickle down to managers, administrators, and academics. In effect, those people who carry it out on a day-to-day basis. In Hong Kong the lack of coordinated management and targeted strategies can be felt in the visible lack of significant progress beyond the rhetoric of achievement.[145] In Singapore however, stricter and centralised regulations mandate a higher level of tangible progression and achievement. The government goes beyond simply announcing its intentions to become an education hub to actually making determined and goal-oriented moves to achieve those intentions.

Education hubs and their complex relationship to internationalisation of higher education in the South East Asian region are a fascinating area for research and provide multiple lines of inquiry including focus on the student, the academic, or the theory as discussed below.

Statistically the percentage of students globally accessing tertiary education is going up and has been doing so for some time.[146] The trend will most likely continue and as institutions place internationalisation at the core of their missions so will transnational education initiatives such as education hubs. The hub popularity in South East Asia is undeniable with Malaysia, South Korea, and Thailand all making claims and organising plans. With more students and more access to versatile and globally minded higher education within the region it is safe to say that the patterns of international student movement will shift. The big players on the international higher education landscape, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada, may lose out on international

[145] Knight, "Comparative Analysis of Education Hubs," 194.
[146] OECD, "Education at a Glance 2014 Highlights," 45.

enrollment as students opt to 'go abroad' regionally. Will education hubs increase student mobility within the region and how will this affect the global higher education landscape?

Similarly, how will education hubs interact with the culture of the academic capitalism which is a staple of today's internationalisation? Molly Lee shows how "the strong intervention of the state combined with the influence of a market ideology has resulted in a hybrid bureaucratic and corporate academic culture in […] Singapore."[147] If Singapore-style education hubs become the ideal how will academics respond? Will the academic standard be diluted or will certain areas become obsolete due to inability to be profitable in a bureaucratic and corporate environment?

Viewing education hubs as tools for the process of internationalisation of higher education at the spatial scale of nation leads to further questions about internationalisation itself. As pointed out at the very beginning of the paper, if the agreed upon procedures and environments of knowledge production, in this case how to successfully internationalise, are directed by the norms of institutions located in the discursive West,[148] is the process we know as internationalisation simply a politically-correct westernisation? Furthermore, how do the tools of this process influence the power relationships at play between local and global, centre and periphery? Are education hubs a way to internalise the fixed status of the local higher education landscape within national policy leading to a reproduction of the colonial state in the education sector?

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[147] Molly Lee, "Malaysia," in *The Decline of the Guru: The Academic Profession in the Third World.* ed Philil G. Altbach (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 137.
[148] Philip G. Altbach Paying the Professoriate: A Global Comparison of Compensation and Contracts (London: Routledge, 2012), 3.

Conclusion

In the above paper I have provided an introduction to the phenomenon of education hubs. Education hubs are a characteristic of the Global Reform Wave which in turn is one of the main signifiers of the 'new' landscape of higher education. This landscape can more accurately be described as the current historical period during which nations and institutions theorise the internationalisation of higher education as an intersectional process happening concurrently at various spatial scales.[149] The education hub is however simultaneously a tool to navigate the 'new' landscape of higher education and one section of the intersectional process of internationalisation. Due to its complexity the education hub is an excellent lens with which to research internationalisation and the 'new'-ness of higher education in the twenty-first century. As a firm proponent of the strong relationship between higher education and the nation-state I have asked how the governments of Singapore and Hong Kong have utilised education hubs as tools to navigate the landscape and participate in the process of internationalisation.

In Hong Kong the Legislative Council ordered the development of a hub and the establishment of regional dominance in higher education. The hub is thereby utilised as a tool to achieve a globally recognised reputation which is necessary in a time when rankings factor into student and faculty's decision making processes. The plan was however not corroborated by a strategic or concentrated effort. Therefore, as Chen and Ng argue, the Hong Kong government has a liberal approach[150] in which the education hub discourse acts as a governmental seal of approval on the internationalisation efforts engaged in by individual institutions such as the Hong Kong Shue Yan University (HKSYU). For Hong

[149] Waters, 548.
[150] Chan and Ng. "Similar Agendas, Diverse Strategies: The Quest for a Regional Hub of Higher Education in Hong Kong and Singapore," 498.

Kong the education hub is a way to attract and retain international students to live and work thereby enhancing economic competitiveness.[151]

Singapore's hub development is driven by economic interests and has its roots in the Global Schoolhouse strategies designed by the Economic Development Board. As such, the hub goes beyond being a tool for governmental navigation of the current higher education historical period, but is additionally a product thereof. By focusing on the export earning potential of education in the framework of GATS and new spaces of knowledge production, the Singapore government forces internationalisation upon its higher education sector and subsequently regulates the specific sections and spatial scales in which individual institutions are to participate. This state-centralist method, albeit effective in certain cases, such as the swift design and delivery of a brand new publicly funded university, the Singapore Institute of Technology,[152] has its limitations and shortcomings as is seen in the difficulties when it comes to moving from research to profitable enterprise.[153]

The education hubs of Hong Kong and Singapore provide valuable insights into the relationship between the nation and the higher education sector in the never ending quest for internationalisation. Likewise, they draw to the forefront of research questions about the effect of hubs on regions; the potentials for regionalisation and integration; the downsides of academic capitalism; and the future sustainability and possibility of synergy within the international higher education landscape.

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[151] Economic Development Board, "Legislative Council Brief," 3.
[152] Ministry of Education, Singapore. "FACTSHEET: Polytechnic–Foreign Specialised Institution (poly-FSI) Initiative."
[153] Sidhu et al, "Singapore: Building a Knowledge and Education Hub," 131.

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- Experienced administrator, project manager, and on-site event coordinator
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- Fluent in Croatian and German as well as intermediate knowledge of French

EDUCATION

University of Vienna, Austria

November 2014 Master of Arts, Global Studies

- Thesis: *Education Hubs in Hong Kong and Singapore*

University of Leipzig, Germany

August 2013 Master of Arts, Global Studies

- Publication: "A Marriage of Convenience: The OECD and Finnish Higher Education – Considering the Lappeenranta University of Technology" in Universities as Portals of Globalization, Crossroads of Internationalization and Area Studies, ed. Claudia Baumann (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2014), 41.

University of British Columbia, Canada

December 2009 Bachelor of Arts, History, Anthropology

- Thesis: *Self-presentation and Agency: Changes in Chinatown*

SELECTED WORK EXPERIENCE

Vienna International School | Vienna, Austria

Event Coordinator *April 2014 – September 2014*

- Design and delivery of 30 Year Anniversary Celebration Weekend and commemorative publication
- On-site management of four events in three days with over 900 registrants
- Working with €36,000 budget

Institute for Higher Education Research, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg | Wittenberg, Germany

Research Assistant *April 2013 – April 2014*

- Assisting in research for the sub project "Elite Formation and Universities" in the DFG Research Unit "Mechanisms of Elite Formation in the German Educational System"

City University London | London, United Kingdom

European Projects Officer *May 2011 – June 2012*

- Primary administration of Erasmus Mundus programme tasked with organising 183 student and staff exchanges between eight EU Universities and eight Western Balkan Universities
- Acting as main contact for partner universities, student and staff participants while ensuring compliance to EU regulations
- Preparing participants for mobility, ensuring all visa requirements are met, coordinating arrival and induction events; acting as first point of call for pastoral care and all other issues during the mobility
- Administering distribution of participant scholarships including grants, travel allowances, and insurance coverage
- Designing Consortium Meetings and Workshops held at various locations throughout Europe
- Maintaining website and databases

Anglo Educational Services | London, United Kingdom
Student Liaison Officer *August 2010 – July 2011*

- Ensuring effective communication between all departments and client institutions in the UK and the US
- Actively liaising between Operations and clients in areas of facilities management
- Acting as first point of call and assisting students with relevant advice and guidance
- Creating, distributing, and compiling evaluation surveys to ascertain areas needing improvement
- Developing and managing improvement projects
- Designing and delivering inductions to accommodation and living in London

The Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia | Vancouver, Canada
Tour Guide and Event Supervisor *January 2010 – June 2010*

- Providing insightful and professional tours to visitors
- Collaborating with clients to facilitate and execute high-quality events; on-site support and direction

The University of British Columbia | Vancouver, Canada
Various roles within International Student Development *August 2007 – June 2010*

- Maintaining administrative aspects of various student programs with membership of 200+ students
- Researching and designing new events to engage the student community
- Updating, editing, and managing website content; database and communications management
- Fact-checking, copy-editing, and consulting on content for annual publications

Student Ambassador for International Student Initiative *September 2008 – April 2010*

- Developing and leading engaging and informative campus tours specifically designed to recruit new students
- Representing the University to prospective students, parents, teachers, counsellors, new staff members, and high-profile community members both domestic and international

History Students Association Representative & President *October 2007 – March 2009*

- Elected to represent the interests of History Students to Arts Undergraduate Society council; elected again to role of President
- Providing strong leadership, coordination and direction in all HSA endeavours including the planning of academic and social events and the publication of an Undergraduate Research Journal
- Delegating tasks and supervising executive members
- Soliciting funding from History Department and representing students' needs
- Collaborating with other departmental associations for more community involvement and arbitrating disputes with parent organizations

Holy Cross Regional High School | Surrey, Canada
Anniversary Publication Editor *June 2006 – February 2007*

- Choosing and organizing content for 25th Anniversary Publication
- Designing page layouts
- Assigning articles and editing submissions

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional short-term work experience:

- Receptionist (Rick Hansen Foundation; Richmond, Canada)
- Event Staff (Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee; Vancouver, Canada)
- Event Coordinator (Delta Arts Council; Delta, Canada)
- Campaign Manager (UBC Arts Undergraduate Society & UBC Alma Mater Society; Vancouver, Canada)

Dual Citizen: Croatia and Canada

Valid Class 5 BC Driver's License and a clean driving record