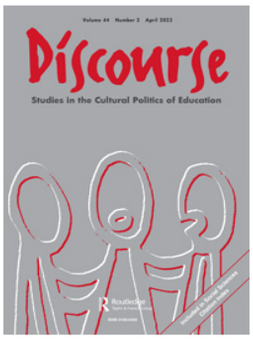

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On the (re)move: exploring governmentality in post-colonial Macao's higher education

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the governmentality in Macao's higher education (HE) by exemplifying how neoliberalism and Chinese nationalism simultaneously inform the governmental rationalities and technologies in the city. Like many other systems, neoliberalism has substantially shaped Macao's HE. However, owing to post-colonial identity, Chinese nationalism has become a significant driving force in the development of Macao's HE after the handover. On the basis of governmentality and a qualitative single case approach, this paper demonstrates how the neoliberal logic and nationalist discourses frame the governmentality in post-colonial Macao's HE. The paper further argues that the recent development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area signifies an intensification of national integration that is deliberately associated with a wave of marketisation in HE. These developments represent the economic and political imperatives of Macao's HE policy and provide insights into Chineseness in HE within the contemporary political context.

KEYWORDS

Governmentality; neoliberalism; Chinese nationalism; higher education; Macao

Introduction

Macao was under Portuguese colonial rule for almost 450 years. Thus, a mutual assimilation of Portuguese and Chinese cultures transpired throughout the city, and a mixture of the two cultures defined Macao's identity (Kaeding, 2010; Lam, 2010). However, as the influence of China was prevalent in the governing process during the colonial rule, the Macao residents did not strongly favour the local identity and generally felt comfortable with the Chinese national identity after the territory became a Special Administrative Region of China (hereafter MSAR) in 1999 (Cai, Tang, Wang, & De Li, 2022). Under such political circumstances, promoting national integration and nationalism outlines the governance in post-colonial Macao in various sectors (Chun, 2019), including higher education (HE).

Meanwhile, Macao's HE is not immune to the strong and widespread global trend towards neoliberalism. Enhancing Macao's competitiveness has become the key theme

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of the SAR's education policy since the handover (Vong & Wong, 2014). Thus, embracing global competition, pursuing academic excellence and increasing research productivity, which appreciably exemplify the neoliberal logic, have characterised university governance and have shaped academics' perceptions of professional identity and their behaviours in the city (Hao, 2016).

On the basis of Foucault's notion of governmentality, this paper examines how neoliberalism and Chinese nationalism constitute the modes of ruling in post-colonial Macao's HE. It begins with discussing the various forces for change in Macao's HE that have emerged since the late colonial period. It then explains how the notion of governmentality and relevant conceptual elements are adopted to guide the research. Next, the paper briefly explores the governmentality in Macao's HE by examining how the neoliberal logic and nationalist discourses were combined to inform the governmental rationalities and technologies in the city. Using a governmentality lens and considering the strategy of developing the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) as a re-territorialisation process,[1] the paper reveals the economic and political imperatives of Macao's HE policy and their implications for understanding Chineseness in HE developments.

Forces for change in Macao's HE

HE developments in Macao are idiosyncratic; it has a lengthy European legacy. For instance, St Paul College was founded in 1594 to prepare for the formation of catholic clergy in the Far East. However, since the college closed in 1762, Macao's HE stagnated for more than 200 years. According to Bray and Kwo (2003), Macao's small size compelled the city to depend on external education supply and constrained its HE developments. Its small internal education market and the government's laissez-faire approach explained the limited private and public investment in HE during the colonial period.

Nevertheless, political transitions accelerated HE developments in Macao. Since the signing of the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration in 1987, the Portuguese Macao government has played an active role in developing HE. For example, the government purchased the private University of East Asia in 1988 and transformed it into the public University of Macau in 1991. Thereafter, Macao's HE experienced a rapid expansion; 10 HE institutions were established between 1988 and 2001. This rapid growth demonstrates that political forces accelerated HE developments in Macao (Bray, 2001).

In addition to political transitions, the research literature suggests that neoliberal globalisation is another significant force driving the city's HE developments. As Lau and Yuen (2015) explained, globalisation brought about an emphasis on the knowledge economy, an increase in demand for HE and a request for HE internationalisation. This globalisation process not only led to growth but also stimulated the diversification of HE in the city. Furthermore, HE internationalisation provided an impetus to international competition. Consequently, the pursuit of constructing world-class universities accelerated (Vong & Yu, 2018).

A new round of HE developments began in the late 2010s. On the one hand, this new round of reforms consolidates the developments in the 1990s and 2000s. Thus, it stresses streamlining governance and quality assurance in HE. For example, in 2017, the MSAR government enacted the Law of Higher Education System (MSAR Government [Law No. 10/2017], 2017), which synthesised the existing HE regulations, clarified their objectives and elucidated the governance and quality assurance mechanisms for public and

private HE institutions. Meanwhile, the Tertiary Education Services Office (Gabinete de Apoio ao Ensino Superior or GAES) was renamed as the Higher Education Bureau, which exercised more power in steering HE institutions, in 2019. In 2021, the Bureau merged with the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau to establish the Education and Youth Development Bureau to enhance the 'coordination and effectiveness of educational policies' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 146). The MSAR government resumed a greater role in HE governance by reforming the governance structure and strengthening the quality assurance mechanisms and regulations.

On the other hand, this round of HE developments responds to a policy context that foregrounds a deeper integration of the MSAR with Chinese national development. In 2017, the Chinese central government launched the GBA strategy to promote cross-border collaboration and integration amongst Macao, Hong Kong and nine cities in Guangdong Province, China. Thus, the MSAR government released the Medium- and Long-Term Outline Development Plan for Macao Higher Education (2021–2030) in 2020, which identified participating in and integrating with the GBA as one of the key directions of HE developments in Macao (Higher Education Bureau, 2020).

Governmentality as a conceptual framework

On the basis of Foucault's notion of governmentality, this paper analyses the connection between neoliberal discourse, sovereign will and policies and practices in Macao's HE. For Foucault (1982), 'power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free' (p. 790). In this regard, the exercise of power in the form of government is 'a set of actions brought to bear upon possible actions; it operates on the field of possibilities in which the behaviour of the acting subjects is inscribed' (p. 789). Thus, he coined the term 'governmentality' to articulate the art of government (or 'the conduct of conduct' [Gordon, 1991]), which not only aims 'to preserve the general order of the state', but also to sustain 'the state with political reason' (Foucault, 2007, p. 296). Governmentality has two dimensions: governmental rationality, which refers to the way to reason, or think about, particular problems and practices of government, and governmental technology, which refers to how government is 'done' and how rationalities are actualised. Foucault (2007) believes that the highest realm of governmentality occurs when the external imposition of the collective good is internalised and becomes the technology of self-governance for individuals' well-being.

Foucault (2008) disclosed a more specific understanding of governmentality by identifying neoliberalism as the core constituent of governmental rationality. Such neoliberal governmentality highlights the role of political economy as the operating mechanism, where an efficient economy is crucial for the population to thrive. Different from classical liberalism, of which the basis is 'natural, private-interest-motivated conduct of free, market exchanging individuals', neoliberalism refers to 'artificially arranged or contrived forms of free, entrepreneurial and competitive conduct of economic-rational individuals' (Burchell, 2013, pp. 23–24). Thus, the form of government Foucault (2008) identified in neoliberalism was turning subjects into self-contained enterprises. Individuals are located in a competitive arena where they can freely contribute their human capital to maximise profits and productivity through the development of techniques, such as auditing, accounting and management (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004).

Contemporary HE governance, which is characterised by marketisation and managerialisation, is considered a manifestation of neoliberal governmentality (Olssen, 2016), as the purpose of HE has been reimagined and repositioned as a governing technology that primarily aims to maximise productivity and economic growth (Baker & Brown, 2007). Such neoliberalisation of HE is coupled with globalisation, as international organisations (such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the World Bank) draw and promote an explicit link between the role of the modern university as a knowledge-producing institution and the imperatives of competitive global exchange (Peters, 2007; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Consequently, the intensification of international interconnection brought about by globalisation implies the imposition of the neoliberal discourse, which becomes a critical force shaping HE policies, institutional practices and individual behaviours (Deuel, 2022; Shahjahan, 2012), including those of Macao (Vong & Wong, 2014).

Literature further reveals the link between neoliberal governmentality and sovereign will in the Chinese national context by illustrating how the Chinese state adopts neoliberal techniques and standards to cultivate desirable subjects (e.g. Hoffman, 2006; Sigley, 2006). Specifically, this literature argues that, against the backdrop of globalisation, Chinese authorities successfully combine neoliberalism and authoritarianism by developing 'an enormous, vertically organised apparatus equipped with increasingly sophisticated instruments of social engineering and for shaping peoples' subjectivities and guiding their conduct from a distance' (Palmer & Winiger, 2019, p. 559). Following this argument, Han (2021) indicated that (transnational) HE policy in China can be understood as a disciplinary technology that produces nationalist subjects who would obey the whims and dictates of the sovereign. This finding is relevant here, as it illustrates an alignment between global and Chinese national policy agendas, which sheds light on the interplay between neoliberal globalisation and national integration in Macao's HE.

To investigate the effect of national integration, this paper also refers to the ideas of governmentality of spatial distribution, which illuminate how the process of bordering is constitutive of education sectors and subjectivities and is influential in formulating social orders, social relations and social identities (Robertson, 2006; 2011). Wu and Vong (2017) employed these ideas to illustrate how a re-territorialisation process in Macao has introduced new space, knowledge and power for the city, and thus reconstituted social relations in its HE development. In this study, this re-territorialisation process and the associated emergence of nationalist discourse intersected with the prevalence of neoliberal discourse and practices because of the Macao state's manipulation. The re-territorialisation process, which serves the dual goals of enhancing the SAR's competitiveness in the global context and cultivating patriotism and nationalist sentiments in the city, represents the re-configurations of knowledge/power and the production of particular subjectivities in the global and national/local settings.

On the basis of these conceptual articulations, this paper uses the notion of governmentality to denote the logic of legitimation in establishing the relationship between the state and the behaviours of HE institutions and individuals. It sees the university as a targeted site of governmental technologies and explores how governmentality in Macao's HE evolves with the dynamic global, national and local settings. Two research questions (RQs) are set to achieve this goal: (1) What is the governmental rationality that guides Macao's HE within the global, national (also known as 'regional' in the

context of Macao) and local contexts? (2) What are the governmental technologies adopted to accomplish the governmental rationality? Here, 'governmental rationality' refers to a political reason under a configuration of dynamic forces or a systematic way of thinking about governing Macao's HE, and 'governmental technology' means how the Macao state shapes individual behaviours, desires and aspirations by steering university governance.

Research design

Investigating a public university in Macao (MU), this study used a qualitative single case approach to reveal how neoliberal thoughts, as influential global discourses on education, were translated into local policies and practices and shaped individual perceptions and behaviours in Macao. First of all, a document analysis, which covered publicly accessible documents from the websites of MU and the MSAR government, was carried out. This documentary research focused on the evolution of HE and MU legislations within specific global, national and local contexts to address RQ1.

Six semi-structured interviews with university council members were conducted to examine how they perceived changes in university governance at MU for answering RQ2, meanwhile six senior administrators from four other HE institutions were interviewed to provide the researchers with a sense of conditions elsewhere in Macao's HE sector. The university council is 'the highest collegiate organ' of MU. It comprises 14 external members appointed by the Chief Executive (CE), three representatives from the MSAR government, nine internal members from the university, one from the alumni association, one from the university student union and one secretary-general (MSAR Government [Executive Order 14/2006], 2006, p. 537). A purposive sampling technique was employed to allow a comprehensive representation of the membership composition. The interviews were conducted from late 2018 to late 2019. Before each interview session, consent was obtained from the interviewee, and privacy and confidentiality were assured. The interviewees confirmed all interview contents before data analysis. All interview extracts presented in this paper are without attributions to preserve the interviewees' anonymity, except for the situation that anonymising the interviewees' membership category would undermine their description of the incidents, and thus risk not fully representing their experiences.

In light of Foucault's ideas, this study examines the coupling of political rationality with specific governance technologies, demonstrating the link between discursive contexts and social realities (i.e. HE policies and practices) (Olssen, 2003). Thus, its analysis covers the political rationality of the state and the construction of its subjects in Macao HE. Table 1 synthesises the focuses of the investigation and the research objectives and methods.

Table 1. Analytical framework.

	Governmentality	Focus of investigation	Intended objective	Research method
RQ1	Governmental rationalities	Political rationality of the state in Macao's HE	Disclose the evolving discursive contexts and governance objectives of Macao HE	Document analysis
RQ2	Governmental technologies	The construction of subjects in Macao's HE	Disclose the governance mechanisms and techniques adopted in Macao HE	Document analysis and semi-structured interviews

Rationalities of HE governance in post-colonial Macao

Neoliberal discourse: embracing global competition

Despite the rapid HE expansion and initiatives of strengthening the role of HE in providing talent during the twilight of the colonial regime, colonial Macao's HE developments were largely ad hoc and focused on the needs of political transitions (Bray, 2001). In this context, laissez-faire themed the governmental rationality in HE for the majority of the colonial period.

The extension of the economic rationale to HE occurred at the dawn of the post-colonial era and marked a paradigm shift in Macao's HE governance, as the CE, in the policy address, emphasised the economic role of HE in enhancing the city's international competitiveness by connecting education with the enterprising spirit of the population and the development of a market economy (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 16). Such an emphasis on global competition was further revealed in the policy address for the next year, in which the CE explicitly noted that 'we have no alternative but boost our own competitiveness, and the promotion of the development of science and education is an integral component of this strategy' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 17). Thereafter, the CEs consistently stressed the links between the competitive international environment and HE's economic roles (e.g. its function in training and attracting talent) (MSAR Government, 2000–2022). The mentioning of the enterprising spirit vividly demonstrates how Macao's application of neoliberalism corresponds to the political objectives of neoliberal rationality, which accentuates the production of enterprising, creative, responsible and self-regulated citizens (Hoffman, 2014).

Along with this discourse on the economic rationale for HE developments, a quest for improving educational quality emerged. As the CE stated, 'in tertiary education, the priority must be the improvement of educational quality' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 21). This quest for educational quality represents a neoliberal tactic, as its mechanism induces people (i.e. academics) to organise themselves on the basis of the pre-set targets, indicators and criteria (Ball, 2003). Later, the quest soared to a desire for elite making, which was illustrated by the government's intention of creating 'an academic and cultural atmosphere on the campuses of our tertiary institutions that is centred on elite academics and professors' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 16). The elite-making idea was also expressed by the government's elite cultivation initiative, which identified 'nurtur(ing) talented local people and facilitate(ing) their career growth, and … build(ing) a pool of high-calibre skilled people for the ongoing development of Macao' as a goal of its HE policy (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 8; see also 2015–2017). The elite-making idea is an incarnation of neoliberal thoughts, as it draws people to the norms of competition and self-maximisation (Ball, 2012).

In the contexts of international competition and the pursuit of quality, 'autonomy in education' was seen as a kind of 'new competitiveness' that enabled educational institutions to 'fully realise their potential' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 23). Thus, the government's respect for academic autonomy was considered a way to promote academic standards (MSAR Government, 2000–2022; 2008; 2010). Meanwhile, liberal education was identified as a means to 'boost university students' ability to learn', 'train their ability in abstract thinking' and facilitate them to 'integrate what they have

learned, as well as display critical thinking and produce original ideas' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 23). This emphasis on autonomy and its link with competitiveness is aligned with neoliberal governmentality, which instils individuals with desires for active self-regulation and self-development (Webb, 2011).

Under the theme of striving for human development, the MSAR government emphasised the importance of raising HE admission requirements to improve HE quality in the 2000s (MSAR Government, 2000–2022). However, later, the government began highlighting the connection between HE, students' competitiveness and their opportunities for upward mobility. Thus, it encouraged 'young students to enrol in higher education programmes' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 26; see also 2013) and committed itself to provide study subsidies during the 2010s. Nevertheless, such advocacy of HE enrolment was coupled with a wave of marketisation from 2020 onwards. As the CE noted, HE institutions would gradually move 'towards market-oriented development', with which public HE institutions should actively expand their student enrolment 'to gradually reduce the allocation of government funding' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, pp. 11–12; see also, 2020). Meanwhile, university-industry research collaboration and commercialisation of research are highlighted as ways for HE institutions to diversify their financial sources (MSAR Government, 2000–2022). The recent shift towards marketisation may be a response to the resource shortages caused by the economic downturn. The emerging market-oriented approach substantially corresponds to neoliberalism. However, although the distribution and governance of HE were not mainly based on market principles in the 2000s and 2010s, the imposed link between human development and economic growth demonstrated in the MSAR government's discourse on HE largely followed the doctrines of neoliberal rationality of transforming individuals into self-maximising units (Ball, 2012) and subjugating HE and citizens to economic desires (Webb, 2011).

Nationalist objective: thriving together with the motherland

Since the retrocession of Macao to Chinese sovereignty, 'heightening citizens' traditional sense of love for the Motherland' has been an objective of the MSAR government (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 4; see also 2005; 2009). Thus, despite the absence of a strong sense of local identity (Cai et al., 2022), the CEs reiterated the importance of cultivating patriotism in society and amongst young people and of strengthening patriotic education in the entire education system, including HE, in the policy addresses (MSAR Government, 2000–2022). Such an emphasis on patriotism can be considered a form of governmentality in post-colonial contexts, as it reveals a process of post-colonial construction/destruction that involves 'the re-formation of subjectivities and the re-organisation of social spaces in which subjects act and are acted upon' (Scott, 1995, p. 191).

More importantly, when promoting patriotism, the government pointed out that a stronger sense of national pride is a prerequisite for 'the sound development of the MSAR in a political sense' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 6). It further noted:

> 'One country, two systems' integrates the nation's objectives and the interests of the Macao SAR at the highest level. Without the protection and support of our Motherland, building a quality community in Macao would be an impossible dream. So, love for our country and love for Macao combines passion and practicality. (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 9)

This coupling of patriotism and development is aligned with China's national circumstances, where political loyalty is combined with the need for development of the country to create a distinct form of governmentality (Palmer & Winiger, 2019). Thus, emphasising the importance of patriotism to development becomes a means of connecting the sovereign will and individual behaviour in the context of China (Dean, 2010).

Within this discursive context, the MSAR government has consistently advocated co-operation and integration with Mainland China, especially the Pearl River Delta region, in the policy addresses since the handover (MSAR Government, 2000–2022). Thus, subnational regional co-operation has emerged as a policy discourse and text that essentially defined the relationship between Macao and its neighbouring provincial homeland, and 'integration was a distinctive feature of Macao's post-colonial reaction to the future' (Chun, 2019, p. 424). This orientation towards national integration justified the co-operation between Macao and Guangdong on Hengqin Island[2], which began in the 2000s and grew into an in-depth co-operation zone that promoted the integration of Macao and the mainland in various aspects in 2021 (MSAR Government, 2000–2022).

Furthermore, the steps towards national integration were intensified, as the Chinese government incorporated its two autonomous SARs (i.e. Macao and Hong Kong) in its 12th Five-Year Plan in 2011 and launched the GPA strategy in its 13th Five-Year Plan in 2016. Since then, integration into China's national development has become an important policy agenda for Macao and Hong Kong (Lo, Lee, & Abdrasheva, 2022). Thus, Macao actively participates in China's grand strategies (i.e. the GPA strategy and the Belt and Road Initiative[3]). For example, the MSAR government saw its projects on Hengqin Island as the 'starting point for (Macao's) participation in the development of the (GBA) and its integration into national development (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 29). Meanwhile, underlining its colonial legacy and role in the Belt and Road Initiative, Macao positioned itself as a platform for trade and economic co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries and a base for exchange and co-operation between Chinese and other cultures (MSAR Government, 2000–2022).

In sum, the theme of integration into national development essentially informs policy discourses, which shape how different objects, including HE, are considered and delineated in post-colonial Macao.

Governing technologies in post-colonial Macao's HE

Managerialising and internationalising HE

Since the MSAR government highlighted the role of HE in enhancing Macao's competitiveness in the early 2000s, it has encouraged HE institutions to 'strengthen their research and development functions' (2002, p. 12) and conduct scientific research that meets 'Macao's development needs' (2004, p. 8), thereby 'enhancing the provision of the kind of teaching and research that are required by (the) society' (p. 2004, p. 22; see also 2005–2006).

This quest for enhancing research quality and productivity was actualised by embedding university rankings as part of strategic plans and ambition in Macao (Vong & Yu, 2018) and at MU. As a MU council member noted:

> In the last two decades, MU transformed from an unknown local university to a comprehensive university with a regional reputation in Asia. I think rankings guide Macao to the regional arena and then to a broader platform.

This excerpt substantially relates to the idea about rankings as a powerful indicator of the geopolitical position of universities and nations (Hazelkorn, 2018). Thus, an external council member asserted that 'pursuing rankings and better reputation has been a view shared by most stakeholders' and a direction of MU. Consequently, as confirmed by a senior academic staff member, research productivity, which major ranking schemes emphasise, becomes an essential criterion in evaluating academic staff at MU.

This change in the performance evaluation system reveals the emergence of a managerial accountability agenda that 'employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change – based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic)' in the neoliberal context (Ball, 2003, p. 216). More importantly, it illustrates how institutional behaviours direct the preference of individuals, and thus articulates the idea of creating self-interested subjects in neoliberal governmentality (Olssen, 2003).

The pursuit of research excellence and productivity and the associated change in university management (i.e. staff performance evaluation) also relate to the government's call for promoting educational quality and nurturing elites. As mentioned, the MSAR Government, (2000–2022) hoped to achieve a concentration of elite academics in Macao's universities. Thus, it intended to 'invite internationally acclaimed scholars to take up positions in Macao' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 17). This policy agenda is implemented by the institutional practice of international recruitment at MU, where, as a senior administrator noted, most academic staff were internationally recruited. As a result, approximately 80 per cent of the faculty members at MU are from overseas.

However, given the government's quest for localisation of research and accelerating the alignment between local HE and international standards (MSAR Government, 2000–2022; 2008), the impact of the internationalisation practices on organisational and individual behaviours is disparate, and the local dimension remains important in some respects at MU. For example, an external council member underlined the importance of the knowledge of local issues in the university council's consideration of a senior appointment:

> The university management identified a candidate who has an international background. However, a few members opposed the appointment because they thought the appointee should have local knowledge.

This emphasis on local knowledge is echoed by two other interviewees who accepted the possibility of combining internationalisation and localisation in university development.

Meanwhile, the governance structure of MU has moved towards the American model since the launch of MU's charter in 2006. A senior administrator explained:

> The charter promulgated in 1991 was the adoption of Portuguese practices. However, the 2006 reform made a big change to the governance structure. The council became the most important governing body of the university. Since then, there has been widespread adoption of practices from the American system at MU.

On the one hand, the tendency towards the American model can be seen as a kind of internationalisation (Deem, Mok, & Lucas, 2008) that responds to the government's call

for adopting 'international standards in developed countries' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 25). On the other hand, it is aligned with the initiative of promoting 'academic autonomy' (MSAR Government, 2000–2022, p. 25), as the reform makes MU an autonomous institution and is featured by the formulation of a participatory governance model that involves different stakeholders of the university (i.e. staff, alumni, students, and external lay members) in the decision-making process. As a student council member described, he was fully involved in the process, though he felt he could exercise less power than other council members due to his limited knowledge of some issues. However, given the dominance of government-appointed external members and the application of managerialism, the reform represents an accountability technique that seeks to govern from a distance on the basis of 'principal-agent relations' rather than a move towards 'the more collegial, deliberative, models of democratic governance' (Olssen, 2016, p. 142; see also, Hao, 2016; Webb, 2011).

Although Macao's HE experienced a process of managerialisation that essentially conforms to neoliberalism, its application of market principles is implicit. Several interviewees noted that the public nature of MU provided the university with financial stability and discouraged it from generating extra income. A university administrator explained:

> MU is assigned to an annual budget. The total amount of its revenue and expenditure should not exceed the assigned budget, no matter where the money comes from. This arrangement means that the university cannot receive any extra money by running fundraising activities and self-financing programmes … Though MU encourages its staff to conduct knowledge transfer activities, it does not aim to make profits.

Two other council members further noted that this non-profit-making nature is also reflected by the affordable tuition fees in Macao, as HE is seen as a kind of social welfare by the public, and its fees should not be market driven. This neglect of marketisation can be explained by Macao's explosive growth of the casino economy and the resulting increase in government revenues between 1999 and the mid-2010s. Thus, the government focused on providing financial assistance to students in its HE policy during the period. However, given the economic recession over the last few years, the government clearly stated its new goals of adopting a market-oriented approach to HE development and promoting the commercialisation of research through university-industry collaboration (MSAR Government, 2000–2022). Thus, the progress of this marketisation initiative and its implication for Macao's HE governance is worthy of observation.

Re-bordering and re-ordering HE

Although Macao has advocated 'regional cooperation and integration' with its neighbouring province of Guangdong since the early post-colonial era, there were limited policy initiatives about cross-border collaboration in HE between the SAR and the province during the period. Instead, the MSAR Government (2000–2022) used the term 'regional cooperation' to describe and foster exchange and co-operation in HE with Taiwan in the early 2010s. This policy initiative reveals how HE was used to promote peaceful interactions between Mainland China and Taiwan during the 2010s (Lo & Chan, 2020). However, the initiative ceased after 2013.

In 2009, the MSAR government announced the construction of the new campus of MU on Hengqin Island, which marked a significant step towards cross-border co-operation

between Macao and Guangdong. In 2014, MU was relocated to the Hengqin campus, which was around 20 times larger than the old one. The construction of the Hengqin campus was a spatial creation technology that allowed Macao's HE to overcome the constraints imposed by its small size (Bray & Kwo, 2003). The government expected that this construction project would upgrade cross-border co-operation (MSAR Government, 2000–2022) and inject 'fresh impetus and momentum to the development of local tertiary education' (2014, p. 11). Thus, MU's 'physical relocation is synchronic with its strive for the status relocation from an off-the-map institution to a unique institution of regional/global recognition' (Wu & Vong, 2017, p. 944). Accompanied by other measures of global competition (e.g. the adoption of English as the medium of instruction, premium emphasis on research, global hire, academic exchanges and implementation of differential academic tracks), the state-of-the-art facility and campus environment rebranded the university in the HE market. The Hengqin campus 'promises a momentum of scaling up in the ranking league tables and echoes the university administration's ambition to transform from a provincial institute into a regional/global education hub' (Wu & Vong, 2017, pp. 944–945). This change is reflected by the growth of MU's non-local student enrolment; currently, over 45 per cent of its students are non-local. A council member also confirmed the change brought about by the relocation:

> (In the past), many good students in Macao did not study at MU. Moving to Hengqin makes things better. More students are willing to study there, as the campus environment is good, and the university is well ranked.

This observation is echoed by a university administrator, who also believed that 'moving to Hengqin is an important stage of development', as the larger campus allowed the university to accommodate more facilities and academic subjects and thus helped the university develop into a comprehensive university that was more competitive regionally and globally.

However, as Wu and Vong (2017) argued, the relocation of MU 'ruptures institutional history and memory, and dampens the academic traditions fostered over time' (p. 947). Therefore, they believe that the spatial integration indicates a transformation of MU's socio-political identity, which represents a process of assimilation and Sinification/mainlandisation of Macao's HE. This assimilation process is accelerated by the development of the GBA, which emphasises integration into national development. For example, the Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the GBA signed in 2017 sets the goal of deepening the academic exchanges and co-operation between the cities within the region. The Outline Development Plan for the GBA promulgated by the Chinese central government in 2019 encourages universities in the GBA to intensify their co-operation. Consequently, the MSAR government clearly states that 'Macao's HE institutions should actively participate in the development of the GBA and integrate into the education cooperation framework and overall development of the region, thereby enhancing the institutions' influence and competitiveness' (Higher Education Bureau, 2020, p. 30).

Thus, encouraging cross-border programme development and research collaboration, promoting inter-institutional personnel exchange within the region and recruiting more students from the GBA can effectively achieve the goal of 'taking advantage of opportunities for regional cooperation to expand the space for development' (Higher Education

Bureau, 2020, pp. 30–31). A university administrator disclosed the impact of this regionalisation process on university governance:

> The university council might view things from both Macao's and regional perspectives. From these different angles, the goals could be different. The university needed to adjust itself and find a balance between these goals.

He further explained:

> In my opinion, the region is a loosely defined concept. Its relevance to institutional development is determined by the capacity of the institution … Training talent for Macao is a basic requirement on MU. What role MU can play in the region is a real question.

The missions of serving and integrating with the GBA revealed in these excerpts and the policy documents illustrate how the emergence of the region as a territorial unit constitutes a new container in which MU's socio-political identity and its policies and practices are transforming (Robertson, 2006). The link between the goal of regional integration and that of enhancing HE institutions' competitiveness specified in the policy documents conforms to the idea about combining the discourse of global competition with the political objective of producing nationalist subjects in the context of China's HE (i.e. transforming Macao's local identity into Chinese national one in this case) (Han, 2021). Seen from the prism of Robertson's (2011) theorisation of re-bordering and re-ordering in education, the relationships between spatiality, territoriality and subjectivity in the case of MU demonstrate the reconfiguration of state–society–citizen relations within the varying economic and political contexts resulted from the change in territorial units. Specifically, whilst de-statisation, de-sectoralisation and de-politicisation (which are illustrated by the reforms themed by neoliberalism and managerialism) emerged to different extents in post-colonial Macao's HE within the discursive context of neoliberal globalisation, re-nationalisation (which is denoted by the national integration) occurred in the context of the retrocession of Macao to Chinese sovereignty and was accelerated by the development of the GBA as a political and economic framework.

On the move: towards a post-neoliberal governmentality

Post-colonial Macao's HE reveals a pragmatic, evolving form of governmentality, in which neoliberalism frames policies and practices whilst nationalist discourse raises and increasingly characterises the policy environment and policy initiatives.

As discussed, neoliberal reforms, which stressed competition and competitiveness in the global context and emerged in Macao's HE during the transitional period, became prevalent when a managerial form of governance was introduced after the handover. For example, the promulgation of MU's new charter in 2006 introduced a phase of reforms and de-/re-regulation to align MU's governance with the neoliberal (and international) standards that underlined performance monitoring and management by measuring and comparing productivity or outputs (Ball, 2003; Deuel, 2022). The High Education System Law enacted in 2017 further strengthened the managerial form of governance by highlighting the enforcement of regulatory procedures and quality assurance mechanisms. Further, the case of MU demonstrates the neoliberal rationality of a 'prestige-seeking' and 'striving' university (O' Meara, 2007, p. 123), which justifies the tendency to mobilise institutional resources and efforts to fulfil its aspirations of 'greater prestige

based on research university standards' (p. 133). To become globally competitive and recognised, MU adopted a monitoring system that comprises premium emphasis on research outputs, global recruitment and the implementation of differential academic tracks to maximise the productivity of its academic staff.

This monitoring system represents the construction of a neoliberal discursive environment in which academic staff become 'responsibilised self-managing subjects' eager to achieve the desired policy and institutional goals (Amsler & Shore, 2017; see also Peters, 2017). These policy discourses and governing techniques constitute a neoliberal form of governmentality, as their emphasis on the regulation of/for competition nurtures academics as the entrepreneurial selves or the responsibilised selves who use rational choice and cost–benefit calculation to define their self-interests (Jordana & Levi-Faur, 2005). MU's institutional actions and behaviours create a 'technology of the self' (Foucault, 1988) by which its academic staff are educated and trained according to neoliberalism.

However, the adoption of neoliberalism in Macao's HE is selective and pragmatic. Despite emphasising competition, the MSAR government did not introduce market principles and mechanisms into its HE system during the wave of reforms in the 2000s and 2010s, because the rapid growth of the casino industry supplied abundant tax revenues for the government in the two decades. This financial cushion suspended the government's action of privatising and individualising social provision with the use of market-like arrangements in HE. This inaction is a pragmatic adoption of rather than a resistance to neoliberal ideologies, as the government has announced its intentions of marketising the HE sector by strengthening the 'government-industry-university alliance' and 'industrialising education' since the economic recession and budget constraints brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic after 2019.

As the regulation of/for global competition illustrates the neoliberal form of governmentality in Macao's HE, this paper argues that the emergence of the nationalist discourse and policy initiatives represents a '*post-neoliberal*' stage of governmentality. A post-neoliberal stage generally describes revisions of the neoliberalisation process. Amsler and Shore (2017), for example, used the term to depict 'further entrenchment and institutional centralisation of (neoliberal) logic, with the addition of more authoritarian modes of governing to reshape academic behaviours' (p. 132). However, this paper regards the post-neoliberal mode as a means to delineate how neoliberal logic is integrated with Chinese nationalist discourse to form the governmental rationalities in Macao's 'one country, two systems' context.[4]

As examined earlier, the relocation of MU to the Guangdong Province is aligned with neoliberalism, as neoliberal logic (e.g. enhancing Macao's economic competitiveness) is underlined throughout the relocation project. However, the project also promoted the integration of Macao's HE with Chinese national development, as thriving with and serving the motherland constituted the discursive environment where the relocation (and integration with Mainland China more generally) occurred. The spatial politics of the relocation substantially discloses the governmental rationality that involves the transformation of MU's socio-political identity and the Sinification of Macao's HE (see Wu & Vong, 2017 for details).

Such a combination of neoliberal and nationalist rationalities also frames the participation of Macao's HE in the GBA plan. As explicitly noted in the policy documents, HE reforms, such as the promotion of market-oriented development and industry-academia

research collaboration, would take place within the framework of the GBA, where Macao's HE institutions are encouraged to co-operate with the academic, government and corporate sectors in the region. Meanwhile, nationalist discourses, such as reinforcing patriotic education and strengthening young people and students' national awareness and patriotism, are emphasised during Macao's implementation of the GBA plan (Higher Education Bureau, 2020; MSAR Government, 2000–2022).

Though these governmental rationalities and technologies feature patriotism, they align with neoliberalism. Thus, the developments in post-colonial Macao's HE resonate with the governmentality in contemporary China, by which individuals are infused with neoliberal values of economic development, self-enterprise, material gains, potential social mobility, and nationalist values of loving the nation. Consequently, 'a self-enterprising subject that is at once autonomous from state planning agencies and still tied to the nation through strategic expressions of patriotism' is produced (Hoffman, 2006, pp. 565–566), and professionalism in academia is presented as a discursive-shaping loyalty to the nation (Han, 2021, pp. 9–10; see also Sigley, 2006). In this sense, the HE developments reported in this paper illustrate how China's rise and the meaning of being Chinese matter in the context of post-colonial Macao. On the one hand, Macao universities (e.g. MU) continue to pursue global academic excellence under the framework themed on neoliberal globalisation and Western supremacy. On the other hand, Macao's return to Chinese sovereignty legitimises an expanding Chinese cultural and political core that repositions and even marginalises the cultural and political characteristics and identities of Macao, a post-colonial and peripheral part of China (Lo, 2023), despite the state's pragmatic use of colonial legacy and cultural hybridity in developing and positioning the SAR and its HE (e.g. the strategic role of Macao in connecting China with Portuguese-speaking countries). Theoretically, this finding significantly undermines the validity of the Greater China framework, which identifies peripheral Chinese societies (including Macao, Hong Kong, Taiwan and even overseas Chinese communities) as variants of Chineseness and unbounded Chinese cultural carriers and makers that serve as reference points in building the subjectivity and worldview of the Chinese cultural core (Lo, 2016; Tu, 1991; Wang, 1993).

Conclusion

This paper uses the case of MU to exemplify how Macao's HE has transformed by following the two parallel tendencies of governmental rationalities (i.e. neoliberalism and Chinese nationalism). Whilst neoliberal globalisation has impacted HE developments in the city through adopting the managerial form of governance since the early 2000s (Lau & Yuen, 2015; Vong & Wong, 2014; Vong & Yu, 2018), a wave of marketisation has emerged since the 2020s. Meanwhile, Macao's return to Chinese sovereignty introduced nationalism as a political rationality of the state, which formed a set of policy discourses (e.g. promoting patriotism) that shaped organisational and individuals' behaviours, desires and aspirations. Such nationalist discourses were accelerated by the recent intensification of national integration (i.e. the GBA strategy).

The title of the paper 'On the (Re)move' aims to reveal how the reaffirmation of neoliberal reforms (i.e. the government's call for market-oriented development) emerged with a recent upsurge of national integration and to interrogate the intertwining and

evolution of these neoliberal and nationalist narratives in post-colonial Macao's HE. This interrogation contributes to a broader understanding of the centre-periphery relations between the Chinese central state and local institutions (Tu, 1991).

From a governmentality perspective, the combination of neoliberalism and Chinese nationalism in post-colonial Macao's HE is not merely an illustration of the interplay between globalisation processes and the changing national/local political and economic settings. Instead, it is a clarification of neoliberal governmentality in the context of a post-colonial and peripheral Chinese society, where the pragmatic use of neoliberal logic and colonial heritage stems from the sovereign will and is aligned with the nationalist objective.

Notes

1. The GBA comprises Macao, Hong Kong and nine cities in the Guangdong Province of Southern China. The strategic plan aims to promote the integration of industries, academia and research and encourage cross-border HE and research collaboration in the area.
2. Hengqin Island is a special economic district in Guangdong adjacent to Macao. Macao has been participating in the development of the island since 2009. An in-depth co-operation zone, jointly managed by the Guangdong and MSAR governments, was established on the island in 2021.
3. The Belt and Road Initiative is a global strategy adopted by China to strengthen global connectivity by building infrastructure, promoting policy exchange, financial integration, free trade and people-to-people bonds, and establishing a network of key cities along the historical Silk Road.
4. Some authors described the Chinese form of governmentality as 'socialist-neoliberal' (Sigley, 2006), 'late-socialist' (Hoffman, 2006) and 'neo-socialist' (Palmer & Winiger, 2019), suggesting the combination of neoliberalism, socialism and authoritarianism. This paper uses 'post-neoliberal' to highlight the evolving feature of governance in Macao's HE, instead of focusing on socialism and authoritarianism in China.

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