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*Star Ferry, Queen's Pier on the agenda*

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*Disputes about the Star Ferry, the Queen's Pier and national identity have put cultural studies back on the agenda, a Lingnan University professor says.*

*Stephen Chan Ching-kiu, professor of cultural studies, said there had been a lack of discussion about cultural issues until recently.*

*The sagas over cultures and identity, especially after the protests over the demolition of the Star Ferry and Queen's piers had made it easier for students to contemplate issues such as whether or not a pier or a building was a part of culture, Professor Chan said.*

*"There is interest now in what should be preserved and what not, the meaning of public space and cultural policies, as well as the role of the government, legislators and citizens in preserving heritage," he said.*

*Li Siu-leung, head of cultural studies at Lingnan, said the study of cultures was gaining ground in Hong Kong as a result of public discussion and the media and was a valuable source of study. "Cultural studies offers students an intellectual training that sows the seeds for changes in social and cultural practices", he said.*

*Secondary teacher Lau Wai-sze, who completed a postgraduate diploma in cultural studies at Lingnan last year, said she had developed a new perspective about her relationship with others and society, which affected the way she taught.*

*"I hope to invite students to approach what I say critically, and I've become more alert to my attitude towards teaching and the need for a less hierarchical relationship between teachers and students," Ms Lau said.*

*However, despite an increasing interest in cultural issues, there were problems with the promotion of cultural studies.*

*"We don't have enough resources," Professor Chan said.*

*Oscar Ho Hung-kay, a professional consultant with the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies at Chinese University of Hong Kong, said apathy towards cultural and creative studies was taking its toll on the development of the discipline.*

*"We don't have enough curators and teachers in arts education," said Mr Ho, a former exhibition director of the Hong Kong Arts Centre and a founding member of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council. He said those who taught here faced challenges, including the need to liberate students from an exam-oriented culture.*

*"I want students to know the importance of being critical and creative. Rote learning is a dead end."*

*Nora Tong*