

# China's Viral War of Words With Hong Kong (guest blog)

 [blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2012/01/29/chinas-viral-war-of-words-with-hong-kong-guest-blog/](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2012/01/29/chinas-viral-war-of-words-with-hong-kong-guest-blog/)

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***The Internet in China is opening up debate in some unexpected ways. This report by LSE media student Celine Lau looks at how networked media can open up discussion around an issue – but does it make the argument more or less civilised?***

Recent tension between Hong Kong and China has elevated to a war of words sparked by a Chinese professor, Kong Qingdong, who calls Hong Kongers 'bastards', 'thieves' and 'dogs of British imperialist' on [a live webcast interview](#) [with subtitles] broadcast by mainland China news website V1.cn. Kong also insists that Hong Kong people should speak mandarin rather than Cantonese, and that it is shameful that Hong Kongers need to rely on the rule of law to be disciplined.

The interview was in response to a [widely circulated video](#) that shows a group of Hong Kongers arguing with some Chinese tourists who were eating on the subway (it is not allowed to consume food or drink on HK's subway) ([This version of the video](#) contains excerpts of the original argument plus some commentaries). Recent tension between Hong Kong and China has escalated into a war of words sparked by a Chinese professor, Kong Qingdong. He called Hong Kongers 'bastards', 'thieves' and 'dogs of British imperialist' on a [live webcast interview](#) broadcast by mainland China news website V1.cn. Professor Kong also insists that Hong Kong people should speak mandarin rather than Cantonese, and that it is shameful that Hong Kongers need to rely on the rule of law to be disciplined.

In no time, the interview went viral online. Loads of information regarding Kong, his background and his political views are published. Bloggers responded enthusiastically to the abuse through blog posts and Facebook notes. Youtube is flooded with reactions – [one using Talking Tom and Ben to mimic the interview](#) (without subtitles), rap songs, and simply videos of people talking back. A [Facebook page was created](#) to organise the protest outside the Chinese Liaison office (without subtitles) while the popular local forum, Golden, is asking for donation to raise money

for a newspaper advertisement to portray mainlanders as locusts.

The anger and discontent on the Internet is prolonging the issue, which has been played down by the HK government. Their numerous responses have also been making the headlines of mainstream news organisations', especially the more tabloid-like papers. It is likely that the incident is just the start to a long suppressed disgruntlement against pressure from China.

Kong has since denied insulting all Hong Kongers via a blog post of more than 4,000 words and another phone interview with V1.cn. He insists that his comments have been taken out of context by newspaper in the Southern region and demands an apology.

This report by LSE Media student Celine Lau

For more on the story: [The Guardian](#) and the [Washington Post](#)

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