

Book review: Global Hong Kong: Post-2019 Migration and the New Hong Kong Diaspora

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### **Main Arguments and Evaluation**

The book is structured into three parts and comprises ten empirical chapters, collectively arguing that a global Hong Kong diaspora is emerging. It outlines the early settlement experiences of new Hong Kong migrants post-2019 in the UK, Taiwan, Canada, and Australia. These migration waves followed the 2019 protests, the COVID-19 pandemic and its stringent quarantine measures, and the enactment of the National Security Law in Hong Kong.

The authors convincingly demonstrate how these political and social developments—combined with Hong Kong’s colonial history and its identity as a Chinese-majority migrant society—intersect with the political contexts of the receiving countries, such as post-Brexit Britain, local politics in Taiwan, and earlier migration waves to Canada and Australia. The chapters offer valuable insights into how these migrants navigate settlement and identity formation, often falling between the categories of “forced” and “voluntary” migration—emerging instead as “reluctant migrants” who seek to establish new lives while preserving their sense of identity.

While the findings are interesting and of reference value, the topics are somewhat scattered. The background information is drawn from a range of sources, including official statistics and less rigorous, internet-based, non-random surveys conducted by community groups. Most empirical chapters rely on qualitative interviews, which provide rich detail on the lived experiences of these migrants. Some chapters also incorporate quantitative survey data, offering further insights. However, caution is warranted regarding the representativeness of these findings, as the sampling methods are not always clearly explained and rely heavily on online data collection.

## **Structure and Content**

The first part contains four chapters focusing on Hong Kong migrants in the UK. These explore identity formation (as both Hongkongers and British), religious affiliations (including the establishment of new Hong Kong church fellowships and participation in Chinese or local British churches), and cultural practices such as food consumption and the promotion of Hong Kong cuisine.

The second part includes three chapters on migrants in Canada, Taiwan, and Australia. The chapter on Canada compares four waves of Hong Kong migration since the 1990s, with a particular focus on identity among recent arrivals. The Taiwan chapter examines migrants' responses to changes in settlement schemes, while the Australian chapter discusses how professional migrants adapt to new work cultures and environments.

The final part shifts focus back to Hong Kong, addressing demographic changes, the care needs of elderly parents who stay behind, and shifts in the French expatriate community. These chapters offer useful starting points for further research into how this migration wave is reshaping identities and social compositions in Hong Kong.

## **Quality and Coherence of Analysis**

While each chapter provides useful reference material on identity formation and settlement, the book lacks a cohesive analytical framework. A comparative overview of visa schemes and migration histories across the receiving countries would have strengthened the analysis and clarified the dynamics of diaspora formation.

The targeted respondents skewed towards middle-aged, middle-class professionals and married individuals. The quantitative chapters rely on online surveys, which are likely biased towards more educated respondents. Despite this, the book covers a wide range of migration-related themes—from institutional integration (e.g., religious affiliations) to cultural practices (e.g., food festivals) and work experiences.

## **Sources, Methodology, and Audience**

The book draws on a mix of qualitative interviews and quantitative survey data. However, the methodology—particularly the sampling strategies for the surveys—is not always clearly explained, which limits the generalisability of some findings.

This work is well-suited for researchers and students in Asian studies, Chinese studies, migration studies, and the sociology of culture. It would also be a valuable resource for courses on diaspora and identity formation.

## **Contribution to the Field**

The book makes a timely and important contribution to Chinese and Hong Kong studies, as well as to the broader field of migration and diaspora studies. It sheds light on how ethnic and cultural identities are formed and transformed through migration, particularly in the context of postcolonial Hong Kong and shifting global immigration politics.

It also highlights how Hong Kong's identity as a migrant city is being reconfigured through economic and political pressures, contributing to the formation of a global diaspora.

## **Limitations and Suggestions**

Given the page constraints, it is understandable that the scope of analysis is limited. However, the book would benefit from a stronger gender and generational lens. Migration often entails shifts in gender roles, and the recent wave from Hong Kong—driven by political motivations—has seen particularly strong engagement from younger people (Kan, Loa, and Richards, 2025). Their political sentiments and sense of Hong Kong identity are often more pronounced.

These aspects are crucial for understanding how identity serves as both a push factor and a framework through which migrants experience and reinterpret their new lives.

## **References**

Kan, M.-Y., Loa, S. P., & Richards, L. (2025). Generational Differences in Local Identities, Participation in Social Movements, and Migration Intention Among Hong Kong People. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 69(3), 277–298. doi:10.1177/00027642231192023