



City Between Worlds: My Hong Kong

Leo Ou-fan Lee

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Hong Kong is perched on the fault line between China and the West, a Special Administrative Region of the PRC. Leo Ou-fan Lee offers an insider's view of Hong Kong, capturing the history and culture that make his densely packed home city so different from its generic neighbors.

The search for an indigenous Hong Kong takes Lee to the wet markets and corner bookshops of congested Mong Kok, remote fishing villages and mountainside temples, teahouses and noodle stalls, Cantonese opera and Cantopop. But he also finds the "real" Hong Kong in a maze of interconnected shopping malls, a jungle of high-rise residential towers, and the neon glow of Chinese-owned skyscrapers in the Central Business District, where land development, global trade, capital accumulation, consumerism, and free-market competition trump every value except family.

Lee illuminates the relationship between Hong Kong's geography and its colonial experience, revisiting colonial life on the secluded Peak, in the opium-filled godowns along the harborfront, and in crowded, plague-infested tenements. He examines, with a critic's eye, the "Hong Kong story" in film and fiction: romance in the bars and brothels of Wan Chai, crime in the walled city of Kowloon, ennui on the eve of the 1997 handover.

Whether viewed from Tsing Yi Bridge or the deck of the Star Ferry, from Victoria Peak or Lion Rock, Hong Kong sparkles here in all its multifaceted complexity, a city forever between worlds.

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