

Preface

This book grew out of “Hong Kong as Method,” an international conference co-hosted by the Hong Kong Studies Programme, Department of Comparative Literature, and the Center for the Study of Globalization and Cultures at The University of Hong Kong in December 2014. The organizing committee called for papers under the themes of, among others, Chineseness, cultural translations, ethnic minorities, global/local/national, identity formation/politics, migration, urban space, and (post)coloniality. There have been heated discussions on the notion of “Hong Kong as Method” and its relation to the rise of China in the context of Asianization. The purpose of the conference was to provide an arena for scholars from different disciplines to address the reconfiguration of Hong Kong culture and society. While Hong Kong was not privileged for the explanations of global and inter-Asia cultural dynamics, what provoked participants’ concerns with the idea of “Hong Kong as Method” would shed light on a new paradigm for understanding the reconfiguration of culture and society not only in Asia but also in the world. As the conference successfully achieved its intended objective to provide a platform for scholars from different disciplines to engage in meaningful discussions of the notion of “Hong Kong as Method” as it relates to the rise of China in the context of Asianization, we also organized post-conference seminars in 2015 to further explore new Hong Kong imaginaries responsive to global, local, and national needs. Discussions about some important issues raised at the conference could be continued in these seminars. After the completion of the conference and seminars, we started planning to publish selected papers in a book manuscript.

Without the continued support of many people neither the conference nor the book would have been possible. To Esther M.K. Cheung, my late collaborator and friend, I owe a special debt. She was actively involved in the organization of the conference despite her health condition, and, more importantly, she was a self-effacing colleague who wanted everyone to succeed. As a personal friend, she was always more than willing to share her experience and wisdom with me. A serious voice of international recognition, she has an almost encyclopedic grasp of various forms of literature and film. Her publications, astutely cosmopolitan and interdisciplinary in perspective, were and will continue to be widely used

and indispensable for comparative literature and Hong Kong cultural studies. In addition, I have always admired her ability to engage and inspire students through her teaching and mentoring. Her dedication and energy are simply infectious, and they are undoubtedly among the factors that have made her such a successful teacher. It was an unexpected and huge loss.

Furthermore, I am grateful to Mirana Szeto, John Wong, and Winnie Yee for organizing the conference. Thanks also go to Louis Cha Fund and the Strategic Research Theme of China-West Studies of The University of Hong Kong for their generous funding of the conference. Last but not least, this book would not have been published without the support of Chu-Ren Huang. Of course, any errors and deficiencies in the book are mine alone.

Hong Kong

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