



ONE LIBRARY  
TWO ANNIVERSARIES

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# An Overview of Book Publishing in Hong Kong

Angela Ko  
Fung Ping Shan Library  
March 2022

# Hong Kong Book Publications

Number of books published & registered in HK in the past 10 years

- 2010-11 14,428
- 2011-12 15,475
- 2012-13 14,564
- 2013-14 14,229
- 2014-15 14,785
- 2015-16 15,285
- 2016-17 13,994
- 2017-18 13,960
- 2018-19 13,128
- 2019-20 13,788

# Books Registration Ordinance (HK) [26 September 1976] L.N. 246 of 1976 (Format changes—E.R. 1 of 2021)

《書刊註冊條例》		Books Registration Ordinance	
1 第 142 章	第 1 條	Section 1	2 Cap. 142
本條例旨在就首次在香港印刷、製成或出版的書刊的註冊及保存訂定條文。		To provide for the registration and preservation of copies of books first printed, produced or published in Hong Kong.	
[1976 年 9 月 26 日] 1976 年第 246 號法律公告 (格式變更—2021 年第 1 號編輯修訂紀錄)		[26 September 1976] L.N. 246 of 1976 (Format changes—E.R. 1 of 2021)	
<b>1. 簡稱</b> 本條例可引稱為《書刊註冊條例》。		<b>1. Short title</b> This Ordinance may be cited as the Books Registration Ordinance.	
<b>2. 釋義</b> 在本條例中，除文意另有所指外—— <b>出版人 (publisher)</b> ——		<b>2. Interpretation</b> In this Ordinance, unless the context otherwise requires— <b>book (書刊)</b> includes—	
(a) 就在香港出版的書刊而言，指其出版人或該出版人在香港的代理人；		(a) every volume, part or division of a volume;	
(b) 就在香港印刷或製成但並非在香港出版的書刊而言，指其出版人在香港的代理人，或在無代理人的情況下，則指主要負責印刷或製成該書刊的人；		(b) every magazine, journal, annual report, or other similar kind of periodical publication; and	
(c) 就書刊的影印本而言，指其出版人在香港的代理人，或在無代理人的情況下，則指在香港主要負責影印該書刊的人；		(c) every pamphlet, sheet of music, map, chart, table or plan which is separately printed or produced, but does not include any book specified in the Schedule;	
<b>書刊 (book)</b> 包括——		<b>new book (新書刊)</b> means a book which—	
(a) 每一冊書、一冊書的部分或分冊；		(a) after the commencement* of this Ordinance is either—	
(b) 所有雜誌、期刊、年報，或其他同類的定期刊物；及		(i) printed or produced for the first time in Hong Kong; or	
(c) 各別印刷或製成的所有小冊子、樂譜、地圖、圖表、列表或圖則，		(ii) published for the first time in Hong Kong, regardless of where it was originally printed or produced; or	
但不包括附表所指明的任何書刊；		(b) is a photographic copy photographically copied in Hong Kong for the first time after the commencement of this	
<b>新書刊 (new book)</b> 指以下書刊——			
最後更新日期 11.3.2021	經核證文本	Verified Copy	Last updated date 11.3.2021

《書刊註冊條例》		Books Registration Ordinance	
3 第 142 章	第 3 條	Section 3	4 Cap. 142
(a) 在本條例生效*後——		Ordinance from a book printed, produced or published outside Hong Kong;	
(i) 首次在香港印刷或製成的書刊；或		<b>publisher (出版人)</b> means—	
(ii) 首次在香港出版的書刊，不論其最初在何處印刷或製成；或		(a) in the case of a book published in Hong Kong, the publisher thereof or his agent in Hong Kong;	
(b) 在香港以外地方印刷、製成或出版的書刊在本條例生效後首次在香港影印成為影印本的書刊。		(b) in the case of a book printed or produced in, but not published in, Hong Kong, the agent in Hong Kong of the publisher or, in the absence of an agent, the person primarily responsible for the printing or production of the book;	
(由 1985 年第 67 號法律公告修訂)		(c) in the case of a photographic copy of a book, the agent in Hong Kong of the publisher or, in the absence of an agent, the person in Hong Kong primarily responsible for the photographic copying of the book;	
<b>編輯附註：</b> * 生效日期：1976 年 9 月 26 日。		<b>Secretary</b> means the Secretary for Home Affairs. (Added L.N. 67 of 1985. Amended L.N. 242 of 1989; L.N. 372 of 1996; L.N. 362 of 1997; L.N. 192 of 1998; L.N. 206 of 1998)	
		(Amended L.N. 67 of 1985)	
		<b>Editorial Note:</b> * Commencement date: 26 September 1976.	
<b>3. 每本新書刊送交民政事務處處長的事宜</b>		<b>3. Delivery to Secretary of copies of every new book</b>	
(1) 任何新書刊的出版人，須於該書刊在香港出版、印刷、製成或以其他方式製成後 1 個月內，將該書刊 5 本連同附屬該書刊的所有地圖、圖片或其他刻印，免費送交民政事務處處長；該等書刊須予妥當釘裝、縫線或縫製，並須以印刷或製成該書刊及其任何地圖、圖片或其他刻印所用的最佳紙張製作而成。		(1) The publisher of a new book shall, within 1 month after the book is published, printed, produced or otherwise made in Hong Kong, deliver to the Secretary free of charge 5 copies of the book, together with all maps, prints or other engravings belonging thereto, properly bound, sewed or stitched and produced on the best paper on which the book and any map, print or other engraving thereto is printed or produced. (Amended L.N. 184 of 1992)	
(2) 上述書刊的出版人須於民政事務處處長所指明由送交該書刊後起計的某期限內，將民政事務處處長所規定有關			
最後更新日期 11.3.2021	經核證文本	Verified Copy	Last updated date 11.3.2021

# HK Books Registration Office (BRO)

## Duties

- Helps preserve Hong Kong's literary heritage by registering local publications and monitoring the effective use of the **International Standard Book Number system**.
- Publishes a Catalogue of Books Printed in Hong Kong in the Government Gazette at quarterly intervals.

<https://www.lcsd.gov.hk/dept/annualrpt/2014-15/en/cultural/libraries.html>

# Criteria for book has to be registered or not in HK

## New Books Published in HK

- Has to be registered within a month after published
- Deliver 5 copies to the Books Registration Office (BRO)
- All books and accompanying materials submitted are not returnable
- 5 copies:  
1 to HKU, 1 to CUHK, 3 to public libraries
- Penalty: may be liable to a fine of HK\$2,000 (US\$260)
- Over 60 % books published and registered are in Chinese

## Books Not Required for Registration:

- Any book which will not be made available to the public at large.
- A publication which consists solely of a price list, sale catalogue, trade circular or trade advertisement.

# Applying HK ISBN: Free Requirements:

## HK Address + HK Business Registration Certificate/HK ID Card

### Notes on Application for ISBN

1. The assignment of ISBNs to published books is not a statutory requirement in Hong Kong, nor is it related to or associated with copyright ownership.
2. No application fee is required. ISBNs have no expiry dates, but they cannot be reused.
3. According to the guidelines of the International ISBN Agency, ISBNs are assigned based on where the publisher operates its business. The ISBNs issued by the BRO are for use by publishers operating in Hong Kong only and should not be assigned to books published outside Hong Kong, including the Mainland and overseas.
4. The company/organisation applying for ISBNs should provide the Hong Kong address as shown on the Business Registration Certificate (issued by the Inland Revenue Department) or Certificate of Registration of a Society (issued by the Police Licensing Office of the Hong Kong Police Force) and furnish a copy of the certificate as proof. The applicant may also be required to provide supplementary proof of its operation address.
5. In general, the ISBNs will be sent by post within three to four working days to the Hong Kong address specified in the application form, provided that the documents and information submitted by the applicant are in order and complete.
6. The quantity of ISBNs to be issued by the BRO depends on the actual needs of the applicant (e.g. publishing progress) and track records of book registration. Generally speaking, at least 10 ISBNs will be issued for each application. A publisher may follow the above procedures to apply for another batch of ISBNs when about 70% of the ISBNs in the previous allocation have been used and the books have been duly delivered to the BRO for registration in accordance with the Books Registration Ordinance (Cap. 142).
7. If ISBNs are assigned to non-print publications (e.g. e-books and audio books), the publisher should notify the BRO in writing. Please contact the BRO for more details.
8. ISBNs are not applicable to newspapers, magazines and periodicals, which fall under the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) system. For details, please visit the ISSN website ( <http://www.issn.org> ).
9. ISBNs are non-transferable. The ISBNs issued by the BRO are for applicant's use only. The ISBN and the corresponding publisher printed on a book should match with records of the BRO.
10. Any change of particulars should be notified to the BRO in writing. If a company/organisation changes its business name or address, a copy of the updated Business Registration Certificate/Certificate of Registration of a Society should be sent to the BRO.

### Company/Organization

- original of a completed International Standard Book Number (ISBN) Application Form
- a copy of Business Registration Certificate or Certificate of Registration of a Society

### Individual

- The applicant should bring along his/her original Hong Kong Identity Card and submit the application in person

### Publishers

- holding an e-Cert may submit electronic applications

# Free to Publish

- No need to seek any approval for publishing a book/journal/newspaper in HK:

在香港創辦報紙、雜誌幾乎無限制，書號免費。……申請刊號和書號沒有批准不批准的概念……。不考慮成本的話，任何一個人都可以辦一份屬於自己的報刊，當然是否能運營下去又是另外一個問題。這種開放的紙媒環境，讓人們擁有了多元的發聲平台、豐富的媒體環境，無論是文化娛樂，還是政治經濟層面，都提供了更多種類的觀點，給香港人構建了一個開放的公共空間。

田恬、謝宇野、吳麗婷、關曉愉〈人文香港：香港小眾雜誌靠創意視角、跨媒體實驗生存〉《南方都市報(深圳版)》，29 Aug 2013, p. A04。

- No book is banned in HK

Kenneth Hsien-yung Pai 白先勇 remarked HK had never banned a single book. *Pai's Honors Literature PhD Conferred speech, HK Polytechnic University, 5 Dec 2013*

# Banned Book?

Definition of “Banned” 禁書 books in HK  
Rumor? Gossips? Sensitive works?

- “「禁書」是個範圍很含糊的書種，它可以是純屬謠傳式的八卦秘聞，也可以是認真嚴肅的傳記研究。又有些時候，它根本就是大陸作者在大陸出過的書，但是到了香港才換了更全面更徹底的真面目。唯一可以界定「禁書」的，是由邊境的海關；凡是被他們發現之後要沒收的，就是我們所說的禁書了。”

梁文道〈牛棚讀書記〉《蘋果日報》 3 Aug 2008, p.E06



# Hub of “special” publications

## Oasis of some scholarly works

### Some Taiwan Authors had their works published in HK in the 70’s

- “這個香港也曾是七十年代台灣文化人心目中的香港。彼時台灣正在兩蔣威權治下，馬列恩毛、魯巴郭曹，俱為禁書..... 不得入境。於是**要更全面地認識中國，必得經過香港中轉。更誇張的，是一些台灣作家也要在香港出版關於台灣的書。**難怪詹宏志等台灣文化界大老回憶起來，也要感激昔年香港的啓蒙之功。

### Some scholars in Mainland publish their books in HK

- 香港，一向是**現代中國思想界文化界的後花園**。內戰以後左右不吃香的文人要是不去海外，就只能來香港獨立綻放。或者人來不了，書過來，例如**陳寅恪先生晚年著作，首發之地便在此城**。大家都說這裏是文化沙漠，偏偏在這過去的幾十年裏，它是兩岸間的唯一綠洲。

梁文道 〈牛棚讀書記〉 《蘋果日報》 3 Aug 2008, p.E06

# Publications:

## In-depth Research in Modern Chinese History

- “香港很多年裏對歷史文化最大的貢獻，就是出版發行了大批根據調研和考證撰寫的中國現代史著作……。”
- 這些實事求是的出版物不僅在全球華人包括內地的學界備受重視，而且成為世界名校圖書館的必備研究資料，有些還譯成外文。

丁學良 〈中國評論：「歷史虛無主義」的辯證法〉

《信報財經新聞 Hong Kong Economic Journal》 1 July 2017, p. 82-84.

Example:

張發奎將軍抗日戰爭回憶記，香港：蔡國楨, 1981

*Zhang Fa kui (1896-1980) Memoir* was first published in HK in 1981

# Some books are published in HK but are not printed in HK

## Many non-HK citizens apply HK ISBN for their books

### Literary Works

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作者 杨文先

### Biography etc.

BOOKS REGISTRATION ORDINANCE  
(Books)

-- NOV 2021

Chapter 142

海得嘞“我要读书”

著 者: 曹 礼

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SOUTHERN CULTURE PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED

地 址: 新界火炭禾盛街 10-16 号海辉工业中心 5 楼 5N 室  
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# The National Security Law of HK 《香港國家安全法》 was gazetted for promulgation on 30 June 2020

<https://www.isd.gov.hk/nationalsecurity/eng/law.html>



## The National Security Law

- The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
- Implementation Rules for Article 43 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
- Operating Principles and Guidelines for Application for Authorization to Conduct Interception and Covert Surveillance--Issued Pursuant to Section 20 of Schedule 6 of the Implementation Rules for Article 43 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

It is criminal:

- secession - breaking away from the country
- subversion - undermining the power or authority of the central government
- terrorism - using violence or intimidation against people
- collusion with foreign or external forces

No content is directly related to publishing, but some people do worry...

# “Banned” Book list?



<https://hd.stheadline.com/news/realtime/hk/2152398/>

- Education officials asked primary and secondary schools to get rid of reading materials that may violate the law
- No clear guidelines nor banned books list are provided

- 教育局提醒學校不應有危害國家安全的藏書，但教育界坦言違法界綫不清，難以執行。連月來，不論是公共圖書館的館藏，還是坊間的繪本，都有書籍疑觸犯《香港國安法》被列入「禁書」，不過國安法實施逾一年，當局至今未提供禁書清單作參考。

記者 陳倩婷 郭增龍 (7 Jan 2022)

# The Biggest Publishing Network in HK

## Sino United Publishing (Holdings) Ltd

- was formed in 1988
- originates from several publishing houses: Joint Publishing 三聯 (HK, 1980), Chung Hwa Book Company 中華 (HK, 1933) Limited & The Commercial Press 商務 (HK, 1924)
- Share more than **80%** of HK publishing & book market

### Five Core Businesses

Publishing

Modern Printing

Retailing and Logistics

New Media, New Platforms and New Businesses

Asset Management and Capital Management

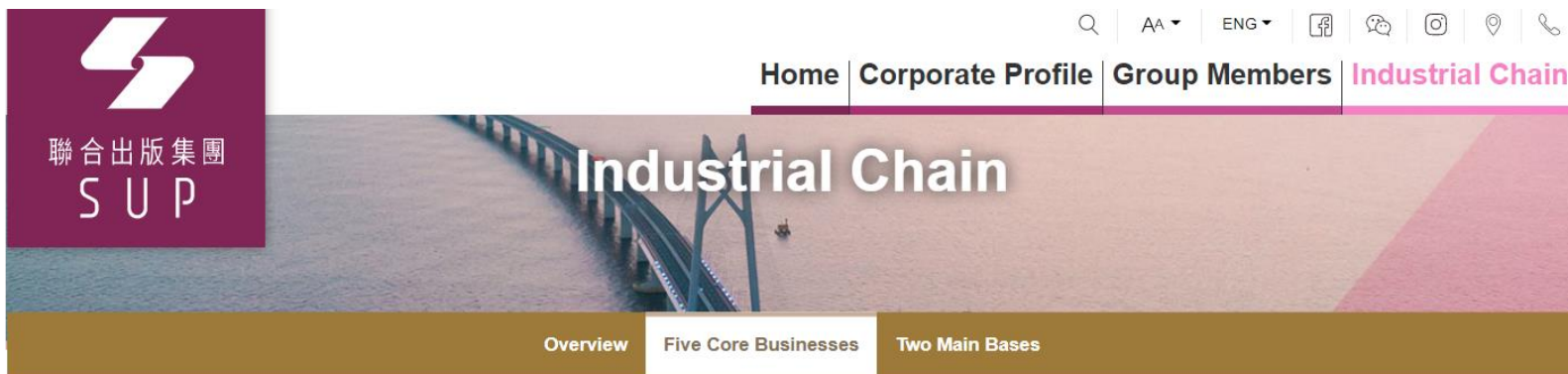
### Two Main Bases

Bauhinia Cultural Plaza in Beijing

Bonded Logistics Centre for Publication, Creative Cultural Products in Nansha, Guangzhou

# 聯合出版集團

## Sino United Publishing (Holdings) Ltd



Home > Industrial Chain > Five Core Businesses > Retailing and Logistics > Retail Network

### Five Core Businesses

- Publishing ^
- Modern Printing ^
- Retailing and Logistics v
- Overview >
- Retail Network >**
- SUP RETAIL (HK) LTD. >
- SINO-COMMERCIAL TRADING CORPORATION >
- New Media, New Platforms and New Businesses ^

### Retail Network

HKSAR, China | All locations | All brands

Joint Publishing, JP@apm  
Shop L6-5, Level 6, apm, Millennium City 5, 418 Kwun Tong Road (MTR KwunTong Exit A2)  
(852) 3148 1089

Joint Publishing, Diamond Hill Branch  
301, Level 3, Plaza Hollywood, Lung Poon Street, Diamond Hill (MTR Diamond Hill Exit C)  
(852) 2955 5986

Joint Publishing, Amoy Plaza Branch

# Upstairs Book Stores

## 樓上書店

### Characteristics:

- Mostly are located at old buildings: upstairs with no lift to avoid high rent
- At areas with good accessibility: Mongkok , Causeway Bay (shopping areas)
- Small in size
- Independently manage
- Offers 10-20% discounts on list book price



# Academic Publishers

## Hong Kong University Press

## The Chinese University of HK Press

 香港大學出版社  
HONG KONG UNIVERSITY PRESS

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public holidays.



**[REVIEW] "A HISTORICALLY COSMOPOLITAN, MIXED CULTURE: Hou Hsiao-Hsien's World of Tang China" BY JEFF TOMPKINS**

October 12, 2021

Published in 2019 by the Hong Kong University Press, *The Assassin: Hou Hsiao-Hsien's World of Tang China* is an anthology of eleven essays

### New Distributed Book



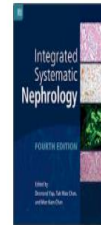
**High Gothic** 哥德盛世  
Christian Art & Iconography of  
the 13th-14th Century 十三至十  
四世紀的基督教藝術與圖像

### New Book



**New Asian Disorder**  
Rivalries Embroiling the Pacific  
Century

### New Book



**Integrated Systematic  
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Fourth Edition

### New Book



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Sinophone Literatures as  
World Literature**

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粵語在香港作為一種有機體，  
有自己蓬勃的生命力，而且不斷地在變化。

張洪年——著

香港粵語  
二百年滄桑探索



重點推薦

# Themes of Interests:

## HK Movie

書名：香港電影2020：紀實遺城

主編：鄭超、致寧

出版社：香港電影評論學會

出版日期：2021年8月

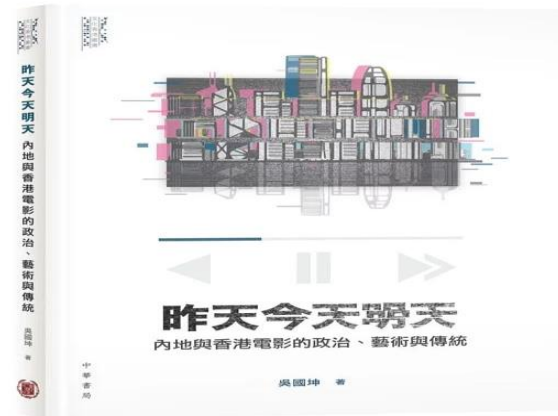


昨天今天明天：內地與香港電影的政治、藝術與傳統

作者：吳國坤

出版社：中華書局(香港)有限公司

出版日期：2021年06月25日



Past Hollywood of the East: Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan...  
HK Film Critics Society, HK Film Archive

# Local Dialect/Cantonese

粵讀

作者：何文匯

出版社：商務印書館(香港)有限公司

出版日期：2021年12月

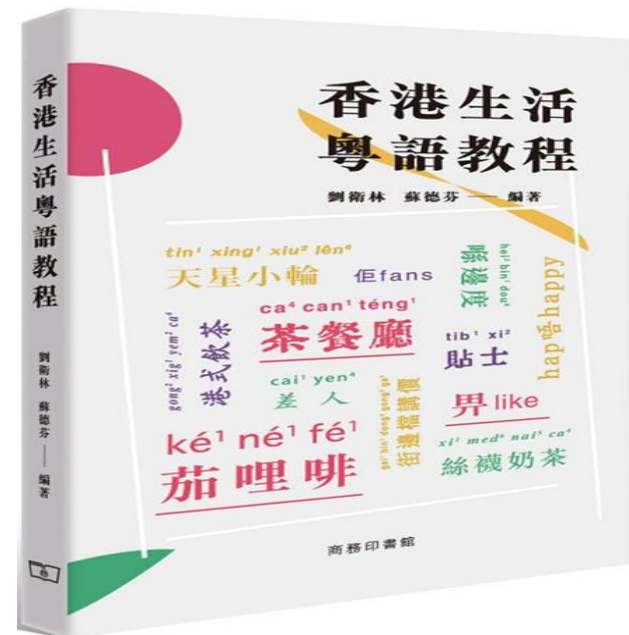


香港生活粵語教程

作者：劉衛林,蘇德芬

出版社：商務印書館(香港)有限公司

出版日期：2020年06月



Cantonese is the major spoken language in HK

# HK Literature

城市回眸：香港文學探論

作者：張燕珠

出版社：初文出版社有限公司

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透視我城：香港文學文化十二講

作者：蔡益懷

出版社：初文出版社有限公司

出版日期：2021年7月



Cultural Desert? 許地山，張愛玲，金庸，李碧華，董啟章。。。.

# HK History

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作者：張惠

出版社：初文出版社有限公司

出版日期：2021年12月01日

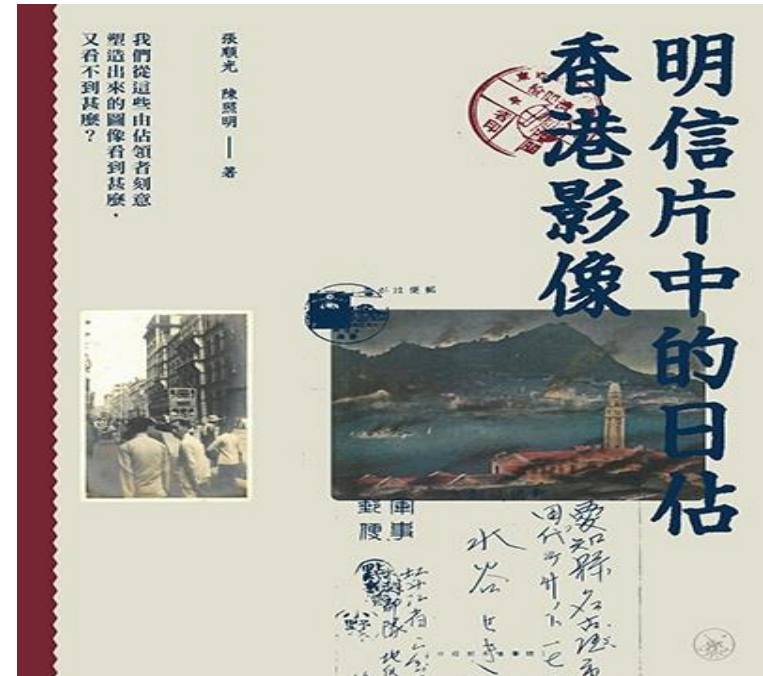


明信片中的日佔香港影像

作者：張順光,陳照明

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