

**Lillian Ngan**

Master's

Department of East Asian Studies,  
Faculty of Arts

Image created in Tai O, Hong Kong

# **Understanding Hong Kong: This Is Not Nostalgia**

## ***Semi-finalist***

Taken in Tai O (a fishing town in Hong Kong), this photo best bespeaks Hong Kong's vicissitude and conceptualize the historical changes in a visualized form. Although Hong Kong has radically transformed from a small fishing village to an internationally recognized cosmopolitan, the livelihood of Tanka people (boat-people) remains with their native traditions. At a beautiful sunset, they sip a tea, listen to radio, enjoy the summer breeze and get prepared for the next day. Contrary to the floating home, the Tankas root their identity in the city and accompany the remarkable turning point with Hong Kong.

Appealing and nostalgic the tourists might find Tai O/ the Tankas to be, my research postulates Hong Kong is now situated in the era of "post-nostalgia" by examining the writing technique and identity in Sinophone Hong Kong literature after 1997. Two decades after the transfer of sovereignty from Britain to China, anxiety certainly remains. Nonetheless, the suffused sentiment of nostalgia has far gone. Writers now consciously undertake a new narrative to delineate the current Hong Kong instead of looking back. Taking further steps to deconstruct the photo, the essence of the composition is self-evident: this is not nostalgia.