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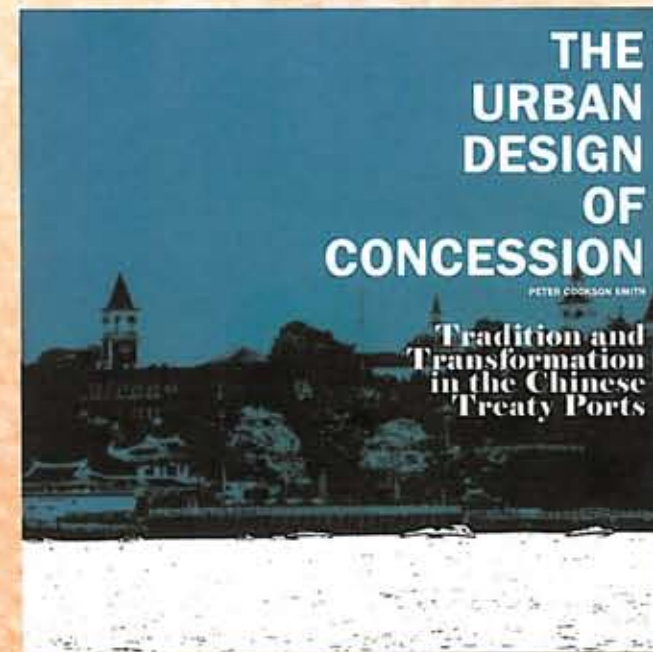
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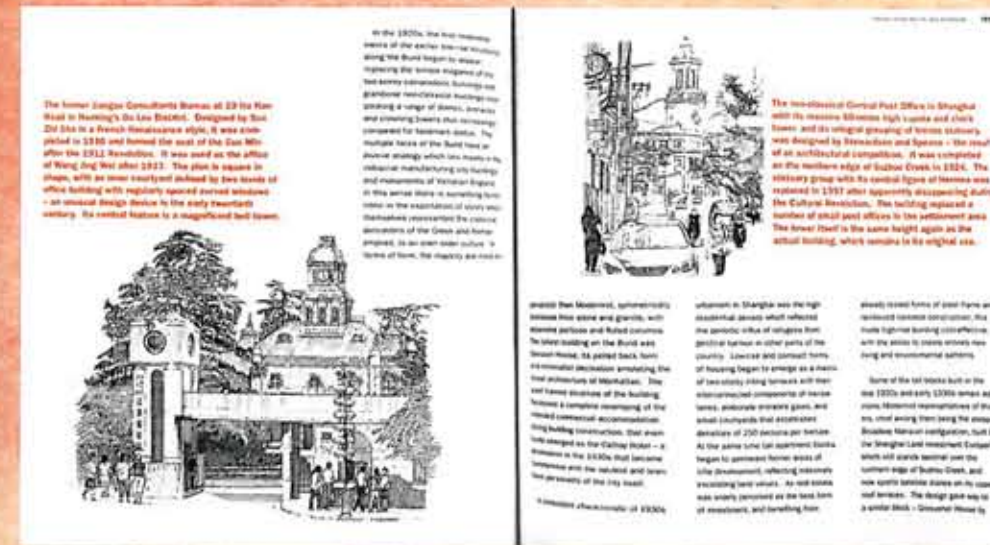
The URBAN DESIGN of Concession

Peter Cookson Smith
MCCM Creations



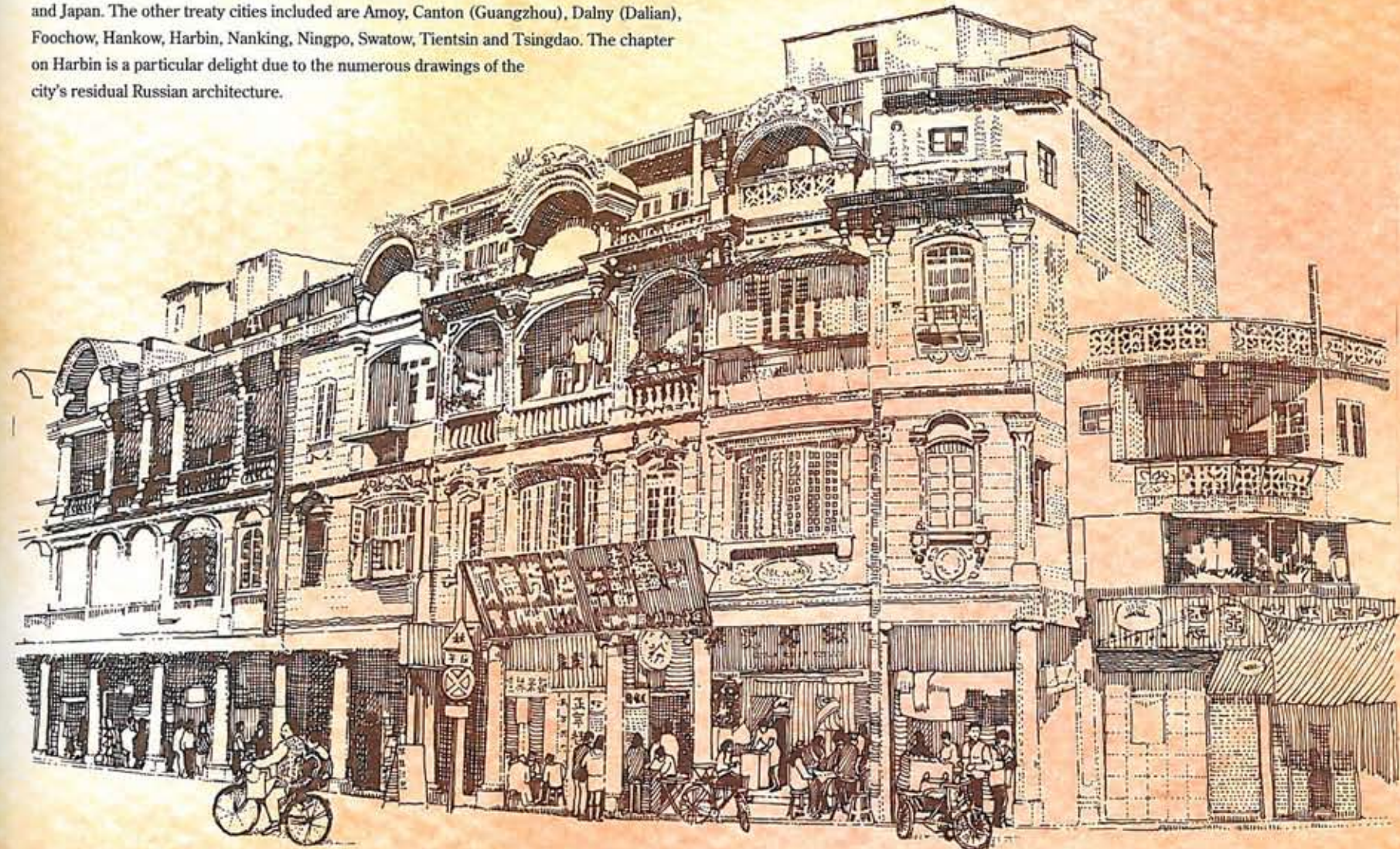
As Peter Cookson Smith flies into Kai Tak airport, Chairman Mao Zedong passes away. The year is 1976 and it marks the beginning of Smith's association with Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland. At the time the island was a British territory, and the most prominent of the historic treaty ports that Smith would later come to write about. In the thirty or so years since, the Englishman has travelled extensively in China, working as an architect and town planner, and has seen, firsthand, the enormous changes that have taken place in the post-Mao period. In his book *The Urban Design of Concession: Tradition and Transformation in the Chinese Treaty Ports*, Smith catalogues the urban and architectural histories of twelve treaty ports – from Guangzhou in China's south, to Harbin in Manchuria – and supplements his prose with exquisite hand-drawn illustrations, and colour reproductions of period paintings.

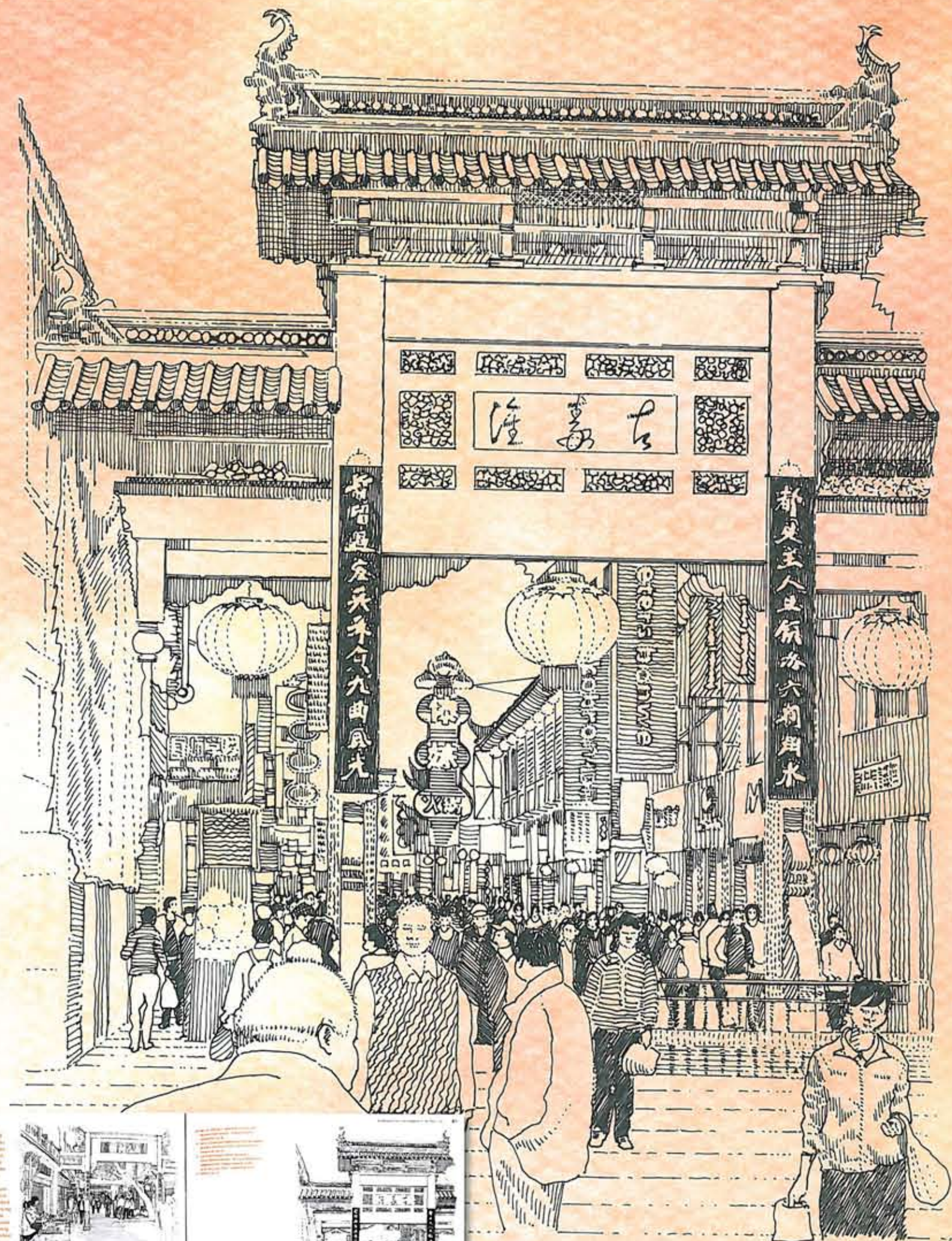
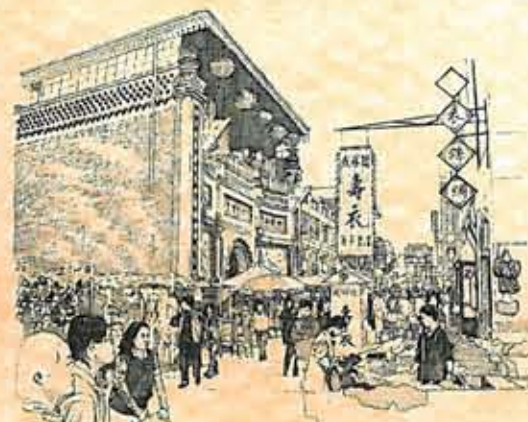
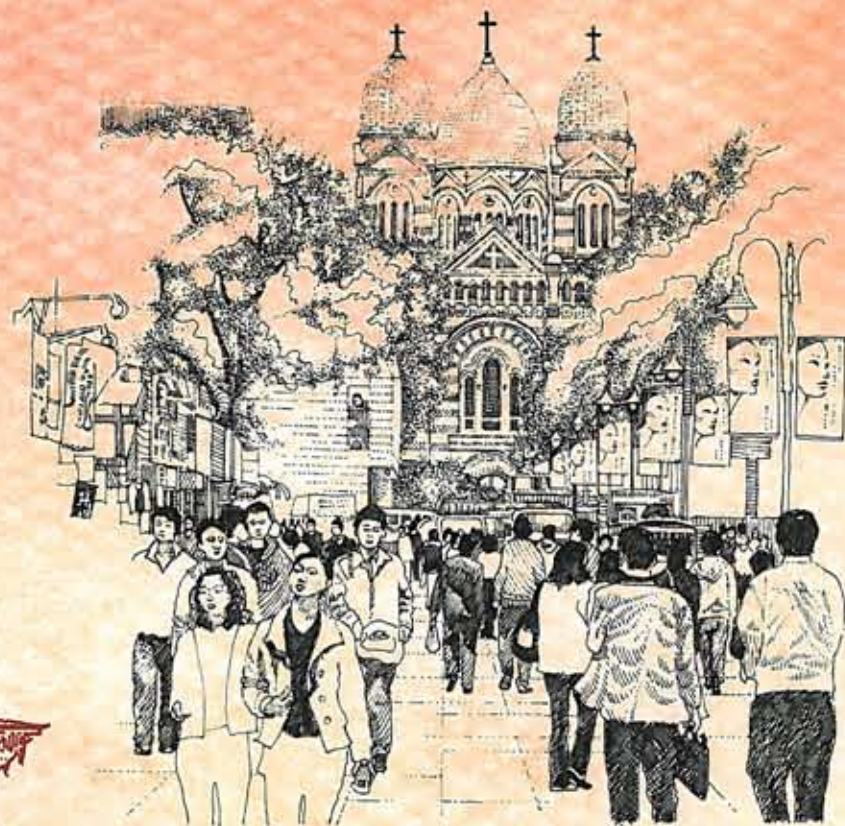
The treaty ports were established to facilitate international trade and European expansion in East Asia. Smith's book analyses the effect the concession areas of these treaty ports – with their European architecture, imported construction techniques, and international trade – had over a wider area in terms of architecture and town planning; he also examines the social, cultural, economic and political impact of these settlements.



The author has divided the book into two halves, with the first giving a history of China as it relates to his tome – including the arrival of the East India Company, the Opium Wars, the 1842 Treaty of Nanking, the Taiping Rebellion of 1853, WWII, the Communist and Cultural Revolutions, and numerous other historical milestones. The Treaties of Nanking and the Bogue (a supplement to Nanking, signed a year later) were the first in the series of the Unequal Treaties that established the Treaty Ports – giving foreigners the right to buy property in the concession areas but imposing restrictions on trade and travel in the Chinese interior.

The second part of the book deals individually with each of the ports selected – Hong Kong, though, isn't among them, having been dealt with separately in the author's previous publication, *The Urban Design of Impermanence*. This section opens with a history of Shanghai, and charts the eastern port's evolution: from its emergence during the Tang dynasty, through its growth during the Ming and Qing periods, to its post-war decline and eventual re-emergence as a global powerhouse. Already one of the Middle Kingdom's largest cities by the early 19th century, Shanghai would soon flourish as a gateway to the Orient for the European powers and Japan. The other treaty cities included are Amoy, Canton (Guangzhou), Dalian (Dalian), Foochow, Hankow, Harbin, Nanking, Ningpo, Swatow, Tientsin and Tsingdao. The chapter on Harbin is a particular delight due to the numerous drawings of the city's residual Russian architecture.





This is the first time in Hong Kong that a large-scale urban planning study has been carried out. The study is a joint effort of the Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design and the Hong Kong Institute of Planners. It is a study of the urban environment of Hong Kong, and it is a study of the urban environment of Hong Kong.

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Dr Peter Cookson Smith is an architect, planner and urban designer. Currently the Vice President of the Hong Kong Institute of Planners and the Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design, and formerly an Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of Hong Kong, Smith brings all his experience to bear upon the writing and illustrating of this publication. Painstakingly researched over many years from his home in Hong Kong, the work is a labour of love that can be enjoyed by architects, planners, and laypersons alike.