



# Citizenship and Citizenship Education in a Global Age

POLITICS, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES IN CHINA



WING-WAH LAW

# FOREWORD

by James A. Banks

Globalization and nationalism are co-existing and sometimes clashing forces. World migration and the political and economic aspects of globalization are challenging the nation-state, yet nationalism remains powerful, as Law points out in this informative and comprehensive historical and sociological study of the development of citizenship and citizenship education in China. Not only are nation-states robust and viable throughout the world, they are growing rather than decreasing. The number of United Nations member states increased from 51 in 1945 to 192 in 2006 (United Nations, 2006).

Globalization is also influential and ubiquitous in nations around the world. There is an acid debate among historians and social scientists about the effects and importance of nation-states in a globalized and interconnected world. Theorists such as McNeill (2002), Mayerfield (1998), and Appadurai (1996) are highly critical of the nation-state and view it as an inimical force in a world that is becoming increasingly post-national and interconnected. McNeill calls nationalism “the most virulent cause of human violence across the past two hundred years” (p. 56). Mayerfield argues that nationalism increases the possibility for conflict between nations. Appadurai (1996) maintains that the nation-state is in crisis. He envisions a post-national world that is characterized by “*diasporic public spheres*” that will be facilitated by electronic mediation

and mass migration (emphasis in original) (p. 21). Other theorists emphasize the ways in which the nation-state has been weakened by globalization and supranational bodies such as the United Nations and the European Union (Castles & Davidson, 2000).

The nation-state also has its defenders. Theorists such as Calhoun (2007) and de Blij (2009) contend that the nation-state remains significant and influential in a world that is experiencing rapid and extensive globalization. Calhoun maintains that the nation-state is “a form of social solidarity and one of the background conditions on which modern democracy has been based” (p. 1). Calhoun also contends that the nation-state was an essential factor in achieving large-scale democracy in many nations around the world. De Blij (2009) compellingly argues that the place or location in which people are raised and socialized—including the state—has a cogent influence on the perspectives, values, and behaviors of individuals and groups. He points out that place has an especially strong influence on low-income individuals and groups who remain within a few miles of their birthplace from birth until death.

In this significant and erudite case study of citizenship and citizenship education in China, Law makes an important contribution to the debate about the influence of globalization and the nation-state on the attitudes, behaviors, and identities of citizens. He argues—with empirical data to support his position collected from students in Hong Kong and Shanghai—that citizenship and citizenship education identity are complex, contextual, multiple, and continually reconstructed. Consequently, citizenship and citizenship identity and behavior are influenced by multiple and interacting factors that require the construction of what Law calls a “multileveled-multidimensional model for citizenship and citizenship education.” This model consists of four major dimensions: *global*, *national*, *local*, and *personal-social*. In his prodigious and analytical discussion of each of these dimensions, Law adduces historical and social science data as well as presents convincing arguments to explain why his conceptual model is reasonable and theoretically rich.

Law describes how citizenship and citizenship education in China is influenced by local and national developments and issues, as well as by the interaction of these variables. He uses the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and the 2010 World Exposition in Shanghai to illustrate how local, national, and global events can be interconnected and interrelated. Law also describes how student agency can exemplify the intersection of the four dimensions of citizenship. He provides examples that illustrate how the highly nationalistic citizenship curriculum in China does not eradicate student efficacy and action.

Regardless of what the goals of the explicit and implicit curriculum are, students have agency, which they can and do mobilize for action. The Tiananmen Square protests that occurred in Beijing in 1989 were led mainly by students and intellectuals who challenged state hegemony as the world watched.

This book—which is an inclusive and meticulous case study of citizenship and citizenship education in China—has important implications for the field of citizenship studies and citizenship education. Conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education around the world face challenges from a number of historical, political, social, and cultural developments. These developments are forcing nation-states and citizenship educators to rethink and re-imagine citizenship education (Banks, 2004).

Nationalistic and assimilationist conceptions of citizenship education were seriously challenged by the rise of the ethnic revitalization movements of the 1960s that were stimulated by the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, which echoed throughout the world (Banks, 2009). Conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education became less nationalistic, and more cosmopolitan and multicultural in nation-states such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Australia from the late 1960s to the late 1990s. However, a backlash against cultural diversity, globalization, cosmopolitanism, and multicultural conceptions of citizenship has occurred since the September 11, 2001, bombings in the United States. A number of factors contributed to this backlash, including increasing worldwide immigration, intensified globalization, the escalation of nationalism, the worldwide economic crisis, and terrorism carried out by radical Muslim individuals. Nations such as the Netherlands and Switzerland have severely restricted the entry of immigrants and implemented draconian immigration requirements and policies. Nations such as Canada and the United Kingdom have implemented policies designed to promote “social cohesion,” which is a veiled reference to assimilation and nationalism (Joshee, 2009; Tomlinson, 2009).

Nationalists and assimilationists have a “zero-sum” conception of citizenship and citizenship education (Kymlicka, 2004, p. xiii). They believe that policies that allow or encourage ethnic, cultural, local, and community identities will prevent individuals from developing commitments and identities to the nation-state and the national civic community (Banks, 2007). Law’s research findings and theoretical explanations described in this book provide ample evidence that local, cultural, and national identities are interrelated and overlapping, and that the local identities of individuals do not necessarily contradict national identities and affiliations. Local identities can facilitate the acquisi-

tion of reflective national identities and affiliations as well as the attainment of the cosmopolitan perspectives, values, and commitments needed to become effective and empowered citizens in the global community. I hope this well-researched, timely, and informative book will attain the wide readership that it deserves.

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## PREFACE

My interest in exploring theoretical issues about the relationships among citizenship, citizenship education, and social change in an increasingly globalized world are closely related to my journey in search of contemporary China's historical and cultural roots. I was born and grew up in Hong Kong, which was ceded to Britain by China as a result of the First Sino-British War (often called the First Opium War in Chinese history textbooks) in the early 1840s. In 1997, Hong Kong ceased to be a British colony and became a special administrative region of China, which the Communist Party of China has ruled since 1949. Hong Kong's population has been predominantly Chinese. During the colonial period, many ethnic Chinese in Hong Kong were perplexed about their national identity. Interestingly, they did not consider Britain their home country but a colonizer. Instead, they often considered their northern neighbor, China, to be their motherland and felt a strong emotional connection to it, although it had no sovereign power over Hong Kong. They probably felt this connection because they or their parents/ancestors had migrated from Mainland China to Hong Kong for various reasons before the 1950s and still maintained close contact with relatives and friends in Mainland China. At the same time, though, many Hong Kong people had a very strong local identity. When introducing themselves to foreigners, they often called themselves Hongkongers or Hongkongese rather than Chinese or British. I was no exception.



The signing of the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration sealed the fate of Hong Kong being returned from Britain to China. This began to compel Hong Kong people to seriously consider whether to stay in Hong Kong or to seek rights of abode in other countries, and thereby decide their choices of national identity (at least in terms of passports). During this exceptionally long period (13 years) of preparation for the change of sovereignty, many Hong Kong people, particularly professionals, tried every available means to emigrate from Hong Kong to other countries (such as the United States, Canada, and Australia). They did so because, despite Mainland China's rising economy and increasing integration with the world, they were uncertain about the future of post-1997 Hong Kong under Chinese communist rule. All these struggles of Hong Kong people intensified my motivation to know more about China as the incoming power. The merger of the former East and West Germany in 1990 further triggered me to ponder about the possibility of Mainland China and Taiwan becoming unified, which seemed to be very sentimentally close and, at the same time, unfamiliar to me. In the early 1990s, I started my PhD study comparing development and education in these two places so that I could understand them more.

As the handover of Hong Kong to China was approaching, my quest to understand the relationships among globalization, citizenship, and citizenship education in the world, and specifically in China, intensified. In the mid-1990s, I turned this quest into a research project. This book is part of that project. It presents my reflections over the years on contentious issues in the literatures of globalization, citizenship, and citizenship education; and specifically, the politics, policies, and practices of citizenship and citizenship education in China, responding to social transitions at home and global changes in different periods, starting from the Chinese monarchy two millennia ago to contemporary China in the 2000s.

Parts of the book were expanded and adapted from a number of my journal articles that were generated from this research project, including: (a) two articles published in *International Journal of Educational Development* in 2002 and 2007, which respectively are "Legislation, Education Reform and Social Transformation: The People's Republic of China's Experience," 22(6), 579–602 and "Globalization, City Development and Citizenship Education in China's Shanghai," 27(1), 18–38; (b) two articles in *Comparative Education Review* in 2004 and 2010, which respectively are "Globalization and Citizenship Education in Hong Kong and Taiwan," 48(3), 253–273 and "The State, Citizenship Education, and International Events in a Global Age: The 2008 Beijing Olympic Games," 54(3), 343–367; (c) an article published in 2006,

“Citizenship, Citizenship Education and the State in China in a Global Age,” *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 36(4), 597–628; and (d) a coauthored article (with Ho-Ming Ng) in 2009, “Globalization and Multileveled Citizenship Education: A Tale of Two Chinese Cities, Hong Kong and Shanghai,” *Teachers College Record (TCR)*, 111(4), 851–892. Because each piece of writing has its own theme and development of discussion and does not totally fit the structure and flow of discussion in the book, I used some more than others, and most were adapted and spread throughout different parts of the book. It should be noted that the names of Chinese authors that are cited in the book start with their surnames and are followed by their first names (such as Deng Xiaoping and Hu Jintao).

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the schools, students, and teachers who participated in the two empirical studies that are presented in the book: the comparative study on citizenship education in Hong Kong and Shanghai and the project on citizenship education and the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. I am indebted to a number of people who offered very helpful research assistance during my fieldwork in Beijing, Hong Kong, and Shanghai. I express my gratitude for financial support for the first study from the Wah Ching Centre of Research on Education in China, The University of Hong Kong and for the second one from the Seed Funding Programme for Basic Research, The University of Hong Kong. I would like to thank Dr. Ho-Ming Ng for his permission to use in this book our coauthored article which, as mentioned earlier, was published in *TCR* in 2009. I am also very grateful to Prof. Tina Besley of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for her very timely suggestion in April 2009 about turning that *TCR* article into a book project and sending a book proposal to the editorial board of the book series, *Global Studies in Education*, with the Peter Lang Publishing Group. My special thanks go to Prof. James A. Banks, Director of the Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Washington, for his strong encouragement and acceptance of my invitation to write the Foreword for this book.