



Editorial**Editorial**Isaac Leung^{1,*} ¹ Associate Professor, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

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In recent years, a variety of approaches to spatial analysis have emerged, enabling diverse explorations of human relationships embedded within built environments and places. These approaches draw from disciplines such as cultural studies, sociology, anthropology and urban studies, and converge to deepen our understanding of spatial relations and the interconnections between the various elements that shape our perception of surrounding environments. By examining these relationships, researchers can narrate place-based stories, map experiential patterns, analyse social dynamics and scrutinise power structures embedded in physical spaces.

This issue brings together articles that explore diverse aspects of spatiality. Ruoqi Yu examines China's urbanisation through the lens of Indigenous knowledge, local adaptations and global influences.¹ Focusing on Xiamen, Yu highlights the complex forces driving urban modernisation in China, underscoring the intricate power dynamics at play. Xiaoli Liu explores how traditional Chinese concepts of space are integrated into contemporary architecture, particularly at the perceptual level, to create meaningful urban spaces.² Using traditional courtyard architecture as an example, Liu delves into the philosophies embedded in Chinese culture and the ways they shape both spatial design and human activity.

In another article, Xiaoyu Chen analyses the film *Kung Fu Hustle* to explore the intertextual 'otherness' between Shanghai and Hong Kong.³ This study highlights how kung fu, as a nostalgic private experience, also evokes collective memory and shared cultural imagination through cinematic portrayals of space. Zilun Shao and Amy Tang's article examines the Suzhou Canal and its transformation through policies of heritage conservation and adaptive reuse from the 1960s to the present.⁴ Focusing

on the canal's significance in everyday life, Shao and Tang's work suggests new strategies for leveraging canal heritage as a resource for economic, social and ecological renewal.

All these articles provide rich insights into the concept of space as both locally grounded and globally connected, shaped by broader influences, politics and varying spatial scales. They help to reconfigure our understanding of place and space. Crucially, they provide opportunities for reconsidering subjectivity and culture, moving between the physicality of past and present and the cinematic representation of cultural realities. This series of studies centred on China across different time periods and spatial contexts contributes a deeper understanding of Chinese spatial philosophy and urban life and its intersections with global spatial discourses to the discussions prevalent in academic inquiry.

Notes

- ¹ Yu, 'Forming an in-between place'.
- ² Liu, 'The return of tradition'.
- ³ Chen, 'Intertextual otherness'.
- ⁴ Shao and Tang, 'Canal-orientated urban waterfront regeneration'.

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