

GRMD1003 / UGEA1212

行萬里，識中國

Understanding China Through Travel 2025 Summer School

Instructor

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Course Website

The course companion website

<http://chinaculturalgeog.com/>

Venue and Time (TBC)

Online Reading List

https://julac-cuhk-a.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/public/852JULAC_CUHK/lists/34238605560003407?auth=SAML

Students can just click and open to view all ebooks and e-articles for this course. They can also view this from the blackboard reading list.

Important Notice

To protect our university's intellectual property rights, no course materials can be uploaded to any online course platform without the permission of the instructor. If found, the case will be passed on to the University's legal team to handle.

Course Overview

This course aims to introduce China's cultural heritages from the theoretical lens of cultural geography. As an important sub-discipline in human geography, cultural geography examines how people use space and develop it into places reflecting their culture – a process known as the formation of cultural landscape. In this process, individuals, groups, civilizations, and their culture interact with the surrounding environment and specific political and economic systems (which are themselves shaped by culture), leaving behind various traces of culture across space.

Furthermore, within this course, we will utilize 'travel' as a metaphorical framework to navigate our study journey through the cultural landscapes of China. Just as travelers explore new territories, our exploration of China's cultural heritage will involve a journey of discovery, interpretation, and understanding.

China provides numerous extraordinary examples to illustrate this process. It is not only the most populous country in the world, but also an ancient civilization with plenty of spectacular landscapes and cultural heritage sites. The emergence and evolution of these features reflect the unique cultural geography of the country, marked by a winding history and significant regional variations. Many of these features have become notable attractions, but their preservation is challenged by globalization, often a force erasing differences between cultures.

The course includes four key components: 1) the theoretical foundation: fundamentals of cultural geography; 2) the legacies and regional variations of China's cultural heritages; 3) topical themes about China's cultural heritages; 4) integrating your knowledge. The course provides not only a body

of knowledge about the cultural landscape and spatial variations of places in China, but also an understanding of their major transformations that have taken place in a globalizing world. Students are required to make use of the course online platform to design a promotion plan and then to promote their Chinese cultural landscape projects to international audience. This exercise aims at enriching students' learning experience on the culturally geographical approach

Course Objectives

The ultimate objectives are:

- to offer students a broad intellectual perspective of the basic academic framework, concepts and methodology of cultural geography to understand the complexity of places and to appreciate the interconnections of different forces that shape China's cultural heritages.
- to enable students to develop sensitivity to China's cultural heritages and their preservation which has become a key issue of tremendous importance for human existence.
- to improve students' ability to think about China's complex civilization and development more comprehensively and critically.
- to introduce students how to 'de-construct' the cultural forms to make apparent the various forces and relations behind cultural landscape formation.
- to enable students to convert their course assignments to written pieces that are communicative with the public for promoting Chinese culture.

Learning Activities

This course comprises a series of lectures. The lectures will be supplemented by stories, images, videos, and team projects to arouse students' interests in the subject matter. In addition to attending lectures and taking a final exam, students will research, plan and complete a mini group project, design a promotion plan, and then promote their Chinese cultural landscape projects to national, regional and international audience. Students will be encouraged to convert their group projects to written pieces that are easily comprehensible to the public.

Expected learning Outcomes

Students are expected to develop a general and comprehensive understanding of China's cultural heritages, using the approach of cultural geography. After completing the course, students can:

- adopt a normative stance in evaluating cultural landscapes
- identify essential features of China's cultural heritages.
- understand Chinese cultural heritages' multiple dimensions and geographical variations, and how these shape and reinforce space, place and cultural formation.
- work in group to discover cases or use experiences to describe how the development of Chinese cultural heritages is associated with forces at different geographical scales such as local, regional, national and even global scales.
- diagnose forces and relations of cultural landscape formation and transformation.
- organize their ideas and information under the framework of cultural geography; and
- explain their ideas in a communicative manner to promote Chinese culture.

Project Team

Students will be divided into a few teams (around 3-4 persons per team). The final number of students in a team will depend on the final course enrolment. Students can freely partner with other classmates to form a team. Each team is expected to do a mini group project (i.e. a project summary in Chinese in line with a template). Grouping information and contacts of team members will be announced afterwards online.

Topics and Schedule*

Day	Date	Topic	Content & Activities
Module 1 - Theoretical foundation: fundamentals of cultural geography;			
1	22 July (Tue)	Introduction I: cultural geography as an approach I 文化地理方法導讀 I	Lecture (Xu)
2	23 July (Wed)	Introduction II: cultural geography as an approach II 文化地理方法導讀 II	Lecture (Xu)
3	24 July (Thur)	Introduction III: Culture, space, place and power 文化地理方法導讀 III: 文化、空間、地方與權力 Shaping of China's cultural landscape: traditions, foreign imports, and globalization 中國文化景觀的形成：傳統、外來影響與全球化	Lecture (Xu)
Module 2 - Legacies and regional variations of China's cultural heritages			
4	25 July (Fri)	Beijing: Beijing Culture and the place of politics 北京：京派文化與空間的政治	Lecture (Xu)
5	28 July (Mon)	Shanghai: Shanghai Culture and the place for spatial competition 上海：海派文化與空間的爭奪	
6	29 July (Tue)	Tibet: Religious culture and the place of belief I 西藏：宗教文化與信仰空間 I	Lecture (Xu)
7	30 July (Wed)	Tibet: Religious culture and the place of belief II 西藏：宗教文化與信仰空間 II	Lecture (Xu)
8	31 July (Thur)	Southwest: Ethnic culture and the place of ethnicity 西南：民族文化與鄉土空間	Lecture (Xu)
9	1 Aug (Fri)	Lingnan: Lingnan culture and the place of diversity 嶺南：嶺南文化與多元空間	Lecture (Xu) Talk: how to undertake the mini group project
10	4 Aug (Mon)	Ancient villages: A place of spatial representation 古村落的空間意象	Fieldtrip
Module 3: Topical themes about China's cultural heritages			
11	5 Aug (Tue)	Field lecture: exploring Hong Kong's ancient villages 校外課堂-香港的古村落	fieldtrip
12	6 Aug (Wed)	Graffiti: the cultural geography of Youth in China 塗鴉：青年文化地理	Lecture (Xu)
	6 Aug (Wed)	The written group project summaries due	All student groups
Module 4 - integrating your knowledge			
13	7 Aug	Course summary & Course Evaluation Warm-up Class activity Final exam	Lecture (Xu)

* This is a tentative list of topics and lecture sequence. Final arrangement may be changed by the instructor.

Students are expected to attend all classes and participate actively in classes and other learning activities. **Each week**, they are expected to spend time for various learning activities (see table below).

Lecture	Interactive	Lab	Discussion of	Field-trip	Projects	Web-based	Other
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(hr) in /out class	tutorial (hr) in /out class	(hr) in /out class	case (hr) in /out class	(hr) in /out class	(hr) in /out class	teaching (hr) in /out class	(hr) in /out class
2			0.5 0.5			0.5	
M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA	M,O, NA
M: Mandatory activity in the course O: Optional activity NA: Not applicable							

Assessment

The course adopts a grade descriptor (see Appendix A).

(1) Class activities (10%)

- **In-class open-ended questions (10%).** In **three** occasions, students are required to answer a short open-ended question after a lecture. These questions have no right or wrong answers. They are related to the lecture's contents. Each question carries 5 marks. The scores of any two questions will be counted in the final course assessment. In total, there are 10 marks for two questions.

(2) Group project: group research, project summary (25%)

We have a few student teams. Each team is expected to undertake a research throughout the class. Individual students will be graded on team performance, adjusted by peer assessment result. **The performance of this group research should contain three components:**

Component 1: The research should be 'empirical research'. The key is to **use cultural geography perspective** to examine a cultural heritage/phenomenon in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macao or overseas countries/regions of Chinese diaspora. For example, you could focus on the region of Southwest China (e.g. Guizhou or Yunnan, or the region as a whole) and evaluate different forces that shape the unique cultural landscape there. Or, you could focus on the development of 798 Art Zone in Beijing and offer insights on how this heritage is formed and developed into a place which we see today. Or, you could choose to compare the Kowloon Walled City and Kowloon Tong, and explore forces shaping these contrasting cultural landscapes in the small territory of Hong Kong. Or, you could explore the Forbidden City, and see how its spatial structure reflects the political, social and cultural value in ancient China. Or, you may focus on Hong Kong's wet market and how this is related to culture development in the city. Others may choose to study the small shrines and altars, scattered everywhere in Hong Kong, and how these spatial elements are translated into parts of the modern spatial layout of Hong Kong. Some may find old villages interesting and try to relate these villages' spatial formation with traditional Chinese culture. Some may find a China Town in Sydney interesting from a cultural geographical perspective.

Component 2: group research summary based on research undertaken in Component 1 (written format in Chinese) (25%): For online dissemination to the wider audience, each group should prepare a summary of its group research project according to the template provided (downloadable at the course website). The overall length of the summary is limited to **2,000 to 3,000**. A good project summary should be communicative to the public – converting your academic project into a written piece of work that is easily comprehensible to global audience. The summary should be supplemented by illustrations, such as map, table and photos taken by yourself or with copyright permitted for use. All projects' summaries should be academically sound and demonstrated/supported by logical arguments, data and evidence. **Each group should submit their summary on or before 6 August 2025. All summaries will be scanned by VeriGuide. Late submission will be accepted but with reduced grade.**

(3) Final exam (65%)

- There is an in-class exam on **7 August 2025**, carrying 65% of the total assessment. The exam takes about 70-90 minutes.
- The exam questions are drawn from lectures and videos, covering the contents of the entire course (lecture notes and readings). The exam may contain multiple-choice questions, assessment questions, and/or short answer questions. The final format will be decided when we approach the exam date.
- It is essential that you be graded only on your own answer. Cheating during the exam will lead to a mark of zero and other university penalty.
- No make-up or early exam is available except under very special circumstances fully beyond the control of the student. To apply for a make-up exam, a written notice and supportive documents should be provided in line with the University's regulation.

Recommended Readings

This course has no textbook. It only offers you a list of recommended reading. **Those with *are considered essential and are key items for reading. E-books and e-papers for this course is available at:**

https://julac-cuhk-a.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/public/852JULAC_CUHK/lists/34238605560003407?auth=SAML

Introduction: culture geography as an approach

- *Chapter 1-3, Jon Anderson (2010), *Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces*, New York and Oxon: Routledge.
- *Anderson, B. (2020). Cultural geography III: The concept of 'culture.' *Progress in Human Geography*, 44(3): 608-617.
- Chapter 1-3, Mike Crang (1998), *Cultural Geography*, London and New York: Routledge.

Culture, space, place and power

- *Chapter 4-5, Jon Anderson (2010), *Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces*, New York and Oxon: Routledge.
- Anderson B (2017) Cultural geography I: Intensities and forms of power. *Progress in Human Geography* 36: 1136–1153.
- Anderson B (2018) Cultural geography II: The force of representations. *Progress in Human Geography*. DOI: 1177/0309132518761431.

Shaping of China's cultural landscape: traditions, foreign imports, and globalization

- *Wang, Jing (2005), 'Introduction: the politics and production of scales in China: how does geography matter to studies of local, popular culture?', in ed. Wang, Jing, *Locating China: space, place and popular culture*, Oxon: Routledge, pp. 1-30.

Beijing: Beijing Culture and the place of politics

- *洪長泰(2011), 地標：北京的空間政治，香港：牛津出版社 (序與第一章：天安門廣場：民族主義的新政治舞臺), XI-55.

Shanghai: Shanghai Culture and the place for spatial competition

- *羅崗(2007), '空間的生產與空間的轉移', 華東師範大學學報(哲學社會科學版), 第 39 卷第 6 期, 91-96 頁

Tibet: Religious culture and the place of belief

- *張學梅、陳昌群（2007），‘藏族傳統聚落形態與藏傳佛教的世界觀’，宗教學研究，2：201-206.
- Chapter 9 (Senses of place: scales and beliefs), Jon Anderson (2010), *Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces*, New York and Oxon: Routledge.

Southwest: Ethnic culture and the place of ethnicity

- *Chapter 8 (The place of ethnicity), Jon Anderson (2010), *Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces*, New York and Oxon: Routledge.

Lingnan: Lingnan culture and the place of diversity

- *劉益（1997），‘嶺南文化的特點及其形成的地理因素’，人文地理，第1期；

Ancient villages: A place of spatial representation

- *劉沛林（1997），古村落：和諧的人聚空間，上海：上海三聯書店。（第2-6章：15-123）

The culture of production and workspace

- *Chapter 9: (Cultures of production), Mike Crang (1998), *Cultural Geography*, London and New York: Routledge.

Graffiti: the cultural geography of Youth in China

- *Chapter 10 (Making and marking new places: the cultural geographies of youth), Jon Anderson (2010), *Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces*, New York and Oxon: Routledge.
- *Valjakka, M. (2016) ‘Contesting Transcultural Trends: Emerging Self-identities and Urban Art Images in Hong Kong’, in Jeffrey Ian Ross (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art*, 357–371, Oxford: Routledge.
- *Valjakka, M. (2016) ‘Claiming spaces for urban art images in Beijing and Shanghai’, in Jeffrey Ian Ross (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art*, 372–387, Oxford: Routledge.

Academic Honesty Guidelines

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed [declaration](#) (See Appendix E) that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.
- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.

Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

Feedback for Course Evaluation

Two anonymous course evaluations (one in the fourth week and one in the last week) will be conducted to get feedback about the course from students.

NOTE: THIS IS A TENTATIVE SYLLABUS AND IS SUBJECTED TO CHANGE BY THE INSTRUCTOR

Appendix A: Course Grade Descriptors

Grade A

- Perform excellently on all learning outcomes
- Participates most actively in in-class and other learning activities, making notable contributions
- Demonstrates exemplary understanding of the subject matter in a theoretically critical and creative manner
- Presents exceptionally clear arguments with originality, supported by effective use of a wide range of evidence
- Write an exceptionally clear project summary easily comprehensible to global audience in line with the provided template, supported by effective use of illustration.

Grade A-

- Perform very well on all learning outcomes
- Participates very actively in in-class and other learning activities
- Demonstrates holistic understanding of the subject matter, with a depth of theoretical insights
- Presents exceptionally clear arguments, supported by effective use of a wide range of evidence
- Write a very clear project summary easily comprehensible to global audience in line with the provided template, supported by effective use of illustration

Grade B

- Perform well on all learning outcomes
- Participates actively in in-class and other learning activities
- Demonstrates holistic understanding of the subject matter
- Presents clear argument, supported by effective use of some evidence
- Write a clear project summary comprehensive to global audience in line with the provided template, supported by use of illustration

Grade C

- Perform well on the majority of learning outcomes
- Sometimes participates actively in in-class and other learning activities
- Demonstrates competent understanding of the subject matter
- Presents clear arguments, supported by effective use of limited evidence
- Write a project summary partially comprehensive to global audience in line with the provided template, supported by limited use of illustration

Grade D

- Perform well on some learning outcomes only
- Participates limitedly in in-class and other learning activities
- Demonstrates basic, compartmentalized understanding of the subject matter
- Presents clear arguments, supported by limited and weak evidence
- Write a project summary not so comprehensive to global audience, not following the provided template, supported by no use of illustration

Grade F

- Perform poorly on the majority or all learning outcomes
- Does not participate in in-class and other learning activities at all
- Demonstrates limited, generally inaccurate understanding of the subject matter
- Lacks clear arguments, or presents arguments with no or generally irrelevant evidence
- Write a project summary not comprehensive to global audience at all, not following the provided template at all, and with no use of any illustration.

Appendix B: Peer Assessment Form

To ensure student's contribution is adequately reflected, students are required to assess each of your group members on their respective contributions. Assessment should be based on (1) Participation and Team Work; (2) Timely Input and Punctuality; (3) Leadership; and (4) Knowledge, Innovative Ideas and Quality of Work throughout class and group discussions within and outside classroom. Marks should be given between 0-10, 10 being full mark as the best performance. The overall contribution is based on 40 marks. The result will be used as a factor to adjust the overall grade of individual students. **PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ASSESSMENT SHOULD BE DONE INDIVIDUALLY AND THE ASSESSMENTS WILL BE KEPT HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL. AND YOU ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO ASSESS YOURSELF.**

Assessment and Comments (*please use marks ranging from 0-10, 10 being the best performance*):

Your group number: _____

Names	P & TW	TI & P	L	K, II & QoW	Overall Contribution	Comments* (strengths & weaknesses)

Notes:

P & TW: *Participation and Team Work;*

TI & P: *Timely Input and Punctuality;*

L: *Leadership;*

K, II & QoW: *Knowledge, Innovative Ideas and Quality of Work*

**Please use additional sheet if required*

Name of Assessor: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Assessment Criteria for Teamwork in the Group Project
(For students when they evaluate their performance of their teammates)

	A	B	C (Pass)	F (Fail)
Participation and teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening attentively • Showing respect to members. • Delivering work promptly and to a high standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to listen. • Members with polite relationship. • Delivering work on time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing for attention and relationship among members could be tense at times. • Problems in delivering tasks in terms of promptness and quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication breakdown. • Showing no respect to members. • Failing to deliver task or joining meetings.
Communication skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrating critical thinking skills. • Ready to negotiate and compromise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good communication among members. • Willing to negotiate and compromise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal communication among members. • Have some difficulties in negotiation and compromising. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor communication among members. • Have a lot of difficulties in negotiation and compromising.
Conflict resolution skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing well with conflicts. • Offering constructive and positive feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows effort in resolving conflicts. • Give appropriate feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have some difficulties in resolving conflicts. • Have problems in giving appropriate feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a lot of difficulties in resolving conflicts. • Negative and destructive feedback.
Leadership skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive in coordinating, planning, organising and keeps the team on task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to cooperate and coordinate various tasks in the team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperating and coordinating on demand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failing to coordinate or cooperate.
Time management skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be always punctual in meetings and delivering tasks on time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering tasks and joining meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes not meeting deadline or joining meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not delivering or joining meetings.

Appendix E Declaration

I am submitting the assignment for:

- ☐ an individual project or
☐ a group project on behalf of all members of the group. It is hereby confirmed that the submission is authorized by all members of the group, and all members of the group are required to sign this declaration.

I/We declare that: (i) the assignment here submitted is original except for source material explicitly acknowledged/all members of the group have read and checked that all parts of the piece of work, irrespective of whether they are contributed by individual members or all members as a group, here submitted are original except for source material explicitly acknowledged; (ii) the piece of work, or a part of the piece of work has not been submitted for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration; and (iii) the submitted soft copy with details listed in the <Submission Details> is identical to the hard copy(ies), if any, which has(have) been / is(are) going to be submitted. I/We also acknowledge that I am/we are aware of the University's policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and of the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations, as contained in the University website <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

In the case of a group project, we are aware that all members of the group should be held responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.

I/We also understand that assignments without a properly signed declaration by the student concerned and in the case of a group project, by all members of the group concerned, will not be graded by the teacher(s).

Signature(s)

Date

Name(s)

Student ID(s)

Course code

Course title

You can download the form at

[http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/Eng_hkm_files_\(2013-14\)/p10.htm](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/Eng_hkm_files_(2013-14)/p10.htm)