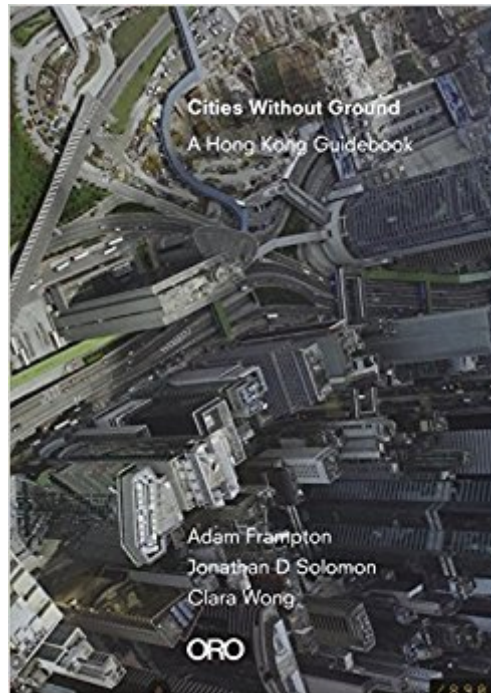


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# Cities Without Ground: A Hong Kong Guidebook



## Synopsis

Hong Kong is a city without ground. This is true both physically (built on steep slopes, the city has no ground plane) and culturally (there is no concept of ground). Density obliterates figure-ground in the city, and in turn re-defines public-private spatial relationships. Perception of distance and time is distorted through compact networks of pedestrian infrastructure, public transport and natural topography in the urban landscape. Without a ground, there can be no figure either. In fact, Hong Kong lacks any of the traditional figure-ground relationships that shape urban space: axis, edge, center, even fabric. *Cities Without Ground* explores this condition by mapping three-dimensional circulation networks that join shopping malls, train stations and public transport interchanges, public parks and private lobbies as a series of spatial models and drawings. These networks, though built piecemeal, owned by different public and private stakeholders, and adjacent to different programs and uses, form a continuous space of variegated environments that serves as a fundamental public resource for the city. The emergence of the shopping malls as spaces of civil society rather than of global capital-- as grounds of resistance-- comes as a surprise. This continuous network and the microclimates of temperature, humidity, noise and smell which differentiate it constitute an entirely new form of urban spatial hierarchy. The relation between shopping malls and air temperature, for instance, suggests architectural implications in circulation--differentiating spaces where pedestrians eagerly flow or make efforts to avoid, where people stop and linger or where smokers gather. Air particle concentration is both logical and counterintuitive: outdoor air is more polluted, while the air in the higher-end malls is cleaner than air adjacent to lower value retail programs. Train stations, while significantly cooler than bus terminals, have only moderately cleaner air. Boundaries determined by sound or smell (a street of flower vendors or bird keepers, or an artificially perfumed mall) can ultimately provide more substantive spatial boundaries than a ground. While space in the city may be continuous, plumes of temperature differential or air particle intensity demonstrate that environments are far from equal.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Cities Without Ground: A Hong Kong Guidebook... [creates] the first-ever maps showing the extent and variety of [Hong Kong's pedestrian] networks... the book comprehensively documents the walkways through highly detailed drawings and 3D models." -The Atlantic Cities

"In Cities Without Ground, Adam Frampton, Jonathan D Solomon, and Clara Wong take you through the vast interior public world of Hong Kong's pedestrian street network. With this guide you can travel for miles and miles without ever touching the ground: an interior world superimposed on the city. In an age of rapid urbanization and unstable climate, might this be a model for the future?" -Volume Magazine

"Cities Without Ground, explores... pedestrian infrastructure formed over the past 50 years around, above, and under the city... documented with detailed drawings and 3D models... showing Hong Kong as we have never seen it before." The Standard

"Cities Without Ground... has attracted attention from the technical, urban-planning-obsessed set, but for the traveller it helps to demystify a complex and multi-layered city." -BBC Travel

"Cities Without Ground: A Hong Kong Guidebook... provides a totally fresh perspective on Hong Kong and the result is frankly amazing." -randomwire.com

"Cities Without Ground is 'an homage to a quirk of Hong Kong's urban landscape: The fact that it's possible to walk for miles above ground, thanks to the city's densely layered pedestrian bridges that crisscross the sky, connecting buildings and spanning wide boulevards.'" -The Wall Street Journal

"[Cities Without Ground] represents a valuable piece of work. It captures this specific moment in time, and shows the informal social arteries on which the city thrives." -The Guardian

"In their conceptually avant-garde book... three architectural specialists lay out complex layered maps of the extensive walkway systems in Hong Kong. You'll never see the city the same way again." -HK Magazine

Hong Kong is a city without ground. Physically, the city is built on steep slopes with no ground plane, and, culturally, there is no concept of ground. Density obliterates and redefines public/private spatial relationships. The perception of distance and time is distorted through compact networks of pedestrian infrastructure, public transportation, and natural topography in the urban landscape.

Cities Without Ground explores this condition by mapping three-dimensional circulation networks that join shopping malls, train stations, public transport interchanges, public parks, and private lobbies as a series of spatial models and drawings.

An impressive collection of drawings that visualize the layered complexity of many Asian cities while also offering clear directives on how the architect can intervene in these extreme contexts.

You don't have to be an architectural student to appreciate this booklet. Three dimensional drawings of the elevated walkways of Hong Kong's urban maze are fascinating. This is for the serious tourist-traveler that would complement a standard guidebook to Hong Kong.

Refreshing with details that make me laugh and wanting to visit the actual location. vivid photos structured diagrams conversation like descriptions very original perspective.

Incredible observations

Neat maps. Interesting approach. My friends from HK can't put it down.

Perfect, thank you.

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