

## **Urban Expansion and State Governance in China**

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### **Abstract**

This paper investigates how the changing role of the Chinese state has led to the reformatting of urban space. It is argued that a new rationality of governance, which based on both localization and promotion of state authority, has been introduced during the era of economic reform. This dual process has reconstructed China's urban scale which was inherited from the pre-reform period. The implementation of city-leading-counties (*shi guan xian*) in 1982 has provided a good example for illustration. Under this new system, cities have not only been institutionalized as administrative centers, their territory, bureaucracy and power have also been expanded and hence a new relationship between cities and counties has been forged. These arguments are illustrated by reference to Jiangsu, one of the first provinces to initiate city-leading-counties.