*From the Sublime to the Marvellous: Cultural Translation versus Cultural Appropriation in Shang Chi* – Event Report

**Programme Description**

*From the Sublime to the Marvellous* was a keynote given by Professor Paul Bowman (Cardiff University) at the University of Sheffield on 14 October 2022. The seminar aims to explore the aesthetic and philosophical meanings embodied in transnational martial arts cinema between Hong Kong and Hollywood and consolidate the UK’s leading position in studying martial arts as an interdisciplinary field.

**Venue and Attendance**

The Diamond was the venue for this keynote. Refreshment was provided afterwards. The talk attracted a broad audience, including undergraduate students, postgraduate students, faculty members, and several students from the University of Manchester. There were more than 20 people attended the event, and most of them asked questions during the Q&A session.

**Expenses**

BAFTSS funding (£169) enabled me to arrange lunch (£40), refreshments (£44), and dinner (£85) for the speaker and participants before and after the keynote. These funds are crucial to create a friendly and comfortable environment for all the participants to share ideas and research.

**Outcome**

*From the Sublime to the Marvellous* offered insightful ideas about cinematic cultural translation by expounding on the concepts of the sublime and orientalism. Bowman traced the theorisation of the sublime from 300 BC to the 19th Century through the works of Zhuangzi, Longinus, Edmund Burke, Immanuel Kant, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. In doing so, he discovered that the notion of the sublime is closely associated with orientalism. By comparing Wong Kar-wai’s *The Grandmaster* (2013) and Destin Daniel Cretton’s *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (2021), he presented to the audience how the sublime in Chinese martial arts cinema was (mis)translated across the Pacific and raised questions about cultural appropriation. His keynote generated a heated debate about Hollywood’s uptake of Hong Kong action in the past three decades since *The Matrix* (1999) and a reflection on the myth of authenticity, the tendency of self-orientalism, and the role of stardom in evoking the sublime. The discussion went on after the keynote as participants enjoyed the refreshments, thanks to the generous support of BAFTSS. Due to the success of the event, everyone was looking forward to joining another BAFTSS-funded event in the future. The keynote will be published as a podcast episode of *Martial Arts Studies,* and it will also appear in Bowman’s next monograph.