

ISSUE 7 May 2024

NEWSLETTER



CHINA CENTRE



Table of Contents

Message from the Director	3
An Interview with Margaret Hillenbrand, Professor of Modern Chinese Literature and Visual Culture; Fellow of Wadham College	4
An Interview with Dr Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova, China Centre Academic Visitor	6
An Interview with Yang Han, China Centre DPhil Associate	7
News Highlights	8
Workshop Showcase	12
Featured Books	13
Featured Chapters and Articles	15
Past Events	19
Events and Talks	21
News from the Library	29
Alumni Spotlight	30

Message from the Director



Greetings all!

As I write this, the weather has been teasing us with intermittent tastes of summer, moments that are very welcome after what was a long, wet winter.

At the China Centre, we have been keeping up an amazing pace of events, with things happening almost every day. There is so much occurring, the Centre is a real hub of activity. Importantly, we have seen wonderful contributions from students in organising seminars, reading groups, and even film screenings. I am also so pleased to point to the diversity of our offerings, which can be seen in reading the following pages. At a time when the news appears to be dominated by stories of geopolitical tensions, the breadth of what is being offered here at the China Centre is a crucial reminder of how much more and how much richer the study of China is and can be.

I want to conclude by thanking those who have donated to support our work. Your contributions make what we do possible. We truly appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Todd Hall
Director of the China Centre



An Interview with Margaret Hillenbrand, Professor of Modern Chinese Literature and Visual Culture, Fellow of Wadham College

Professor Margaret Hillenbrand has done a series of interviews on her new book *On the Edge: Feeling Precarious in China*, including [China Digital Times](#), [Made in China Journal](#), [New Books Network](#), [Table Media](#), and [View: Theories and Practices of Visual Culture](#). And there will be another interview appearing in *Asiascape: Digital Asia* later this year. We recently talked to her.

Hello Margaret! Can you tell us how you hope your work will impact your readers?

The main aim of my work is to explore what contemporary Chinese visual culture can reveal about topics that are more typically studied by anthropologists, sociologists, and political scientists. My two recent books – *Negative Exposures* and *On the Edge* – examine secrecy and precarity respectively, themes which have lacked a sustained humanistic perspective within the domain of Chinese studies, but which a humanistic lens can – I hope – illuminate in new or unexpected ways. In a sense, this is another way of saying that I take a cultural studies approach to contemporary China, since cultural studies takes the fusion of different disciplines as one of its core principles and sets out to cross the boundaries between the humanities and the social sciences. Another of its core tenets is a focus on the study of culture at the grassroots, culture as more than merely representational, and culture as a site of political struggle. This bottom-up, intensely dynamic approach to cultural practices is vital when looking at contentious topics such as secrecy and precarity, as these societal conditions are constantly generating novel and non-elite forms of culture which often seek to make a directed political intervention.



So, my definition of visual culture, and the kind of archive that I work with, is intentionally quite broad. It certainly includes traditional forms, such as painting and cinema; but I'm also interested in memes, social media posts, live protest performance, livestreaming apps, site-specific installations, museum exhibits, cartoons, animation, graphic art, migrant worker magazines, cosmetic surgery diaries, protest masks, AI-generated portraits, and so on. Even today, quite a lot of research about contemporary Chinese culture remains quite siloed within the sealed fields of literary studies, film studies, or art history, even as these practices are themselves being broken open and remade in response to precisely the kind of pressures that public secrecy and precarity are bringing to bear.

Could you please tell us about your next research project?

Face – or *mianzi* – has a long history in anthropological and sociological study as a codeword for status, respectability, pride, reputation. In my new book, I move away from this established notion of *mianzi* to explore the face as something fleshly rather than figurative. In particular, I'm fascinated in the face as a vessel or conduit through which forms of biopower flow in China today. I focus on three facescapes which have shaped governance in China since the millennium: the biometric face, the aesthetically modified face, and the masked face. The face is a zone in which power happens, and the book investigates how spaces of visual culture are both reflecting and making real that process. As I've got deeper into this project, I've been increasingly struck by the fact that face is so persistently overlooked in social theory, beyond the parameters of the face-as-status that I just mentioned. There's work by philosophers such as Levinas and Deleuze and Guattari, and more recently by a few geographers and anthropologists; but for the most part, the face remains almost entirely eclipsed by the body right across the humanities. Embodiment is still an incomparably more commanding subject of inquiry: race, gender, dis/ability studies, sexuality, postcoloniality, digitality – all of these fields have to intersect with the body to stay relevant.

(Continued on the next page)

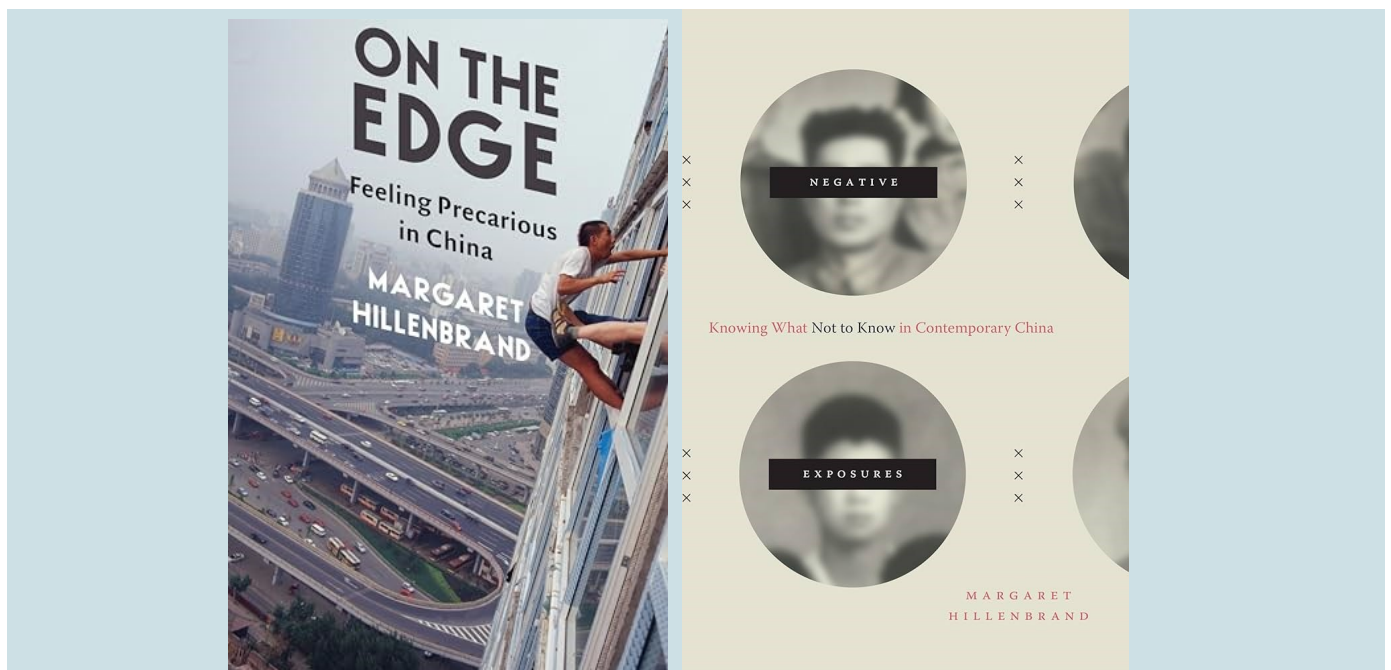
An Interview with Margaret Hillenbrand (continued)

Meanwhile, the face is almost uncharted terrain. And if this is true of the humanities more broadly, then it's even more the case for China, where the focus on face as social protocol has combined with a visual obsession with the particular countenance of Mao Zedong, even today. In a sense, the face is missing in action, even as its meanings have multiplied in extraordinary ways in an era of pandemic and protest, surveillance and surgery. My new book tries to get to grapple with that, using a broad archive range of visual, textual, and digital sources.

How do you deal with the myth of Chinese uniqueness in your work?

That's a really good question and one which I think is on the minds of many people who teach and write about China at the moment. Both my recent books and my new project are concerned very closely with so-called Chinese exceptionalism, the myths of uniqueness that can plague the academic study of China and the representation of Chinese society in the media. For example, in my work on the relationship between visual culture and biometric surveillance in China, I've found it striking that Anglophone media commentators zero in on the use of facial recognition technologies in China as if they were uniquely dystopian – supposedly set apart from the rest of the datafied world in a “Black Mirror”-esque box – when there are actually far more similarities than differences among the major global players in the deployment of big data trained on the face. In cases like this, Chinese exceptionalism can serve a deflecting purpose, as commentators whose own personal freedoms are threatened by algorithmic governance slate China instead of mobilizing about data protection at home. But at the same time, I think it's equally important to take the specificities of Chinese experience more fully into account when conditions such as precarity – the topic of my most recent book – are conceptualized on the macro scale. Until quite recently, China was mostly missing from the discussion on precarity, even as the term became a widespread keyword for the present after the 2008 crash. In *On the Edge*, I try to argue that China is a core site for the study of the relationship between precarity, citizenship, and cultural creativity – so much so that conditions there actually mandate a qualitative shift in global understandings of precarious experience. So, it may be the case that exceptionalism as a prejudicial, pernicious myth needs to be balanced out with a due recognition of how research about China can move the dial on questions in which the perspectives of the Global North still predominate.

Thank you so much. We look forward to your future publications!



An Interview with Dr Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova, China Centre Academic Visitor

Dr Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova is Director of the China Studies Centre and Head of the PhD Programme in Social Sciences, Rīgas Stradiņa universitāte, Latvija. She is the author of *Perfect Imbalance: China And Russia* (World Scientific Publishing Company 2022).

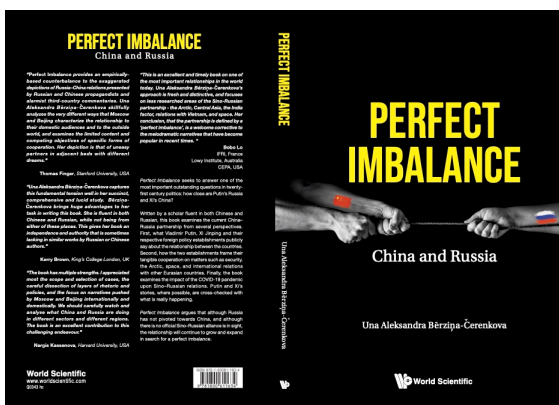
Could you please tell us about your research background and experiences?

As I was doing my BA in Asian Studies in Riga, Latvia, some 20 years ago, an opportunity came up to spend a year doing language training in Beijing. That determined my professional path — I went on to do an MA and PhD in Political Science, working in Discourse Analysis applied to Chinese political texts, and spending a few more years in China along the way. During that period I was also working as an official interpreter, which took me to people and rooms I had never imagined I would visit. This only fuelled my interest in International Relations. Now I am running Riga Stradiņa University China Studies Centre, directing the PhD Programme in Social Sciences and teaching courses on China's politics — which are dream jobs, actually, as, thanks to the students, I get everyday access to PhD seminars, topics, and methodology debates. This is why the stay at the University of Oxford China Centre is such a great fit — it is helpful not just from an academic and research standpoint, but also as an administrative and institutional learning exercise.



Could you please tell us about your work on China and Russia? What is your view on China-Russia Relations?

During my Fulbright stay at the Stanford University Center for East Asian Studies a few years ago, a group of colleagues asked me if I'd consider giving a talk on the China-Russia relationship. I knew both languages, but I had never seriously considered the Russian political discourse for my research before. The more I looked, the more curious and complex the topic seemed. That afternoon seminar gave me so many ideas that I published a book on the topic two years later: *Perfect Imbalance: China and Russia*, and this line of research has stayed with me since. In fact, my Oxford project is an analysis of the bilateral relationship based on archival sources and documents in Chinese and Russian, from the 16th century onwards. Another direction of my work is more hands-on, more policy oriented. I write on European and NATO China policy for the European Think Tank Network on China (ETNC), China Observers in Central and Eastern Europe (CHOICE), Digital Power China, and the Latvian Institute of International Affairs. Just a couple of weeks ago a group of us published a study requested by the AFET committee at the European Parliament: "EU-China relations: De-risking or de-coupling – the future of the EU strategy towards China".



The Russia-China relationship is a partnership: both parties agree on certain – not all – issues across a wide range of domains, be it politics, economy, security, or even values. This is not an alliance in a narrow sense, as the institutional design on both sides does not allow for a routine exchange of limited access information across the border. There is also no treaty of military support if the other side enters a conflict. That said, the shared dislike for the US-led global security architecture is a powerful motivation for cooperation, as China's tacit support of the Russian invasion in Ukraine shows. As long as both sides agree that the de-Americanisation of their respective spheres of interest is a shared strategic goal, veiled in the narrative of "multipolarity", Moscow and Beijing will strive to keep a lid on any bilateral frictions.

What are the other projects are you involved in?

I am now also working on a very exciting topic — information manipulation and interference. Our Horizon Europe funded consortium "DE-CONSPIRATOR: Detecting and Countering Information Suppression from A Transnational Perspective", chaired by Özyeğin University, is in its first year. My main responsibility is qualitative research of China-related material, but given the interdisciplinary work of the consortium it also provides qualitative geeks like myself with learning opportunities of **quant** methodologies. Meanwhile, I am enthusiastic to cheer my PhD students along, to continue working in the international research consortia that we are a part of, and to invest in international area studies communities. We are finishing a couple of project proposals, so fingers crossed!

An Interview with Yang Han, China Centre DPhil Associate

Yang Han is a China Centre DPhil Associate, a doctoral candidate at the Department of Politics and International Relations, and a Swire Scholar at St Antony's College. Her research focuses on contemporary China-Africa relations, exploring China's outlook on international hierarchies through its discourse on Africa with a particular focus on the intersections of race, class and gender.

Could you please tell us more about yourself and your research?

Yes. I'm a DPhil candidate in International Relations and a DPhil Associate at the China Centre. I obtained my first degree in International Politics and Psychology from Peking University, followed by my master's study in International Relations (Research) at London School of Economics and Political Science. Critical international relations theory has long been an academic interest of mine. For my PhD research, I study hierarchies in international relations from a critical IR perspective. Focusing on China's discourses on Africa in the 21st century, I propose a theory that addresses the fluidity of hierarchization practices expressed in the languages of modernity, race, culture, as well as class and gender. Particularly, I observe many parallels across discourses under varied hierarchizing categories, such as race, class, culture, and gender, all interestingly articulated in modernist language. This further raises questions about the most appropriate prisms through which we can understand international hierarchies and the discursive processes involved in hierarchy-building. I'm also very interested in feminism in International Relations, which sparked my interest in doing work on gender.

What do you enjoy most about your programme?

The highlight of my study at Oxford is the multidisciplinary experiences offered by both the China Centre and my Department (DPIR), where I benefit from the privilege of learning from fellow researchers across the fields of politics, history, sociology, and more. I am very grateful for many inspiring conversations and exchanges with them, which have directly shaped my research. I've also had the opportunities to work with UNIDO, ILO, UNICEF and national governments to advise on gender mainstreaming and other social equality agendas. I enjoy the experience of collecting data from fieldwork, analysing the baseline situation and making gender action plans accordingly for gender mainstreaming in industrial transformation and social welfare projects in different parts of the world.



What are your career goals?

As a job market candidate, my passion for research and teaching motivates me to pursue an academic career upon graduation. I have been teaching both at the University of Oxford and Ruskin College. At Oxford, I deliver tutorials to undergraduate students on Politics in China, International Relations theories, as well as International Relations in the Era of the Cold War. I have also been supervising undergraduate dissertations with a focus on Chinese foreign relations. At Ruskin, I am currently offering two undergraduate modules, i.e., Theories of International Relations and Politics of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, which I convene and co-teach with two other lecturers. I thoroughly enjoy teaching and growing with my students. It has been a great pleasure to inspire and be inspired from thought-provoking questions in highly interactive classrooms.

News Highlights

Professor Vivienne Shue awarded Honorary Membership of Trevelyan College



On 28 November 2023, Professor Vivienne Shue delivered a lecture titled “China as a Civilisational Power” at Durham University, which surveyed the historical, philosophical, and cultural background which led to China’s recent launching of its major “Global Civilisation Initiative”. The lecture was part of this year’s Trevelyan College Global Dynamics Lecture Series. While visiting Trevelyan, Professor Shue was awarded an honorary membership of the College.

Professor Tian Yuan Tan interviewed by the *Comparative Literature & World Literature* journal and delivered international conference keynote lecture



Professor Tian Yuan Tan was interviewed by the *Comparative Literature & World Literature* journal: “‘Reciprocal Gaze’ in the Age of Globalisation and Digital Humanities: An Interview with Professor Tan Tian Yuan”. Click [here](#) to read the interview.

He was also invited to give a keynote lecture at the 4th International Conference on Early Modern Visuality and Cultural Change, Chung-cheng University, 26 April 2024. Click [here](#) for details.

Professor Henrietta Harrison interviewed on her new project “1949: A Year of Choice”

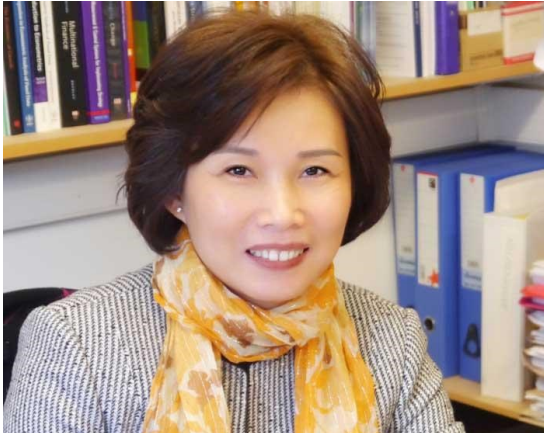


Professor Henrietta Harrison was invited by the Guo Tingyi Library librarian to talk about her recent research on the 1949 revolution. Her work examines how Chinese people lived, felt and made choices during the changes of 1949, from the perspective of personal life experience. Professor Harrison shared her insights on conducting six-week preliminary research at the Academia Sinica in September and October 2023, perusing a number of diary materials in the Kwok Ting Yi Library.

Click [here](#) to read more.

News Highlights

Professor Xiaolan Fu invited to write an article for *Project Syndicate*



Professor Xiaolan Fu published an article entitled “Will Today’s Tech Wave Drown Developing Countries?” in *Project Syndicate*.

We are living through humanity’s fourth industrial revolution, which is largely driven by breakthroughs in digital technologies. ... For developing countries, the implications are profound, and questions concerning policy choices and the “appropriateness” of new technologies have become urgent.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Professor Jennifer Altehenger, Co-Director of the Oxford Centre for Global History, co-sponsored a workshop



Professor Jennifer Altehenger, as Co-Director of the Oxford Centre for Global History, co-sponsored a workshop on “‘Domicide’: State Violence and the Destruction of Home in the Middle East and China”. The workshop was organised by Professor James McDougall, Faculty of History.

Click [here](#) for more details.

Dr Ning Zhang invited to lecture at the SOAS Centre of Southeast Asian Studies



Dr Ning Zhang organized and participated in a panel titled “Revisiting Mao’s World Revolution: China’s Military Aid to the Third World during the Cold War (the 1960s-1980s)” at the AAS 2024 conference in Seattle. This event brought together colleagues from Fudan University, the University of Exeter, SOAS, and the University of Cologne.

News Highlights

Professor Todd Hall invited to give a talk at Columbia University



Professor Todd Hall lectured on “Making sense of how we make sense of Chinese Foreign Policy” in the China and the World Program, the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University.

Click [here](#) to watch.

Professor Margaret Hillenbrand invited to give a talk at UC San Diego



Professor Margaret Hillenbrand discussed her book *On the Edge: Feeling precarious in China* with Professor Karl Gerth, UC San Diego.

Click [here](#) to watch.

George Magnus interviewed on China’s economic growth outlook

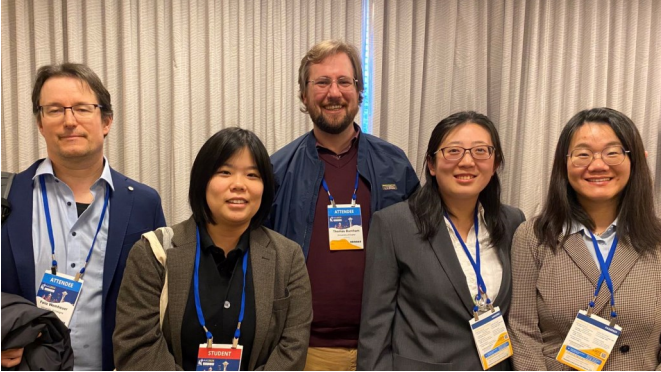


George Magnus was interviewed on “China’s ‘Balance Sheet Recession’ & Economic Growth Outlook” by Public.

Click [here](#) to watch.

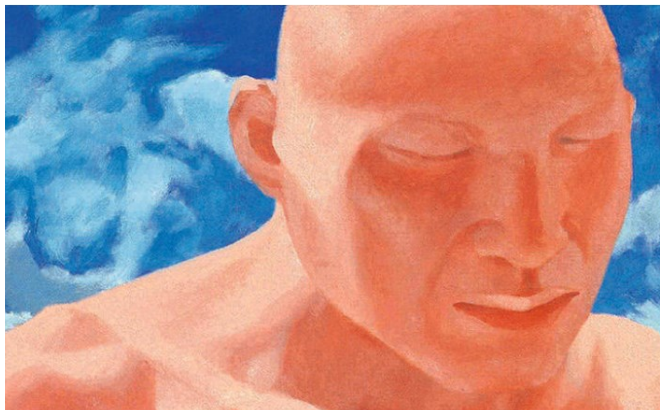
News Highlights

Dr Ning Zhang organised and participated in a panel at the AAS 2024 Conference



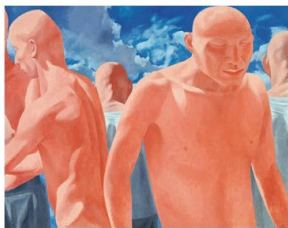
Dr Ning Zhang organized and participated in a panel titled “Revisiting Mao's World Revolution: China's Military Aid to the Third World during the Cold War (the 1960s-1980s)” at the AAS 2024 conference in Seattle. This event brought together colleagues from Fudan University, the University of Exeter, SOAS, and the University of Cologne.

Ashmolean Museum held the “Fang Lijun: Portraits and Porcelains” exhibition

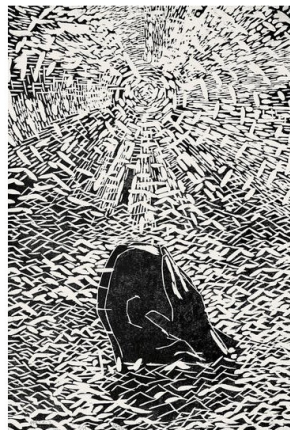


Ashmolean Museum held a free Exhibition entitled “Fang Lijun: Portraits and Porcelains” from 15 October 2023 to 14 April 2024. It showcased Fang's paintings and drawings, and also ceramics produced in the last five years. His works captured the disillusionment of his generation and reflected the feeling of helplessness in Chinese society in the early 1990s.

Click [here](#) for more.



'Oil Painting No 4', Fang Lijun, oil on canvas, 1991-1992 © Fang Lijun studio



'2023.5.6' Colour-glazed porcelain, Fang Lijun, 2023 © Fang Lijun studio



'2023' Porcelain, Fang Lijun, 2023 © Fang Lijun studio

Exhibition supported by:

Clouds Intelligence



Triumph Art Gallery, Beijing

TRIUMPH

Brand support:

LuZhou Laojiao, Guojiao 1573

泸州老窖·国窖1573

Workshop Showcase

Solitude and Community in Contemporary Chinese Culture Workshop held at the Lecture Theatre, University of Oxford, 15 May 2024

In the aftermath of China's strict Zero-COVID, policy, when millions of people were confined to their homes for months in states of isolation, questions about the intersection between being alone and being together are more pertinent than ever. This workshop focusses in particular on the insights their relationship offers into the ways in which seemingly disparate makers of culture navigate uncertainty in China and Hong Kong today. Placing the loneliness of the prison cell alongside solitary spectatorship of censored documentaries; linking online communities of transnational authors to the network of world-cities in which they live; and exploring the overlapping tensions between being singular and plural in contemporary poetry, this workshop shows how community and solitude, as multi-media and multi-scalar concepts, illuminate the bonds of sociality in uncertain times.



Workshop Programme

- 10:00-10:15** Welcome and Introduction
- 10:15-11:15** "Solitude and Community, Singular and Plural, Poet and Class: Overlaps in Workers' Poetry"
Federico Picerni, University of Bologna
- 11:15-11:45** Coffee
- 11:45-12:45** "Digital Documentaries, Solitary Spectatorship"
Margaret Hillenbrand, University of Oxford
- 12:45-14:00** Lunch
- 14:00-15:00** "Writing Behind Bars: The Fandom That Queers Our Political Subjectivity"
Pang Laikwan, Chinese University of Hong Kong
- 15:00-16:00** "In the Shadow of the World City: City Identity and Community in China"
Carwyn Morris, Leiden University
- 16:00-16:30** Coffee
- 16:30-17:30** "Chinese Female Transnational-Romance Content Creators' Cautious Labour in Daily Production and Community Management"
Huang Qian, University of Groningen
- 17:30-18:30** Reception



Featured Books

The Echo Chamber (回音室) by Craig Clunas, OCAT Institute, April 2024



The Echo Chamber: Transnational Chinese Painting 1897-1935 is a study of the global circulation of certain key artistic ideas about Chinese painting in the early part of the twentieth century. Written in opposition to the idea that there can ever be a clear-cut distinction between ‘the Chinese approach’ and ‘the Western approach’ to art, it takes as its starting point the first translation – into German in 1897 – of the ‘Six Laws’ of the sixth-century writer on art, Xie He. The most important of these, the enigmatic idea of *qi yun sheng dong*, was soon rendered into English for the first time in 1904 as ‘The Life Movement of the Spirit in the Rhythm of Things’. But the author of this English translation was a Japanese writer, working in colonial Calcutta, aided by a prominent Irish convert to Hinduism, in a milieu where the Bengali Renaissance intersected with European philosophy. Subsequent Chinese readings of this English translation, which were themselves re-read in turn by early western authors on Chinese painting, created the ‘echo chamber’ which gives the book its title. The book ends with the decision of the painter Liu Haisu (1896-1994), writing in Chinese, to explain *qi yun sheng dong* by invoking the work of English aesthete Walter Pater (1839-1894).

Richly illustrated, and published in a bilingual edition with Chinese and English text, the book draws on a wide range of writers and artists to explore an art world which is much richer and more entangled than older accounts of an East-West ‘encounter’ in art. From the responses of Chinese intellectuals to exhibitions in Paris, to the stormy reception of Cézanne in 1920s Shanghai, this innovative volume vividly lays out the contours of an entangled world of art and ideas.

For purchasing detail of the book click [here](#).

Craig Clunas is Professor Emeritus of History of Art at the University of Oxford. As a historian of the art and history of China, Clunas has focused particularly on the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). At least eight of Clunas’ books have been translated into Chinese.

Based on a series of lectures given at the OCAT Institute Beijing in 2019, *The Echo Chamber* is the first book Clunas has published solely in China, although it is a bilingual edition.

Featured Books

China 1949: Year of Revolution by Graham Hutchings

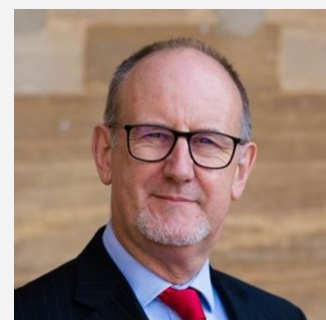


Graham Hutchings' book *China 1949: Year of Revolution* (Bloomsbury, 2022) has been translated into traditional Chinese language by Yanbo Liao and published by Times Publishing Limited, Hong Kong in 2023. It also has a Taiwanese version with a different preface.

China 1949: Year of Revolution follows the huge military forces that tramped across the country, the exile of once-powerful leaders and the alarm of the foreign powers watching on. The well-known figures of the Revolution are all here. But so are lesser known military and political leaders along with a host of 'ordinary' Chinese citizens and foreigners caught in the maelstrom. They include the often neglected but crucial role played by the 'Guangxi faction' within Chiang's own regime, the fate of a country woman who fled her village carrying her baby to avoid the fighting, a prominent Shanghai business man and a schoolboy from Nanyang, ordered by his teachers to trek south with his classmates in search of safety. Shadowing both the leaders and the people of China in 1949, Hutchings reveals the lived experiences, aftermath and consequences of this pivotal year -- one in which careers were made and ruined, and popular hopes for a 'new China' contrasted with fears that it would change the country forever. around them. This book shows how sanqu and drama were produced, transmitted, and 'used' among these writers, things less evident when we focus on the individual.

Click [here](#) for more details.

Graham Hutchings is a Research Associate at the University of Oxford China Centre and an Honorary Professor in the School of Politics and International Relations, University of Nottingham. Hutchings is currently working on a biography of Sir Cecil Clementi (金文泰), himself a distinguished sinologist and one of the few Hong Kong cadets who rose to be Governor of the Colony (1925-1930). Hutchings spoke at the China Centre about his work on Clementi, on 21 May 2024.



Featured Chapters and Articles

Christopher Mittelstaedt, J. (2023). Culture for the Masses: Building Grassroots Cultural Infrastructure in China. *Modern China*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00977004231206177>



This article focuses on the development of “grassroots cultural infrastructure”—namely, “cultural halls” and “cultural stations”—at the county level and below since the Mao Zedong era. Since their formation, the party-state has accorded cultural halls and stations a critical role in propagating policies, educating citizens, and conducting cultural activities. Based on historical gazetteers, Chinese Communist Party histories, government policies, handbooks, and statistical yearbooks, this article shows that frequently changing policy priorities meant cultural halls and stations were wedged in between the demands of the party-state and the people and were ill-equipped to fulfill their role. Mass political campaigns during the Mao era wrought havoc, and commercialization during reform and opening up undermined their relevance. In the mid-2000s, a focus on service provision resulted in higher expectations that were impossible to fulfill. As a remedy, after 2015, cultural infrastructure has been reorganized and increasingly deployed via volunteers and technology. This article therefore sheds light not only on the history of grassroots cultural infrastructure but also its future.

Erie, Matthew Steven, Property as National Security (November 7, 2023). *Wisconsin Law Review*, Forthcoming, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4626317> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4626317>



This article is the first to try to make sense of China-related bills and laws, by diagnosing their common features and analysing their constitutional implications. Specifically, the article focuses on those state legislative sources regulating property broadly conceived, including, land, corporate interests, and data, arguing that while there are national security threats posed by Chinese actors in the United States, the state statutes often go too far, violate the Constitution, and show U.S. property law trending towards illiberalism. States have become sites for the integration of national security into property law because of traditional state rights to regulate real property. Yet the state statutes affect immigration and other foreign affairs matters with China, thus opening the door to federal pre-emption. The state laws have been met with lawsuits, one of which *Shen v. Simpson* is on appeal in the Eleventh Circuit and a focus of this Article. An analysis of a bespoke set of 152 state bills and laws regulating property rights reveals their features and potential pitfalls.

Featured Chapters and Articles

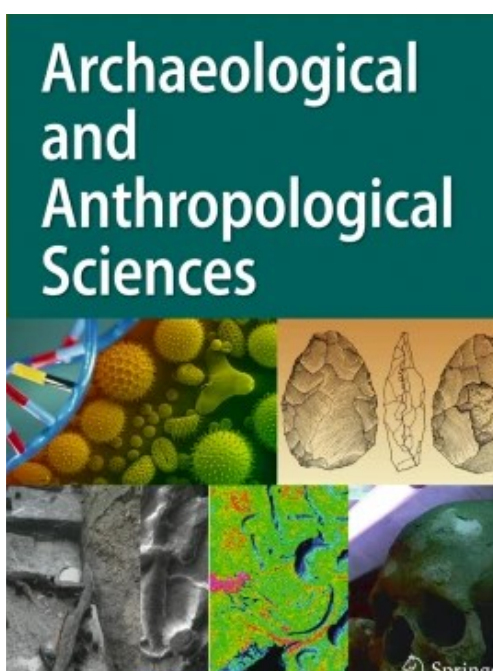
Foot, Rosemary. "Institutional Design and Rhetorical Spaces: China's Human Rights Strategies in a Changing World Order". *Journal of Contemporary China* (2024): 1-14.



This article underlines the need to pay attention to institutional design in the analysis of China's stated aim of leading the reform of global governance. The argument made here is that institutional choice and institutional design matter in relation to the larger question of how Chinese objectives are translated into its desired outcomes. The process of translation is hindered or enabled not solely by the embeddedness of normative ideas but also by design features such as membership criteria, informal or formal voting and procedural rules, the relative power and status of various institutions, together with the relative power of China within these institutions. The ways in which institutional design affects what China is actually able to achieve is shown in reference to two UN-related and one Beijing-initiated international organization that deal with human rights, an issue area where China's determination to effect reform or revision is largely agreed to be significant

Click [here](#) to read more.

Hein, Anke with Yue You, Xianglong Chen, Cunyu Qin, Yanan Zhao, Jiaxin Zhang, Tianyang Liu, Wenquan Fan, Guangkuo Yuan (2024). "Pig domestication and human subsistence at the early Neolithic site of Guanjia (6100–5500 BC), Central China". *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 16, 40 (2024).

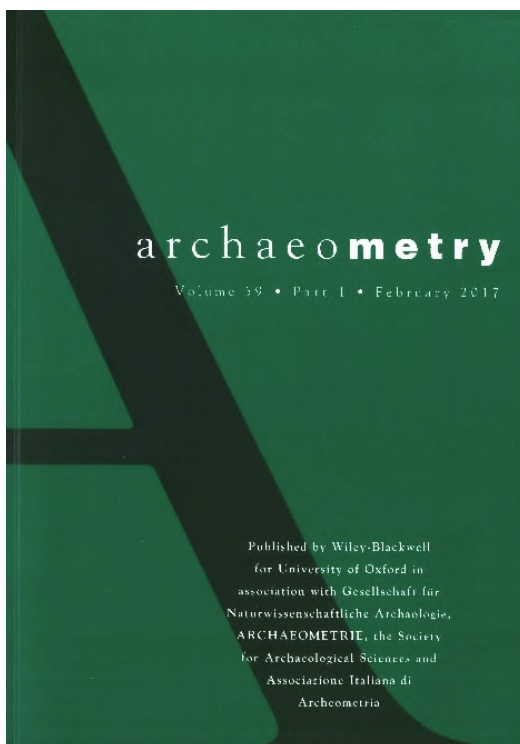


This case study of the early Neolithic Guanjia site (6100–5500 BC) combines zooarchaeological, paleobotanical, and isotope research to investigate how humans raised pigs and incorporated them in their overall subsistence system. Although the teeth (M2) of *Sus scrofa* from Guanjia were all larger than domesticated pigs dating to the middle Neolithic (Yangshao period, 5000–3000 BC) and early Bronze Age (2000–1000 BC), which would suggest that Guanjia pigs were not domesticated pigs morphologically if body size is a key criterion to identify domesticated animals, we still argue that there was human management of pigs via feeding and culling strategies. This study also reveals that animals in the early stages of domestication and domestic plants only accounted for a small proportion of human subsistence; thus, people still relied heavily on hunting and gathering at Guanjia.

Click [here](#) for the full article.

Featured Chapters and Articles

Hein, Anke & Stilborg, O. (2024). "Beyond Painted Pottery: a Longue Durée Story of Ceramic Technology in Pre-historic Northwest China". *Archaeometry*, Wiley Online Library, 4 January 2024.



This paper presents a study of ceramics from Northwest China from the Neolithic and Bronze Age (c. 3300–600 BCE), providing insights into variations in human–ceramic interactions over time and space. Based on macroscopic and petrographic analysis of ceramics from 10 sites, this paper shows that there is much more complexity in ceramic technology than previously thought. It identifies a development from a bi-modal distinction between painted fine ware and rusticated coarse wares shared among communities across Northwest China to strongly localised ceramic traditions with new fabrics, vessel shapes, and decorations, some of them potentially of outside origin, reflecting considerable societal change.

Click [here](#) for the full article.

George Magnus, "China's Economy: Cassandra vs. Pollyanna". *China Books Review*, 25 January 2024. <https://chinabooksreview.com/2024/01/25/chinas-economy-cassandra-vs-pollyanna/>



Some analysts are performing an autopsy on the Chinese economy. Others say it has never had more potential for growth. Who will win in this cage fight of the economists?

George Magnus is a research associate at the University of Oxford China Centre, and at the SOAS China Institute, London. Previously, he was Chief Economist and Senior Economic Adviser at UBS. He is the author of *Red Flags: Why Xi's China is in Jeopardy* (2019), *Uprising: Will Emerging Markets Shape or Shake the World Economy* (2010) and *The Age of Aging: How Demographics are Changing the Global Economy and Our World* (2012).

Click [here](#) for the full article.

Featured Chapters and Articles

Tan, T. Y. "Reworking Songs Past and Present: Literary Forms and Traditions in Chinese Court Drama". *Nanyang Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture* 4 (2023).



Ming and Qing dynasty court plays are commonly read and used as valuable sources for understanding the court performance traditions and practices in late imperial China. As such, however, they are largely studied as a separate field of research in theatre history, in isolation from other Chinese literary genres. To redress the imbalance in current scholarship, this paper reconsiders the role and place of court drama in Chinese literary history and calls attention to the potential interconnections between court drama and other forms of Chinese literatures. The paper proposes a new approach to link court drama to Chinese literary tradition by focusing on the composite nature of court drama texts. Using the Qing dynasty court play *Bayi wu Yuting* as a case study, it explores ways of reading court drama as a composite literary text consisting of various poetic genres and components deriving from different historical periods and engaging actively with these literary traditions.

Click [here](#) for the full article.

Yamaura, Chigusa. "An Imagined Shrinking Community: Japanese Nationalism and The Chronology of the Future". *Japanese Studies* (2024): 1-23.



This article analyses an emerging genre of best-selling books in Japan, *Mirai no nenpyō* [The chronology of the future] series, that present a dismal vision of Japan's national demographic future. Their goal is to provoke a sense of national urgency by encouraging Japanese nationals to feel personally the shrinking nation through imagining its coming consequences for everyday life. Such narrations of an imagined shrinking community act to create a timeless sense of national belonging, with daily lived experience in the imagined future interpreted through the lens of the contracting nation. Importantly, the future that these discourses present is nationalized within boundaries separating it from global developments and intercourse. Ultimately, this form of nationalism is constituted not by dying for the nation, but instead by people seeing the continued stability of everyday life as intricately tied to the fate of the national community. This article is based on Dr Yamaura's recent book, *Marriage and Marriageability: The Practices of Matchmaking between Men from Japan and Women from Northeast China* (Cornell University Press, 2020).

Click [here](#) for the full article.

Past Events

Baillie Gifford Distinguished Speaker Series: “The British China Story”, by Kerry Brown

Professor Kerry Brown was the Hilary Term Baillie Gifford Distinguished Speaker. He gave a talk at the China Centre entitled “The British China Story” on 6 March 2024. The series is supported by Baillie Gifford and the University of Oxford China Centre.

We know broadly what the Chinese narrative is about Britain and its role in the country's modern history. That is told through stories of humiliation and victimisation that are now standard parts of the school curriculum in China. But what is the British response to this - what is Britain's version of the China story? In this talk, Professor Brown will refer to research he did in 2022 to 2023 during a year-long sabbatical about the creation of a British narrative on China. This covers the period from 1570 when the first documented awareness in English of China appeared, up to the present day, and has resulted in the first single volume account of Britain's relations with China from the start to today. Taking this longer term approach exposes new shapes and forces and developments that have driven this relationship, one that could be argued sits at the very heart of global modernity as it brought two entirely different cultural, economic and political forces in direct encounter with each other in ways which are still having an impact to the present day.

Baillie Gifford Distinguished Speaker Series

The British China Story

Professor Kerry Brown

The Chinese narrative about Britain and its role in the country's modern history is told through stories of humiliation and victimisation that are now standard parts of the school curriculum in China. But what is the British response to this - what is Britain's version of the China story? In this talk, Professor Brown will refer to research he did in 2022 to 2023 during a year-long sabbatical about the creation of a British narrative on China. This covers the period from 1570 when the first documented awareness in English of China appeared, up to the present day, and has resulted in the first single volume account of Britain's relations with China from the start to today. Taking this longer term approach exposes new shapes and forces and developments that have driven this relationship, one that could be argued sits at the very heart of global modernity as it brought two entirely different cultural, economic and political forces in direct encounter with each other in ways which are still having an impact to the present day.

Wednesday 6 March, 2024
17:00 GMT
Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre
University of Oxford China Centre

Kerry Brown is Professor of Chinese Studies and Director of the Lau China Institute at King's College, London. From 2012 to 2015 he was Professor of Chinese Politics and Director of the China Studies Centre at the University of Sydney, Australia. Prior to this he worked at Chatham House from 2006 to 2012, as Senior Fellow and then Head of the Asia Programme. From 1998 to 2005 he worked at the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as First Secretary at the British Embassy in Beijing, and then as Head of the Indonesia, Philippine and East Timor Section. He previously graduated from Cambridge University and has a PhD in Chinese politics and language from Leeds University. He is the author of 20 books on modern Chinese politics. His 'The Great Reversal', a comprehensive history of Britain's relations with China, is scheduled for release by Yale University Press in 2024, alongside a study of Taiwan with Penguin Books.

Supported by Baillie Gifford and the University of Oxford China Centre

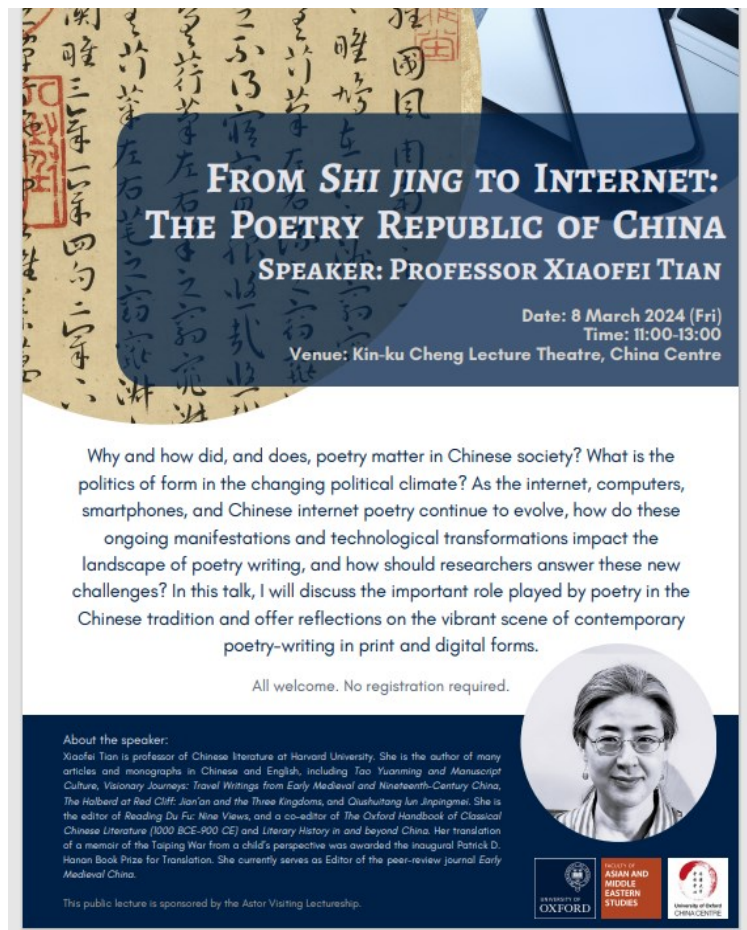
Kerry Brown is Professor of Chinese Studies and Director of the Lau China Institute at King's College, London. From 2012 to 2015 he was Professor of Chinese Politics and Director of the China Studies Centre at the University of Sydney, Australia. Prior to this he worked at Chatham House from 2006 to 2012, as Senior Fellow and then Head of the Asia Programme. From 1998 to 2005 he worked at the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as First Secretary at the British Embassy in Beijing, and then as Head of the Indonesia, Philippine and East Timor Section. He previously graduated from Cambridge University and has a PhD in Chinese politics and language from Leeds University. He is the author of 20 books on modern Chinese politics. His 'The Great Reversal', a comprehensive history of Britain's relations with China, is scheduled for release by Yale University Press in 2024, alongside a study of Taiwan with Penguin Books.

Past Events

The 2024 Astor Lecture in Chinese Literature was given by Professor Xiaofei Tian, Harvard University.

The 2024 Astor Lecture in Chinese Literature was given by Professor Xiaofei Tian (Harvard University) on “From *Shi jing* to Internet: The Poetry Republic of China” at the Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre, University of Oxford China Centre on 8 March 2024.

Why and how did, and does, poetry matter in Chinese society? What is the politics of form in the changing political climate? As the internet, computers, smartphones, and Chinese internet poetry continue to evolve, how do these ongoing manifestations and technological transformations impact the landscape of poetry writing, and how should researchers answer these new challenges? In this talk, I will discuss the important role played by poetry in the Chinese tradition and offer reflections on the vibrant scene of contemporary poetry-writing in print and digital forms.



**FROM SHI JING TO INTERNET:
THE POETRY REPUBLIC OF CHINA**
SPEAKER: PROFESSOR XIAOFEI TIAN



Date: 8 March 2024 (Fri)
Time: 11:00-13:00
Venue: Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre, China Centre

Why and how did, and does, poetry matter in Chinese society? What is the politics of form in the changing political climate? As the internet, computers, smartphones, and Chinese internet poetry continue to evolve, how do these ongoing manifestations and technological transformations impact the landscape of poetry writing, and how should researchers answer these new challenges? In this talk, I will discuss the important role played by poetry in the Chinese tradition and offer reflections on the vibrant scene of contemporary poetry-writing in print and digital forms.

All welcome. No registration required.

About the speaker:
Xiaofei Tian is professor of Chinese literature at Harvard University. She is the author of many articles and monographs in Chinese and English, including *Tao Yuanming and Manuscript Culture*, *Visionary Journeys: Travel Writings from Early Medieval and Nineteenth-Century China*, *The Halberd at Red Cliff: Jian'an and the Three Kingdoms*, and *Qiusuitang lun Jinpingmei*. She is the editor of *Reading Du Fu: Nine Views*, and a co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Classical Chinese Literature (1000 BCE–900 CE)* and *Literary History in and beyond China*. Her translation of a memoir of the Taiping War from a child's perspective was awarded the inaugural Patrick D. Hanan Book Prize for Translation. She currently serves as Editor of the peer-review journal *Early Medieval China*.

This public lecture is sponsored by the Astor Visiting Lectureship.



Xiaofei Tian is professor of Chinese literature at Harvard University. She is the author of many articles and monographs in Chinese and English, including *Tao Yuanming and Manuscript Culture*, *Visionary Journeys: Travel Writings from Early Medieval and Nineteenth-Century China*, *The Halberd at Red Cliff: Jian'an and the Three Kingdoms*, and *Qiusuitang lun Jinpingmei*. She is the editor of *Reading Du Fu: Nine Views*, and a co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Classical Chinese Literature (1000 BCE–900 CE)* and *Literary History in and beyond China*. Her translation of a memoir of the Taiping War from a child's perspective was awarded the inaugural Patrick D. Hanan Book Prize for Translation. She currently serves as Editor of the peer-review journal *Early Medieval China*.

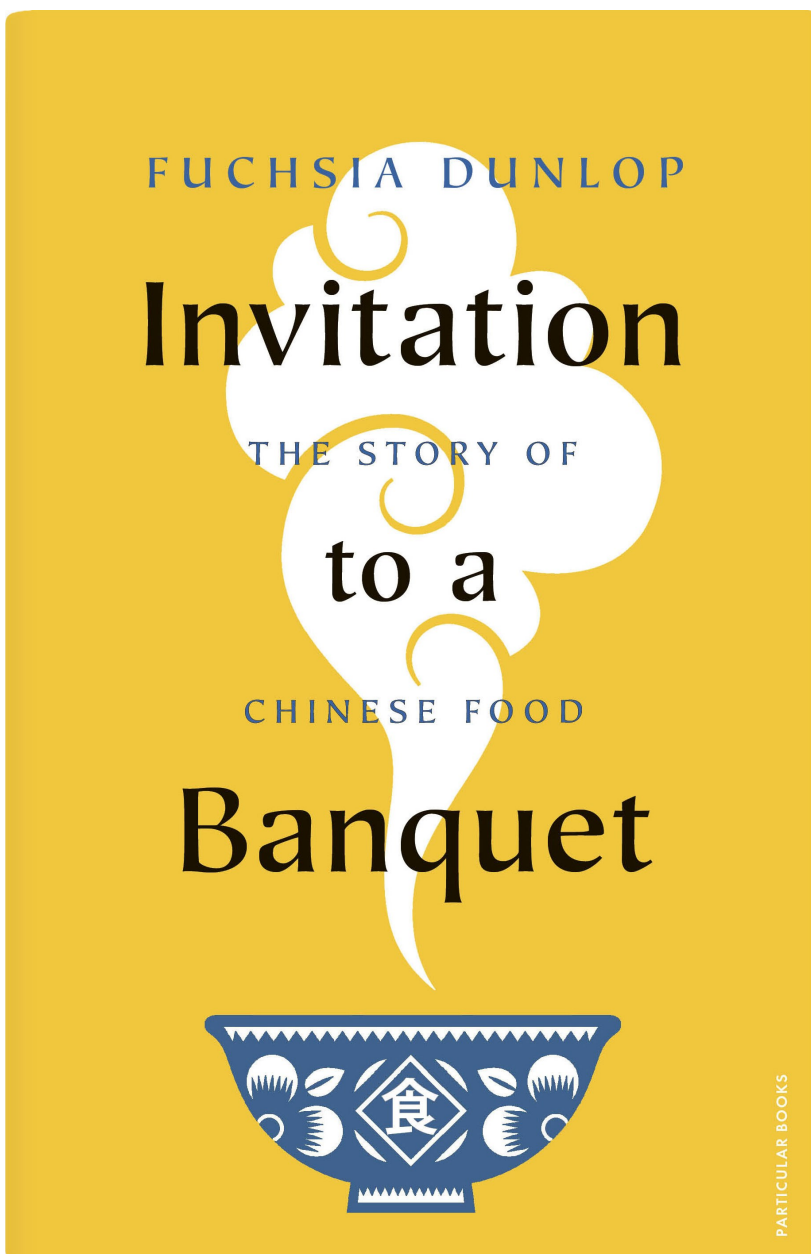
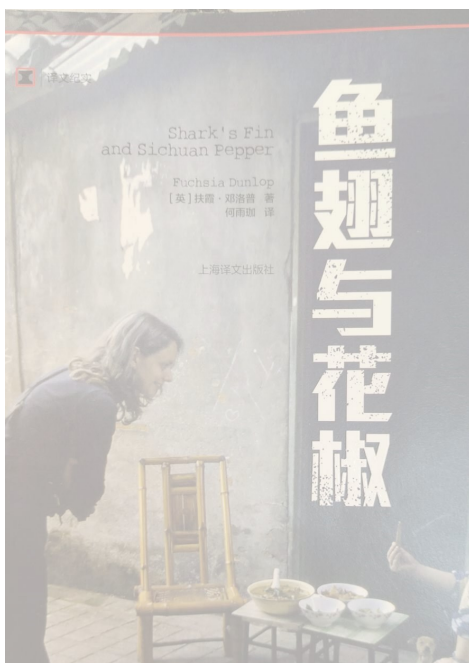
Events and Talks

Baillie Gifford Distinguished Speaker Series

Baillie Gifford Distinguished Speaker Series invites renowned academics and practitioners to talk about their work in the field of China Studies. The series is supported by Baillie Gifford and the University of Oxford China Centre. The previous speakers include Robert B. Zoellick, Christopher Marquis, John Edwards, Megan Walsh, and Kerry Brown.

Fuchsia Dunlop, writer and cook, who specialises in Chinese cookery, especially Sichuan cuisine, will be the Trinity Term Baillie Gifford Distinguished Speaker with the topic "Invitation to a Banquet: Exploring Chinese Food". Dunlop studied at the Sichuan University, the Sichuan Higher Institute of Cuisine, and later for an Area Studies master's degree at SOAS. Her book *Land of Plenty* (2003) won the Guild of Food Writers Jeremy Round Award for a best first book. Her autobiographical memoir, *Shark's Fin and Sichuan Pepper* (2008), won the IACP Jane Grigson Award and the Guild of Food Writers Kate Whiteman Award.

The talk will take place in the Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre at the China Centre on 12 June, 17:00 BST.



Events and Talks

China Centre Talk Series

The China Centre Talk Series is a biweekly talk series run by the University of Oxford China Centre. Last term it included 'US–China Competition: Risks without Rewards?' by Professor Ashley J. Tellis, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; 'The 'Strategic Partnership' between China and the European Union after Twenty Years: Drivers of Change and Continuity' by John Farnell, University of Oxford; 'Upside of US–Chinese Strategic Competition: Institutional Balancing and Order Transition in the Asia Pacific' by Professor Kai He, Griffith University; and a book talk 'Wild Ride: A Short History of the Opening and Closing of the Chinese Economy' by Anne Stevenson-Yang.

In Trinity Term the China Centre Talk Series will feature talks on diverse topics.

Week 0

Thomas Schelling, the United States, and China's Rise

Thomas J. Christensen, Columbia University

Monday 8 April, 12:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 1

Southeast Asia between the Superpowers: Who is Where and Why?

Yuen Foong KHONG, National University of Singapore

Tuesday 23 April 2024, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 2

Unfulfilled Dreams: China's 'Liberal' Communist Party Intellectuals' Struggle for Democracy from the 1930s to the 2000s

Verna Yu, University of Oxford

Tuesday 30 April 2024, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 2

How Can Regulation Revive China's Sagging Economy?

Angela Zhang, University of Hong Kong

Wednesday 1 May 2024, 12:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 5

Paradiplomacy in Hard Times: Cooperation and Confrontation in Subnational US-China Relations

Kyle Jaros, University of Notre Dame

Monday 20 May, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 5

Sinologist, Traveller, Governor, Spy: The Lives and Legacies of Sir Cecil Clementi, 17th Governor of Hong Kong

Graham Hutchings, University of Oxford, University of Nottingham)

Tuesday 21 May, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 5

If Hong Kong is Really Over

Dr Kim Wah Chung

Wednesday 22 May, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 9

China's Military Rise: Two decades of catch up with the USA

Peter Robertson, University of Western Australia

Thursday 20 June, 12:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Events and Talks

China Studies Seminar Series

The China Centre Seminar Series is a weekly seminar series, run jointly by members of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies. Last term the seminars included 'Inside the Global Supply Chain: Transnational Migrant Labor, Commodity Circulation, and Digitized Economies across Taiwan' by Beatrice Zani, French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS); 'Post-Election Analysis of Taiwan's 2024 Elections' by Monique Chu, University of Southampton; Dr Michael Reilly, University of Nottingham, and Jing Bo-jiun, University of Oxford; 'Xi Jinping and Time' by Jean Christopher Mittelstaedt, University of Oxford; 'Pure and True: The Everyday Politics of Ethnicity for China's Hui Muslims' by David R. Stroup, University of Manchester; 'Receptivity to Different Types of Migrants in Taiwan: Civic Behaviour and Support for Same-sex Marriage as Novel Correlates' by Hsin-Chieh Chang, Fudan University; 'China's Mundane Revolution: Cheap Print, Vernacular Knowledge, and the Rise of the Common Reader, 1894–1954' by Joan Judge, York University, Toronto; 'How to Tell a Sensitive History: Interviews with Chinese International Communist Volunteers in Burma' by Ning Zhang, University of Oxford; and 'Engaging with Alterity: The Chinese Style of Gardening in 18th-century Britain' by Yue Zhuang, University of Exeter. In Trinity Term we will also feature a full schedule with presentations planned for every week (time varies, see website for details).

Week 1

Buddhists in the Print Culture of Modern China

Gregory Scott, University of Manchester

Monday, 25 April, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 2

Chairman Mao's Children: Generation and the Politics of Memory in China

Bin Xu, Emory University

Thursday, 2 May, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 3

Scents of China: A Modern History of Smell

Xuelei Huang, University of Edinburgh

Thursday, 9 May, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 4

Navigating Geoeducational Dilemmas: Chinese Student Migration in Singapore

Zachary M. Howlett, Yale NUS College

Tuesday, 16 May, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 5

Captain of the Roving Bandits: Spoken drama and the culture of Rural Pacification in Japanese-occupied China

Jeremy Taylor, University of Nottingham

Thursday, 23 May, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 6

Chinese Businessmen and the Economic Roots of American Cold War Power, 1938–1955D

Judd Kinzley, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Monday, 27 May, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 7

Problematic Analogies: Diplomatic Exchange and the Discourse of Legitimacy in Early Medieval China

Kou Lu, Columbia University

Thursday 6 June, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Week 8

Competition in the Gray Zone: A Cross-analysis of Taiwan and the South China Sea

Diren Doğan, Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University

Monday, 10 June, 17:00

The Kin-ku Cheng Lecture Theatre

Events and Talks

Oxford Seminar Series on Visual Culture in Modern and Contemporary China

The Oxford Seminar Series on Visual Culture in Modern and Contemporary China is organised by Professor Margaret Hillenbrand and is open to the public. Last term the seminars featured “Medium Format: Soil Photography, Ecological Mosaics, Dispossession” by William Schaefer, Durham University and “Revolutionary Becomings: Documentary Media in Twentieth-Century China” by Ying Qian, Columbia University.

This term the series consisted of two talks “Worrying about China: Storytelling, Humanitarian Intervention, and the Global Circulation of Independent Chinese Documentary” by Dr Luke Robinson from the University of Sussex and “Landscape Paintings and Territorial Sovereignty in Socialist China” by Professor Pang Laikwan from the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Week 1

Worrying about China: Storytelling, Humanitarian Intervention, and the Global Circulation of Independent Chinese Documentary

Luke Robinson, University of Sussex
Ho Tim Seminar Room
Tuesday, 23 April, 17:00

Week 3

Paintings and Territorial Sovereignty in Socialist China

Pang Laikwan, Chinese University of Hong Kong
Lecture Theatre
Friday, 14 May, 17:00

Mandarin Forum

Our Mandarin Forum series is a platform that provides a Chinese-speaking environment for academic exchange for scholars in Oxford and beyond. Last term the seminars included “The Vicissitudes of the Image of the Soviet Union among the Chinese Public during the 1950s” by Professor Wang Zihui, Northwest University; “Democracy, Nationalism and Revolution: The Relationships between Revolutionists and the Powers during China’s National Protection War (1915–1916)” by Professor Honglei Cheng, Central China Normal University; “Where is the Way out for the Sino-Indian Border Dispute?” by Professor Xinmin Sui, Zhengzhou University; and “Shanghai A-Fei: Fashionable Rebels and Discourse Showdown in Socialist China” by Professor Yajuan Liu, East China Normal University. In Trinity Term, the following four talks from our academic visitors will be held on Fridays at 13:00 in the Lucina Ho Room.

Week 1

Migrant Approaches, Family Patterns and Social Integration: the Striving Teams’ Family Migration in Contemporary China

Godfrey (Gaohui) Wu, Central South University
Lucina Ho Room
Friday, 26 April, 13:00

Week 3

Collecting Knowledge about Medicinal Ingredients in Northwestern Sichuan in the 1950s

Wuyutong Yao, University Oxford
Lucina Ho Room
Friday, 10 May, 13:00

Week 5

Governance of the Water Community in the South-central Region of the People’s Republic of China

Yunxian Ren, Nanchang Hangkong University
Lucina Ho Room
Friday, 24 May, 13:00

Week 7

How to Become a Sage: The Cultivation Efforts of Neo-Confucianists in Song and Ming Dynasties

Yin Hui, Hunan University,
Lucina Ho Room
Friday, 7 June, 13:00

Events and Talks

International History of East Asia Seminar

Hilary Term saw the continuation of the International History of East Asia Seminar Series, a weekly series that covers the international and transnational history of East and Southeast Asia, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The International History of East Asia Seminar for the Trinity Term will be held over four sessions in person or hybrid at the Lucina Ho Seminar Room at the University of Oxford China Centre.

Week 3

The Politics of Ignorance: Rejecting European "Pseudoscience" in China, 1920s-1930s

Mengliu Cheng, University of Pennsylvania

From Brazil to Macau: The Role of the Concept of Lusotropicalism in the Portuguese Colonial Propaganda in Postwar Macau (1951-1974)

Henoch Gabriel Mandelbaum, University of São Paulo

Thursday 9 May, 17:00

Online

Week 6

Modernization and Imperial State-Building in Jinan's Self-Opened Commercial Settlement

Dan Knorr, University of Cambridge

A Frustrated Scholar and Six Appreciative Envoys: Literati Networks in the Early Nineteenth Century Confucian Commonwealth

Zheng Chen, University of California, Los Angeles

Lucina Ho Seminar Room

Wednesday 29 May, 17:00

Week 7

International Literature: The Experiment of a Soviet Literature Journal in China, 1928-1941

Weikang Zhang, Tsinghua University

Management of the Burma Road Transportation

Xinyi Chi, Wuhan University

Lucina Ho Seminar Room

Tuesday 4 June, 17:00

Week 8

Achieving Accommodation through Struggles: Examining the First Two Taiwan Strait Crises of 1954-1955 and 1958

Yi-Chuan Chiu, University of Oxford

Rehabilitating Republican China: Historical Memory, National Identity and Authoritarian Fragmentation in Post-Mao China

Qiang Zhang, University of Nottingham

Lucina Ho Seminar Room

Wednesday 12 June, 17:00

Oxford Seminar on the Pre-Modern History of East Asia

Oxford Seminar on the Pre-Modern History of East Asia is a new seminar series organized by Ross Moncrieff (All Souls College, Oxford) and Chui-Joe Tham (Linacre College, Oxford) to be held at Lucina Ho Seminar Room, China Centre at 17:00.

Week 4

Democracy in Early Modern East Asia? Japanese chivalric 'solidarity' and Chinese imperial "meritocracy" in contrast and collaboration

Kiri Paramore (Cork)

Wednesday, 15 May, 17:00

Week 6

The Disease of Money: Coins, Traders, and Agency in Twelfth-Century East Asia

Mikael Adolphson, Cambridge University

Tuesday, 28 May, 17:00

Week 7

Parades and Power in Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century Japan: The Daimyo of Satsuma's visits to a village of captured Korean potters within his domain

Rebekah Clements (ICREA)

Wednesday, 5 June, 17:00

Week 8

Still Chasing the Xiezhai: Mythology and Visual Representations of Justice in Chinese History

Ernest Caldwell (Goldsmiths)

Tuesday, 11 June, 17:00

China Centre DPhil Associate Seminar Series

DPhil Associate Seminar Series is a series established for China Centre DPhil Associates to present their work in-progress, where they will be given feedback from the faculty and peers. In Hilary Term, four DPhil Associates presented their work, including “Interpreting China’s Grand Strategy: A Case-Study of China-Australia Relations in Xi Jinping’s First Term” by Caixuan Ji (Susan), Area Studies (China), Oxford School of Global and Area Studies; and “Understanding Urban Futures and China’s New Model City: Xiong’an, a new way of creating and living in the city?” by Kevin Wang, DPhil Candidate in Migration Studies.

This seminar featured two presentations by our DPhil Associates.

Week 2

The Victims’ Movement and Parents of Missing Children in China

Haiyun (Helena) Zhao,
DPhil student in Area Studies (China),
Oxford School of Global and Area Studies

Understanding China’s Economic Growth, 1840-2010

Ms. Mengelisha
DPhil Student in Economic and Social History,
Faculty of History, University of Oxford

Lucina Ho Seminar Room

Monday 29 April, 14:00



The slide features logos for Contemporary China Studies, China Centre, and the University of Oxford. The title is "University of Oxford China Centre DPhil Associates Seminar" with the subtitle "Presentation of Work in-progress Followed by Feedback from Faculty and Peers".

Two presentations are listed:

- The victim's movement and parents of missing children in China**
Speaker: Haiyun (Helena) Zhao, DPhil student, Area Studies (China), Oxford School of Global and Area Studies, St Antony's College. The abstract describes a longitudinal ethnographic investigation of parents of missing children in Mainland China, focusing on the evolution of the victims' movement and the impact of social media and technology like Douyin.
- Understanding China's Economic Growth, 1840-2010**
Speaker: Ms. Mengelisha, DPhil Student in Economic and Social History, St Edmund Hall. The abstract compares Chinese growth and productivity from 1840 to 2010 with the UK, US, and other Asian countries, using a dataset of Chinese production and employment.

The slide also includes a small image of a person and a larger image of a person in a white coat.



Events and Talks

Oxford China Reading Group

Oxford China Reading Group is a student-led reading group on Chinese history which aims to deliver interdisciplinary insights into late imperial to contemporary China. It was founded in October 2022. It meets every Friday at 2–4 pm during term time in the China Centre.

Click Here for Readings: <https://tinyurl.com/4pxhk69v>
Facebook/Twitter: Oxford China Reading Group/@OxfordCRG

Week 1

LGBTQ Identity in China

Sang, *The Emerging Lesbian*, Introduction

Bao, *Queer comrades*, Chapter 2

Ho Tim Room

Friday 26 April, 14:00

Week 2

Rural Reconstruction

Merkel-Hess, *The Rural Modern*, Introduction and Chapter 3

Ho Tim Room

Friday 3 May, 14:00

Week 3

Collaboration during the Second Sino-Japanese War

Serfass, 'Collaboration and state making in China'.

Wakeman, 'Hanjian', in Yeh (ed.) *Becoming Chinese*.

Ho Tim Room

Friday 3 May, 14:00

Week 4

Consumerism in China

Gerth, *China Made*, Chapter 3-4 (optional) and 5

Thornton, 'From liberating production to unleashing consumption'

Ho Tim Room

Week 5

Right-Wing Discourse in Online Chinese Spaces

Lin, 'Beaconism and the Trumpian metamorphosis of Chinese liberal intellectuals'

Zhang, 'Right-wing populism'.

Ho Tim Room

Friday 17 May, 14:00

Week 6

Early Chinese Communism

Van de Ven, *From Friend to Comrade*, Chapter 1

Perry, *Anyuan*, Introduction (optional) and Chapter 2

Ho Tim Room

Friday 24 May, 14:00

Week 7

Joint Session with the Oxford Taiwan Reading Group

Topic to be decided

Ho Tim Room

Friday 7 June, 14:00

Week 8

Pub Social

Gardeners Arms on North Parade

Friday 14 June, 14:00



Ox.C.R.G.
OXFORD CHINA READING GROUP

Events and Talks

Oxford Taiwan Reading Group

Taiwan Reading Group is a reading and discussion group co-organised by the Oxford Chinese Studies Society (OCSS) and Oxford University Taiwanese Students Society (OUTSS). A different Oxford graduate student plans every session and hosts discussions about reading materials on Taiwan-related topics. It aims to introduce more aspects of Taiwan, which has more to explore than geopolitical tensions. The topics in Hilary term include presidential election, Taiwanese identity, Taiwanese Liberalism, and higher education in Taiwan. Members of the University is welcome to join the biweekly discussion in the Language Lab 2 at the China Centre.

Week 1

Equality or Livelihood: Yin-Hai Kuang's Egalitarian Liberalism and the Intellectual Obscurity of Post-War Taiwan

Hai-Guang, Yin 殷海光. "Gan Kuai Shou Shi Ren Xin 趕快收拾人心 The Need to Quickly Rally the Nation." *Zhong Yang Ri Bao* 中央日報, 4 November 1948.

Language Lab 2

Thursday 25 April, 14:00

Week 3

Testing Loyalties to Nation, Party, and Family: Reflections on Generational Shifts and Political Cleavages in Contemporary Taiwan

Chu, Deborah. "How Nancy Pelosi's Trip to Taiwan Revealed My Family's Deep Political Differences." *Gal-Dem*, 16 September 2022. <https://gal-dem.com/nancy-pelosi-taiwan-family-political-differences/>

Language Lab 2

Thursday 9 May, 14:00

Week 5

Same but Different: Hong Kong Migrants Settlement in Taiwan

Li, Yao-Tai, and Bin-Jou Liao. "An 'Unsettling' Journey? Hong Kong's Exodus to Taiwan and Australia after the 2019 Protests." *American Behavioral Scientist*, 8 August 8 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00027642231192025>.

Language Lab 2

Thursday 23 May, 14:00

Week 7

Chinese Medicine or Taiwanese Medicine: Pandemic, Regulations, and Taiwan's Nationhood

Chen, Po-Hsun. "The Return of NRICM101 to Taiwan: The Contributions of an Herbal Formula to Both COVID-19 Treatment and Nationalism." In *Taiwan's COVID-19 Experience: Governance, Governmentality, and the Global Pandemic*, edited by Ming-Cheng M. Lo, Michael Liu, and Yu-Yueh Tsai, 227–47. London: Routledge, 2024.

Kuo, Wen-Hua. "Promoting Chinese Herbal Drugs through Regulatory Globalisation." *Asian Medicine* 10, no. 1-2 (3 October 2015): 316–39. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15734218-12341351>.

Language Lab 2

Thursday 6 June, 14:00

Week 7

Special Joint Session with the China Reading Group

Topic to be confirmed

Ho Tim Seminar Room

Thursday 6 June, 14:00



News from the Library

Spring Festival celebration at the Bodleian Libraries

Mamtimyn Sunuodula, Head of East Asia Section at the Bodleian Libraries

Volunteers, students, and staff welcomed 700 visitors to the Bodleian's Spring Festival celebration event on Saturday, 17 February 2024 at the Weston Library's Blackwell Hall. Visitors relished crafting and decorating traditional Chinese red paper lanterns and embraced the opportunity to create their own Spring Festival greetings in Chinese calligraphy, guided by volunteer calligraphers. The family activity of colouring dragon masks captivated many children, while traditional Chinese games such as Go and Mah-jong engaged audiences of all ages. Additionally, visitors enjoyed printing 'Bank of Bodley' notes on the Albion press, which they took home in red envelopes.

Family-friendly Show and Tells featuring the Chinese special collections offered the local community a unique opportunity to closely examine rare manuscripts. Among the highlighted items was a close replica of the Selden Map (MS. Selden supra 105), which portrays East and Southeast Asia. Acquired by the Bodleian in 1659, this map is celebrated for its extensive size and intricate depiction of merchant routes in the South China Sea. Both children and adults were thrilled by the replica displayed in Blackwell Hall and other treasures of the Bodleian Libraries' Chinese collection.

Professor Lai Tsz Pang (John) presented a lecture titled "Flying Dragon in the Heavens: The Sublimity of the Hexagram Qian (The Creative) from The Book of Changes", as part of the Spring Festival celebration. The 45-minute talk, followed by a Q&A session, saw Professor Lai demonstrating the traditional divination process using yarrow stalks (筮草). Seventy attendees, primarily adults, enjoyed this session, and one fortunate visitor had the chance to personally experience this ancient divination method. Dr Weimin He, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers and artist-in-residence at Green Templeton College, University of Oxford, led a dragon drawing workshop. This family-friendly activity was a source of joy and entertainment for both children and adults.

Student dancers and musicians from the PhoenOx Oxford Chinese Dance Society and the Oxford Chinese Orchestra delivered breathtaking performances to the audiences gathered in the Blackwell Hall at the Weston Library.



Alumni Spotlight

Toby Lincoln, DPhil 2009, Associate Professor in Chinese Urban History, Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester

I spent over three years at the University of Oxford studying with Professor Rana Mitter, and his expertise on China during WWII has influenced me ever since. It meant that when I was fortunate to discover a rich vein of archives in Wuxi about the city's experience under Japanese occupation, I was perfectly positioned to take full advantage. My first book, *Urbanizing China in War and Peace the Case of Wuxi County* (Hawai'i UP, 2015), also owes much to long discussions with other graduate students at Oxford as well as the ever-stimulating weekly seminar series.

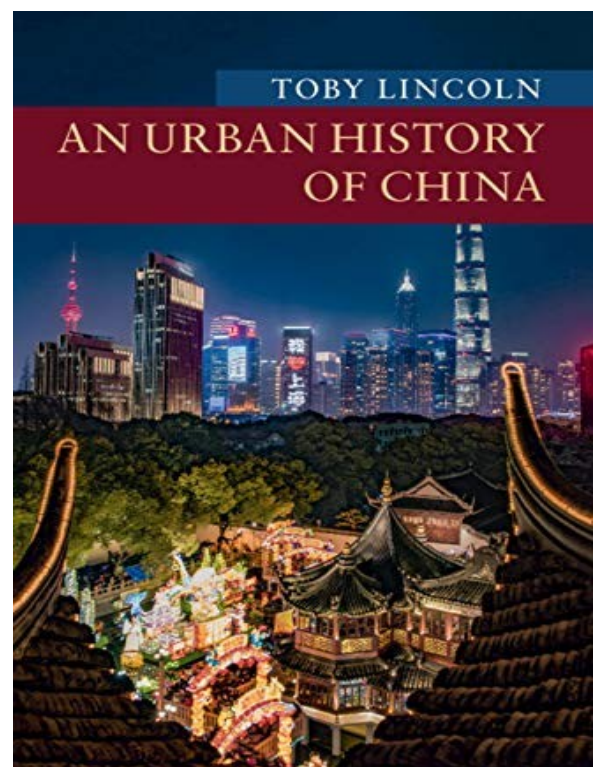
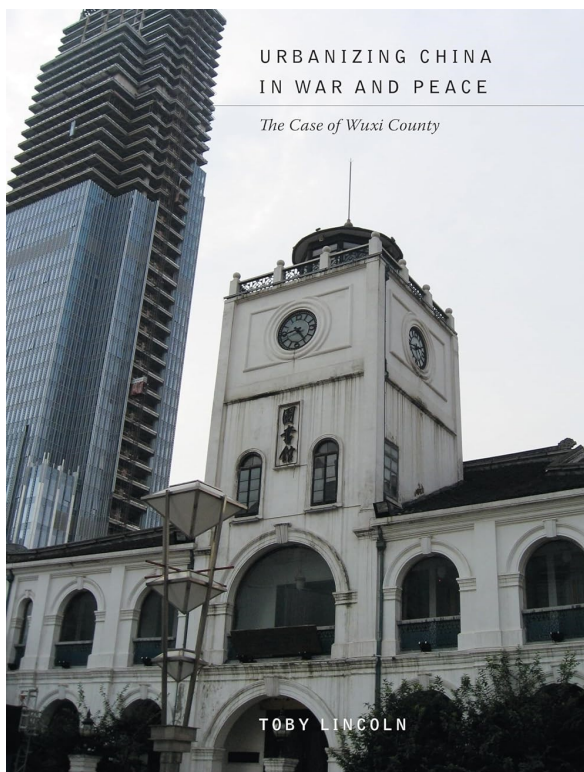
In recent years, I have been engaged on two projects. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to write *An Urban History of China* (Cambridge UP, 2021), which some of my colleagues tell me, students are enjoying in their classes around the world. In 2018, I received an Arts and Humanities Early Career Research Fellowship entitled, 'Postwar Urban Reconstruction in China, 1937-1945'. Before Covid, I was able to visit a wide range of archives and collaborate with colleagues in China.

Back in the UK, my research assistant Lauren Walden, assisted me in co-creating a website with teachers of Chinese language in schools.

<https://chinesehistoryforteachers.omeka.net/>



This project has now evolved into a comparative study of postwar reconstruction that explores experiences of cities like Changsha, Coventry, Tokyo, and Vienna. It owes much to the continuing work of a generation of scholars who have spent time in Oxford's China Centre studying World War II in East Asia. The supportive atmosphere of the Centre has created a global community of historians of modern China, of which I am proud to be a part.



CONTACT US



University of Oxford China Centre

Dickson Poon Building

Canterbury Road

Oxford OX2 6LU

Enquiries: +44 (0)1865 613835

Email: information@chinese.ox.ac.uk

Website: <https://>

www.chinacentre.ox.ac.uk/

