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China through the European Nose*

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How did China smell to European travellers in the past? T. S. Eliot (1888–1965) argues that "the first condition of understanding a foreign country is to smell it" because feeling "truly" is the first condition of thinking "rightly." Feeling and thinking are undeniably intertwined, and how China smelled was also interlinked to the changing Western images of the country over centuries. China was generally admired during the times of Marco Polo (1254-1324), sixteenth-century Portuguese and Spanish adventurers, seventeenth-century Jesuit missionaries, and Enlightenment philosophers. However, from the late eighteenth century onward, during the golden age of Western colonialism and imperialism, European popular imaginations gradually formed a negative image of China. These shifting attitudes and sensibilities significantly influenced how China was perceived and smelled. While Spanish priest Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza (1545-1618) described in his 1585 book that the Chinese, both in their streets and their houses, were marvellously clean,2 the Englishman George Wingrove Cooke (1814–1865) quoted a contemporary French Jesuit anecdotally, who remarked: "Alas! madam, in China there is but one scent, and that is not a perfume." Does a country carry a distinctive smell? It might be challenging to scientifically prove that; yet it is a common trope in travel literature that contributes to the stereotyping or "othering" of a particular country, its people, and its environments. Under the noses of European travel writers of the nineteenth century, China had her own peculiar smell.



The True Chinese Smell

The source of the perceived authentic Chinese smell varies in different narratives. Clarke Abel (1780–1826), a British surgeon and naturalist who served as the chief medical officer on Lord Amherst's embassy to China in 1816–1817, was one of the first nineteenth-century travellers to meticulously document Chinese smells. While strolling along the long, dirty streets near the capital Beijing (Peking), Abel noticed



Figure 1 Street life in Shanghai, ca. 1910. (Virtual Shanghai Project)

a scene that "gave so peculiar a character to the streets": fur cloaks with long sleeves hanging before the doors, possessing what he perceived as "the true Chinese smell." He did not provide an explanation for why he considered this odour to be truly Chinese. In fact, most Han Chinese people would strongly disagree with his view, regarding such a smell "barbaric" instead, as their own preferred winter dresses were made of odourless cotton and silk. This story serves as an illustration of cross-cultural misperceptions that feed into the formation of olfactory stereotypes.

A more common source of the reputed distinctive Chinese smell was the bustling streets of the densely populated cities and towns (Figure 1). During an expedition along the east coast of China, British Army medical officer Charles Alexander Gordon (1821–1899) found himself overwhelmed by the odours that assailed his nostrils on the crowded streets of Guangdong (Canton): they were "not only different in nature from all other stenches," but also "no less extraordinary by reason of their variety—all different from each other, and from all others; they were, in fact, *purely and thoroughly Chinese.*" The renowned Scottish photographer John Thomson (1837–1921) was more elaborate on the composition of the true Chinese smell in his portrayal of the business quarter of Fuzhou (Foochow), a city on the southeastern coast of China:

The atmosphere also is oppressed with odours, in their variety and sublimated offensiveness *peculiarly Chinese*; the unsavoury outcome of extremely defective drainage, which blends its exhalations with the fumes of charcoal, garlic, and oil; whiffs of opium and tobacco being mingled therewith by way of an occasional change.⁶

While this blend of odours may have shocked the foreigner's "delicate sensibility," in Shanghai's native city, where quaint little shops lined the narrow passages, the greasy pavement exhaled "the rich, close, and altogether *peculiar odour* so familiar to all old residents in the Celestial Empire." A decade later, as "the new order of things" began to emerge in the new republic of China, the streets still retained "the grime and the smells," all "typical of Old China." The true smell of China, as it was, may have endured beyond the vicissitudes of historical change, leaving a lasting impression in the memories of travellers.

Although the writers keenly endeavoured to preserve these ephemeral whiffs in words, they also claimed that the peculiar odour of China was unimaginable, an experience that was profoundly bodily

and personal. Commenting on the Chinese method of preparing manure as fertilizer, Charles Alexander Gordon wrote: "these places are offensive to sight and smell in a degree that *cannot be imagined* by people who have never visited China." Scottish female adventurer Constance Gordon-Cumming (1837–1924) made similar remarks about a site offered by the Chinese for the English Church Mission Society's station. It was in the "foul, overcrowded streets" of Fuzhou, and "what that means, at its very best, *can scarcely be realised* by any one not personally acquainted with the horrors of a Chinese city." By emphasizing their unique sensory experience of the true Chinese smell, these writers essentialized China, positioning it as the diametrical opposite of "us," and mythologizing it beyond reach.

Is there such a thing as a "true Chinese smell"? Anecdotal, impressionistic, and subjective depictions of such an odour mainly reflected the fleeting sensations and emotions of the narrators, influenced by a particular mindset. Some other travellers, however, sniffed more attentively and archived specific smells that were characteristic of China, often associated with particular Chinese practices and customs. There was a sardonic statement circulating among foreigners, claiming that "the chief industry of China is the manufacture of smells." ¹²

The Manufacture of Smells

The most frequently complaint-about stenches "manufactured" by China were offensive atmospheric odours stemming from poorly paved streets and malfunctioning sewers, two primary targets in modern sanitation campaigns.¹³ However, these were hardly exclusive to China, as medieval European cities and towns were similarly miasmic and industrializing Europe of the nineteenth century also had its share of foul odours. Another high-profile malodour was allegedly the body odour of the Chinese, attributed to a lack of regular baths and hygienic products, and dietary and clothing habits. However, Caucasians were not deemed agreeable to the Chinese nose either, a deeply rooted stereotype documented even in the same corpus of travel writing.¹⁴ So, what were the characteristic stenches manufactured in China?

There was a "peculiarly obnoxious" smell "without which no Chinese city is complete," derived from the "primitive methods" of manure collection. Utilizing human excrement to fertilize soil was a common practice in the Chinese agricultural tradition, giving rise to a balanced rural-urban ecosystem, an ever-flowing cycle of exchange between agricultural products and human waste. Despite his admiration for the Chinese way of cultivating the soil with extreme care and attention to details, the sinologist James Dyer Ball (1847–1919) commented on the collection of night-soil in the cities and even in every little hamlet, "to the disgust of the olfactory nerves of those unaccustomed to such an ancient mode." Records of stenches "manufactured" in relation to this practice are innumerable in Western travel literature. A street scene in 1880s Hangzhou, as observed by the English missionary Arthur Evans Moule (1836–1918), was a symphony of exotic sound and smell: the shouts of the scavengers, carrying the sewage of the city "in open buckets" to their country boats, were accompanied by "the multiform and most evil odours." Amid the bustling crowd of a Canton street, some men trotted along "bearing most objectionable and unfragrant uncovered buckets, inclining foreigners to believe that Chinamen were created without the sense of smell."

Another exceedingly "outlandish" aspect amongst the array of Chinese stenches was connected to a Chinese burial custom, according to which coffins had to be rested in the house until the most propitious day of interment arrived. The English missionary Samuel Pollard (1864–1915) provided a vivid account of how this primarily Han Chinese burial method entailed "revolting unsanitariness and almost nameless horrors":

What can be more horrible and offensive than to walk into the front room of some Chinese friend's house and to be offered a seat near an awkward-looking mound right in the centre of the room. As the cup of tea is handed to you and you are sipping it and inquiring after the welfare of the members of the household, you are conscious of a *disagreeable smell* which tends to get on one's nerves and make one feel ill. And when you find it comes from the mound in the centre of the room, and that under this, resting on the floor, is the coffin and corpse of the father who died six months ago and has never yet been carried out for burial, you feel very queer. Fancy keeping the corpse of one's father or husband in the sitting-room for twelve months or more!²⁰

Constance Gordon-Cumming's sensitive nose detected an odour of a similar nature. During her travels to Beijing, she encountered the funeral procession of a man who had been dead for about two months. Since the heavy wooden coffin had not been properly sealed, she was "nearly poisoned for half an hour afterwards by the appalling stench which floated along the track in his wake." This Chinese practice is indeed notably stench-inducing, but the scent of death is universal. John Barrow (1764–1848), a member of Lord Macartney's embassy to China (1792–1794), noted that the Chinese bury their dead at a proper distance from the dwellings of the living, whereas the Europeans "not only allow the interment of dead bodies in the midst of their populous cities, but have thrust them also into places of public worship, where crowded congregations are constantly exposed to the *nauseous effluvia*, and perhaps infection, arising from putrid carcases." 22

Dried fish, with a distinctively unpleasant odour to the average foreign palate, represented another unique source of stench "manufactured" by China (Figure 2). The clichéd "spoiled, stinking fish" even found its place in Kant's work as an example of the eating habits of Asian people.²³ Clarke Abel, during his 1810s journey in China, observed that the lower class of Chinese consumed "rice or millet, seasoned with a preparation of putrid fish that sent forth a stench quite intolerable to European organs."²⁴ Subsequently, this pungent smell permeated the pages of travel literature. The British surgeon Frederick Treves (1853–1923) likened dried fish shops in Guangzhou to "depots for discarded museum specimens" and the stench emanating from them was "beyond words."²⁵ An influential travel handbook introduced the fishing port of Ningbo with a cautionary note about "the pervasive odor of drying cuttle-fish" that wafted with "nearly every breeze that blows over the town" each spring.²⁶ The odour of Chinese fishermen's



Figure 2 Fish workers drying and salting fish near the harbor, Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong Island. Photographed by Hedda Morrison, 1946. (Harvard Yenching Library)



Figure 3 The boiling and testing of opium by Chinese men watched by a European man. Wood-engraving by F. Dadd, c. 1880.

(Wellcome Collection)

squid-drying fields in California even triggered a lengthy legal dispute in the 1890s regarding the residency rights of the Chinese in Monterey. Intertwined with existing discourses of racial difference (i.e., the notion that Chinese were inherently repugnant), subjectively perceived offensive smells became the legitimate accused parties in the institutionalized exercise of power.²⁷

Amongst all the stereotypical Chinese odours, the smell of opium might be most complex, intertwined with rich political and moral undertones (Figure 3). Virtually a sensorial symbol of China in the nineteenth century, opium smelled evil and represented China's illness, moral degeneration, and shame. British missionary Edwin Dukes (1847–1930) remarked on the pervasiveness of opium in Chinese inns, calling it "a great nuisance...for the smell of the fumes is very *vile* and *sickening*." When discussing hiring chairbearers, he wrote, "one is obliged to look at them—and shall I say, smell them?—to calculate whether they *shek-in* (eat smoke) ." The nose was engaged in making both practical and moral judgements simultaneously. However, the moral judgement was not necessarily directed solely at the Chinese. In fact, there was no shortage of criticism from home and some church leaders in England even labelled the opium trade a "national sin." Therefore, the perception of the fumes of opium as baneful, wicked, and abominable might have resulted from the coordination of feeling and thinking. Opium does not inherently have a sickly smell; in fact, during its heyday when opium was a symbol of taste relished by the privileged classes in China, it smelled fragrant, as illustrated in a poem written by the future emperor Daoguang 道光 (1782–1850) in the early nineteenth century:

Sharpen wood into a hollow pipe,
Give it a copper head and tail,
Stuff the eye with bamboo shavings,
Watch the cloud ascend from nostril.
Inhale and exhale, *fragrance* rises,
Ambience deepens and thickens
When it is stagnant, it is really as if
Mountains and clouds emerge in distant sea.³¹

The polarized olfactory perception of opium demonstrates that the sense of smell is more ambivalent than commonly assumed, begging for carefully contextualized readings and interpretations. Amidst the vast array of stenches "manufactured" in China, it's worth noting that China also boasted a profusion of scents appreciated by European noses of the time.

Nature's Incense

"The Chinese are fond of flowers," as observed by the English missionary Mary Bryson (?–1913). Sweet floral scents—what she referred to as "Nature's incense"—seemed "for a time almost to overpower the vile odours which rise from the crowded streets of every Chinese city."³² The seasonal cycle of Chinese flowers and their fragrances were documented at great length in the writings of Alicia Little (1845–1926, aka Mrs Archibald Little):

Among wild flowers the *narcissus* and the *banksia* bloom in March and April, when the rocky hills become red with *azaleas* for hundreds of miles, *wisteria* hanging there in festoons. In April

also beans are in flower, and these with the yellow blossoms of the oil-plant make it indeed a fragrant month. In May the country air is sweet with wild honeysuckle and dog-rose. In June follows the luscious gardenia, sold in the streets for one cash a blossom (a tenth of a penny), and worn at this season by every woman, rich and poor alike, in her hair. In July among the mountain glades large white lilies are to be found, with a rich fragrance, but in this as in some other instances, it is a private and local breath, not a pervading odour such as those specially enumerated. In September and October, however, and even in August for some early flowering varieties, the delightful Olea fragrans and Kuei-hua scents the air in city and country alike, not to speak of the favourite jasmine, white and yellow. November and most of December are practically scentless in North China, but in mild seasons at the end of December, and generally in the early part of January, the sweet Lah mei, or waxen almond (cheimonanthus fragrans) blooms before its leaves appear; and it is scarce over before the delicious white and pink double almond, richly fragrant, breathes out the old year for the Chinese, this generally occurring in February. 33

One of the most sweet-smelling flowers mentioned by Little is the gardenia. Native to tropical and subtropical regions of Africa, Asia, Madagascar, and Pacific islands, there are five species in China. The flowers are often nocturnal and are usually "strongly sweetly fragrant" with a distinctive odour. This overpowering scent was found in an Englishman's garden in Shanghai when the renowned botanist Robert Fortune (1812–1880) paid a visit to this newly opened treaty port in 1848. Fortune wrote that this species, noted as the "new *Gardenia* (*G. Fortuniana*)," had been introduced by the Horticultural Society to England in 1845 and was now common in English gardens. In the Shanghai garden, the bushes were "covered with fine double white flowers, as large as a camellia, and highly fragrant." The heavy, delicious aroma of the gardenia also delighted the British adventurer Isabella Bird-Bishop (1831–1904) as she travelled across the Yangtze valley in China. "Strings of gardenia blossoms hang up at that season in all houses, every coolie sticks them into his hair, and even the beggars find a place for them among their rags," as she observed. Season in the constraint of the place for them among their rags, as she observed.

In the same garden in Shanghai, Robert Fortune also discovered (or "sniffed out") large quantities of the "Olea fragrans, the Qui Wha" planted in different parts of the garden. In autumn, when they are in bloom, the air is "perfumed with the most delicious fragrance."³⁷ The perfume is so intense that "one tree is enough to scent a whole garden."³⁸ Also featured in Alicia Little's passage as well, Olea fragrans is more commonly known as Osmanthus (Guihua 桂花 or Muxi 木樨 in Chinese). Out of a total of 30 species, 23 are indigenous to China. As a well-known spice plant, the flowers are fragrant in all species. ³⁹ Fortune noted that Osmanthus flowers were a source of great profit, cherished by the Chinese for multiple purposes. Ladies wear wreaths of them in their hair, and dried petals are used for "mixing with the finer kind of tea, in order to give it an agreeable perfume."⁴⁰

Another favourite scent employed by the Chinese to flavour tea is jasmine. Native to India, *Jasminum sambac* is widely cultivated in South China for its fragrant flowers, which are used in tea flavouring and in perfumes.⁴¹ When visiting nurseries in Tianjin, accompanied by Robert Fortune, the medical officer Charles Gordon recognized the *Jasminum sambac* and the *Olea fragrans*, "two of the plants whose flower buds are employed to give their peculiar odour to certain kinds of scented tea." These flowers are also used to adorn ladies' hair and to scent the apartments of the wealthy during winter, with "the flower buds being for this purpose collected in considerable numbers, and placed in an open saucer upon the table."⁴² Clearly,

European knowledge of Chinese olfactory practices was expanding in those decades following the Opium War. The intoxicating aroma of jasmine also provided relief to travellers' noses weary of fetid street odours. The city walls of Ningbo were thickly covered with "fragrant jessamine and wild honeysuckle," making leisurely strolls joyful for Constance Gordon-Cumming. On Orphan Island in Poyang Lake, where a stately temple was located during Mary Bryson's impromptu visit, it was "like a garden, the grey old rocks being covered with lovely climbing plants, while the fragrance of the Chinese jessamine scented the air."

Blooming in winter or very early spring, the sweet *Chimonanthus praecox* (*Lamei* 臘梅) and the delicious *Armeniaca mume* (*Meihua* 梅花, or plum blossom; referred to as almond by Alicia Little) hold particular cultural significance to the Chinese, as their delicate scents enhance the festive ambience of the Lunar New Year (Figure 4). Mary Bryson noted that for a Chinese florist, in early spring, "he has the fragrant flowers of the la-mei and the delicate pink blossoms of the almond," accompanied by the "fragrant narcissus" to adorn Chinese homes. ⁴⁵ James Dyer Ball introduced the Chinese practice of displaying aromatic fruit blossoms in his encyclopaedia, a neglected aspect of flower culture in the West:

The Chinese cut off the branches of fruit-trees as they burst into bud, and the delicate tints of the peach, the white flowers of the plum, and the tender blossoms of the almond, are all eagerly sought for, to decorate their homes at that festive season of the year.⁴⁶

Besides these sweet-smelling flowers particularly cherished by the Chinese, foreigners exploring the "Flowery Land" often marvelled at the diverse scents emitted by magnolias, orchids, lotus flowers, and peonies. In addition to floral fragrances, for nineteenth-century European traders, the medley of "Nature's incense" in China was incomplete without the subtle aroma of tea, the exquisite perfume of musk, and the agreeable scent of camphor—three of the most sought-after commodities for export to Europe.

While a significant amount of knowledge about the aromas and flavours of tea had been circulating in Europe, the olfactory experiences of our travellers offered fresh insight into the marvellous scent bestowed by nature. In the heart of a five-gorged valley, as French poet Paul Claudel's (1868–1955) murmuring narrative unfolds, he suddenly found himself in a wood "like that which on Parnassus served for the assembly of the Muses!" Above him, tea plants lifted their shoots and foliage. "A delicate perfume, which seems to survive rather than emanate, flatters the nostril while recreating the spirit. And in a hollow I discover the spring!"

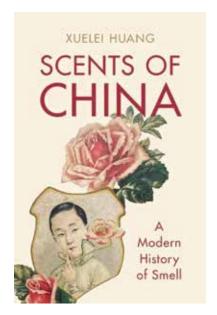
Musk is undoubtedly one of the most treasured and costly aromatic substances revered in both eastern and western cultures. Marco Polo documented this exquisite scent in his travelogue on several occasions. He detailed the features of musk deer and the methods of obtaining the aromatic substance in the province of Tangut, where "the finest and most valuable musk is procured." In Thebeth (Tibet), as he noted, the



Figure 4 Flowering tree by main entrance, Chaotung, ca. 1930s. (Historical Photographs of China, University of Bristol)

animals that produce the musk abounded, "and such is the quantity, that the scent of it is diffused over the whole country." Throughout every part of this region, "the odour generally prevails." Six centuries later, the same aroma still permeated the accounts of Victorian travellers who encountered the valuable aromatic. According to Isabella Bird-Bishop, Kuan Hsien (Guanxian) was an unattractive town in Sichuan Province, except for its strategic location, which made it a hub for trade with Northern Tibet. Musk was one of the most profitable Tibetan exports traded in this town for Chinese tea, silk, and cotton. From there, it was sold or smuggled to neighbouring cities such as Chongqing and Chengdu. "Chengtu reeks with its intensely pungent odour," as she wrote. 50

Camphor was another well-established fragrant commodity exported to Europe and North America. William Hunter (1812–1891), an American trader based in Canton in the 1820s, mentioned it in a poem à la Byron: "Know'st thou the land where the nankin and tea-chest, / With cassia and rhubarb and camphor, abound?" *Cinnamomum camphora*, evergreen large



Scents of China: A Modern History of Smell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023)

trees with a strong scent, are the primary source of camphor. Derived from chipped wood of the stems and roots, as well as from branchlets and leaves through steam distillation, camphor is used medicinally as a stimulant, antispasmodic, antiseptic, and so on.⁵² James Dyer Ball's encyclopaedia includes an entry on it, identifying camphor as a useful drug originating from the camphor tree, abundant in the provinces of Fuh-kien (Fujian) and Kwong-tung (Guangdong). "The odour of the wood is pleasant, and when fresh and strong of some utility in keeping away moths and insects from clothing."

So, was/is there a true Chinese smell? There might be one lingering in each traveller's memories, but in reality, there is certainly an indefinite array of smells existing in any given country. Many above-mentioned stenches and fragrances identified by the Victorian travellers can be conceived as "Chinese" since they are associated with native species, climate, habits and customs in China. However, once essentialized and stereotyped, they became an instrument of othering within the particular socio-historical contexts. In this sense, a decolonization of the nose might be the first condition of "feeling truly."

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- ⁵³ Dyer Ball, *Things Chinese*, p. 126.

「嶺南文化與世界」研討會暨 明代至民國廣東文人士紳古籍書畫 數位典藏啟動禮

香港中文大學中國文化研究所「嶺南文化研究計劃」建立了明代至民國廣東文人士紳古籍書數位典藏(下稱「廣東文人數位典藏」),為全球首個以廣東文人士紳為核心的研究型數位典藏。廣東文人數位典藏收錄香港中文大學文物館及圖書館豐富難得的廣東遺珍,並運用細讀多種文獻資料的方式整理文人士紳檔案資料。通過數位化、可視化的方式,廣東文人數位典藏保存及展示廣東文人士紳傳記信息與珍貴的文物典籍,從嶄新的角度重溫明代至民國廣東文化菁英綻放的魅力與光彩,弘揚廣東文化,展現廣東本有的璀璨人文精神,以啟來者。就此,中國文化研究所已於2023年11月23至25日圓滿舉行「嶺南文化與世界」研討會暨明代至民國廣東文人士紳古籍書畫數位典藏啟動禮,於線上及線下同步進行。

研討會以廣東文人數位典藏啟動禮開始,主禮嘉賓包括一直致力支持及資助廣東文人數位 典藏的創建的北山堂基金行政總裁江馨平女士、中大常務副校長陳金樑教授、中國文化研究所 所長唐小兵教授、文物館館長姚進莊教授、中大圖書館高級助理館長李麗芳女士以及廣東文人 數位典藏項目主持人兼中國文化研究所常務副所長黎志添教授。陳金樑教授於致歡迎辭時表 示:「是次研討會將展現更全面、更清晰的嶺南文化研究視野。」他亦強調:「嶺南文化在香港 有特別重要的地位。」





(左起)姚進莊教授、黎志添教授、江馨平女士、陳金樑教授、唐小兵教授、李麗芳女士

黎志添教授致辭時闡述啟始嶺南文化研究的因由與目標,指出:「學界急需建立一個開放的廣東文人士紳數位典藏以突顯廣東文化的價值與重要性。」廣東文人數位典藏及是次研討會皆為香港研究資助局協作研究基金撥款項目「嶺南文化與世界:廣東文人文化景觀的建構及轉變(1821-1949)」的成果之一,此項目由黎志添教授主持,並與八位分別來自中大及其他院校的跨學科學者合作。黎志添教授表示:「此協作研究基金撥款項目旨在具突破性地展現一群極其重要的廣東文人,摸索他們如何吸取西方的知識文化並重新審視中國傳統,為我們在全球語境下理解多元的嶺南文化提供嶄新的研究角度。」



是次研討會邀請了28位來自不同地方院校的學者,包括香港、中國內地、台灣、新加坡、 澳洲及美國,設九個專題環節發表研究報告及討論。專題薈萃橫跨人文各學科的主題,涵蓋嶺 南文學、跨語實踐、粵劇、語言學、宗教傳統、科學知識、物質文化、教育及文化機構等領 域。一連三日的研討會共吸引了全球多於800人次參與。



香港中文大學中國文化研究所嶺南文化研究計劃

第二屆「嶺南文化研究論文獎」

提交日期:2023年8月1日至12月31日

「嶺南文化研究論文獎」旨在推動國際嶺南文化學術研究,以鼓勵海內外在讀博士生及博士後研究員在嶺南文化領域進行深入研究。

參獎資格:

本論文獎接受在讀博士生及博士後研究員提交嶺南文化研究領域的優秀論文。論文內容可與古今文學、歷史、哲學、宗教、藝術、語言學、人類學等範疇相關。論文必須從未發表或出版,字數在三萬以內,中、英文皆可。

注意事項:

參獎者須填妥申請表,並連同論文以電郵附件方式一併發送至: ics-lingnan@cuhk.edu.hk,郵件標題為「第二屆嶺南文化研究論文獎(申請人全名)」。

評審委員:

黎志添教授、程美寶教授、程中山博士、葉嘉博士

獎項:

論文獎由北山堂基金贊助,設一等獎、二等獎與三等獎各一名,每名獎金分別為港幣一萬、八千及五千元;優秀獎五名,每名獎金為港幣三千元。 獎項將於2024年初公佈。

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地址:香港沙田香港中文大學中國文化研究所105室

電話:(852)39437393 傳真:(852)26035149

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*香港研究資助局協作研究計劃「嶺南文化與世界」活動(2023-2026)



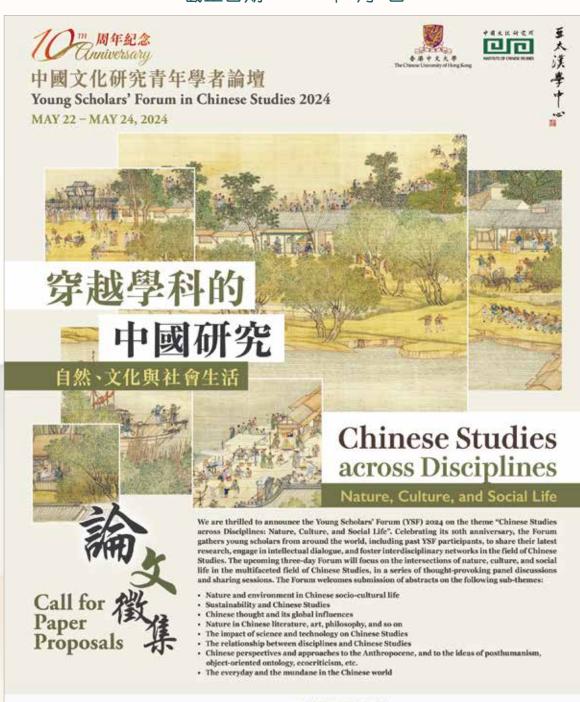




香港中文大學中國文化研究所、蔣經國基金會亞太漢學中心 合辦

第十屆「中國文化研究青年學者論壇」

截止日期:2024年1月8日



ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be:

- Ph.D. candidates (i.e. after completion of qualifying examination); or
- Ph.D. graduates with less than five years of work experience (including postdoctoral fellows)

APPLICATION

An application should include:

- · an abstract of no more than 400 words
- · a short biographical note of no more than 200 words

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中國文化研究所公開講座2023

清末與今日中國

禤駿遠先生 主講

中國文化研究所邀得禤駿遠先生為2023年9月28日的「午間雅聚」擔任嘉賓講者,講題為「清末與今日中國」。

禤駿遠先生是美國普林斯頓大學經濟學學士,以及香港中文 大學比較及公共史學文學碩士。著有The Rising Sons: China's Imperial



Succession & The Art of War、What Bruce Lee Didn't Know about Kung Fu and Other Revelations about China,以及《你說的是從前——清末與今日中國》。在公共事業上,他擔任何鴻燊博士醫療拓展基金會之信託委員,致力於基金會的諮詢、發展資金和在亞洲地區搜羅研究資源等工作,推動醫療創新;亦於報章撰寫專欄,與大眾分享醫學新知、中國傳統哲學、企業管理和歷史等話題。

在是次講座中,禤先生以清末的衰弱與當代中國的富強作對比。首先梳理了清代自1898年「百日維新」起的種種事件,由維新派的徒勞無功、清廷與八國聯軍宣戰、新政失敗,皆使國勢每況愈下,直至辛亥革命,中國進程才迎來翻天覆地的改變。從清末的衰亡,對照今天中國在復興之路上的努力,如在基建、經濟、能源方面的發展,可見兩個時代的雲泥之別。

中國文化研究所「午間雅聚 | 暨 「嶺南文化研究計劃 | 公開講座系列

《海角嚶鳴:香港中文大學文物館藏蘇文擢致何叔惠函牘》述介鄒穎文女士主講

鄒穎文女士於2023年10月19日以「《海角嚶鳴:香港中文大學文物館藏蘇文擢致何叔惠函牘》述介」為題,主講中國文化研究所「午間雅聚」暨「嶺南文化研究計劃」公開講座系列講座。

鄒穎文女士,任職香港中文大學圖書館,輯有《香港中文大學圖書館叢書》多種,包括《李景康先生百壺山館藏故舊書畫函牘》及《香港古典詩文集經眼錄》初編與續編等。近輯《海角嚶鳴:香港中文大學文物館藏蘇文擢致何叔惠函牘》(合編)。

聯合書院蘇文擢教授 (1921-1997) 與國學名宿何叔 惠先生 (1919-2012) 二人同科籍廣東順德,均系出書香



鄒穎文女士、黎明釗教授

望族,從事教育,桃李滿門。鄒女士通過蘇文擢教授五十年代來港後寫與何叔惠先生的信函、 詩詞、序跋,藉以了解二人友誼、生活及身處的社會狀況,並探討早年南來文士境遇及嶺南 文化在香港的傳承。

*是次講座為香港研究資助局協作研究計劃「嶺南文化與世界」活動(2023-2026)

中國文化研究所訪問學者歡迎會

於新的學年,中國文化研究所有幸邀得7位訪問學者,分別是:1. 饒宗頤訪問學人:美國芝加哥大學的夏含夷(Edward L. Shaughnessy)教授;經中國文化研究所訪問學人計劃到訪:2. 美國芝加哥羅耀拉大學的阿琳娜(Elena Valussi)教授、3. 意大利威尼斯大學的榮思彬(Sabrina Rastelli)教授;經近代中國研究訪問學者計劃到訪:4. 中國南京大學的鄧燕華教授;經亞太漢學中心「青年學者訪問計劃2023」到訪:5. 美國維珍尼亞大學的陳鐵峰(Matthew Chin)教授、6. 新加坡國立大學的劉遙教授、7. 中國蘇州大學的王勝宇教授。

為歡迎新到訪的訪問學者,讓他們與中大學者互相認識和交流學術心得,本所在2023年 10月4日舉辦了訪問學者歡迎會。有賴當日的好天氣,有超過30位中大學者於本所中庭出席 歡迎會。



(左起)黎志添教授、榮思彬教授、唐小兵教授、夏含夷教授、阿琳娜教授、 王勝宇教授、陳鐵峰教授、鄧燕華教授、劉遙教授

中國文化研究所饒宗頤訪問學人講座2023

讀如字:出土文獻整理的釋讀原則 夏含夷教授主講

本年度饒宗頤訪問學人——夏含夷(Edward L. Shaughnessy) 教授的第二場公開講座於2023年10月12日假大學圖書館地下研討室舉行。是次講題為「讀如字:出土文獻整理的釋讀原則」,以普通話發表,超過80人參與。夏教授在講座上首先提出現代學者多以「古今字」、「假借字」及「形近字訛」的方法將出土文獻的文字隸定和破讀為通行文字,繼而舉出大量例子,印證這些方法未必時時適用,最後提出「讀如字」這一釋讀方法,建議以「實事求是」的態度對待出土文獻。



中國文化研究所訪問學人計劃公開講座2023

四川宗教空間之混合性、靈活性及包容性:今昔田野考察之反思阿琳娜教授主講

阿琳娜(Elena Valussi)教授現為芝加哥羅耀拉大學歷史系高級講師,目前正通過中國文化研究所訪問學人計劃於香港中文大學訪學四個月。中國文化研究所有幸邀得阿琳娜教授於2023年11月7日下午假大學圖書館地下研討室舉辦了一場公開講座,講題為「四川宗教空間之混合性、靈活性及包容性:今昔田野考察之反思」。是次講座以英語進行,約35人出席。

講座通過對四川宗教空間——或在不同宗教認同之間轉換、或已成為世俗場所——的歷史分析,處理該地之宗教混合性及宗教認同兩項問題。以新津純陽觀的研



究為起點,阿琳娜教授於講座中還列舉了她新近到訪四川時所考察的其他混合宗教場所,包括道教、佛教、三教場所和具多元功能的「會館」等,以展示宗教場所之持續轉變狀態,以及那些轉變在場所遺留下來的痕跡。

變化的力學:10和11世紀的中國瓷器及其美學 榮思彬教授主講

榮思彬(Sabrina Rastelli)教授現為意大利威尼斯大學中國藝術與考古學教授,目前正通過中國文化研究所訪問學人計劃於香港中文大學訪學四個月。中國文化研究所有幸邀得榮思彬教授於2023年11月28日下午假大學圖書館地下研討室舉辦了一場公開講座,講題為「變化的力學:10和11世紀的中國瓷器及其美學」。是次講座以英語進行,約30人出席。

講座上,榮思彬教授介紹了她最近的研究關注,即中國瓷器的發展在十和十一世紀這段關鍵時期受到哪些方面影響。演講中提出並回答了一些問題,例如「北宋



以至經常被忽略的五代時期的瓷器之製作風格和生產,受哪些因素影響而發生變化?」「關於中國瓷器之發展,純粹以窯及其傳承為研究對象的傳統方法是否仍然適用?還是應該從相互關聯和跨領域的角度來看待?」

中國文化體驗系列 最是無情帝皇家 禤駿遠先生 主講

「君君,臣臣,父父,子子」是傳統中國社會秩序的形象化描述,意思是各歸其位,各司其職。那麼,在「君是父、臣是子」的帝皇之家,家庭傳承和國家命運緊密交織,會是一個怎樣的故事?中國文化研究所有幸邀得禤駿遠先生主講五節名為「最是無情帝皇家」講座,以中國經典名著《孫子兵法》分析四件具代表性的帝位傳承歷史個案,探討中國古代的傳統智慧對現代家族傳承的啟示。講座於2023年11月3日至12月1日晚上假大學圖書館地下研討室舉行,共有大約80名參加者。



「學海書樓與香江文教」學術研討會

由中國文化研究所當代中國文化研究中心及學海書樓聯合主辦、北山堂基金贊助的「學海書樓與香江文教」學術研討會已於2023年10月13日於中大祖堯堂圓滿舉行。研討會榮幸邀請到13位來自中國內地、香港,以及新加坡的專家學者,討論香江之文化薪傳,兼賀書樓百年慶典。

會議開幕禮邀請到中大常務副校長及利榮森中國文化教授陳金樑教授致歡迎辭,並由學 海書樓主席馮國培教授為學海書樓一百周年致辭。學海書樓董事及前主席杜祖貽教授為是次 研討會作主題演講,題目為「學海波瀾」,並由當代中國文化研究中心前主任梁元生教授主 持研討會。

參與的學者包括:卜永堅教授、李子歸博士、姜本末博士、徐世博博士、梁元生教授、梁基永博士、區志堅教授、陳芳芳教授、陳學然教授、曹璇博士、勞悅強教授、黎志添教授及盧偉成先生。會議分為四節,發表的各篇論文涉及學海書樓的講學、藏書,書樓成員的作品與學術成果,以及近代以來香江文脈延續與發展等多個主題,從文學、宗教、藝術等多種角度,對學海書樓作為文化與教育機構的發展歷程,以及香港傳統文化教育與研究情況,展開深入討論。



蔣經國基金會亞太漢學中心

訪問學者講座系列

蔣經國基金會亞太漢學中心有幸邀得三位獲「青年學者訪問計劃2023」支持的學者發表演講,與中大學生、教職員,以及公眾人士分享研究所得。

三位學者於2023年11月17日聯合舉行公開講座。講座的第一節由王勝宇教授主講,王教授是蘇州大學助理教授,研究興趣為中國神話、通俗宗教、明清文學作品。他的演講主題為 "Adrift in the Land of Immortals: Extraordinary Ships and Dao in Wang Tao's Late Nineteenth-Century Tales about Global Navigation",從清代思想家、政論家王韜的著述出發,以當中的道家思想為焦點。王韜一生足跡遍佈歐亞,常乘船考察各國,嘗試吸取外國經驗以助中國變法自強;他思想新穎,認為「道不能即通,則先假器以通之,火輪舟車皆所以載道而行者也」,意即西方器物亦可作為承載中方思想之工具,足見其人之劃時代性。

第二節則由陳鐵峰教授主講,陳教授是維珍尼亞大學助理教授,研究興趣為人類學、性別、性別研究、歷史、去殖民化。他的演講主題為"Between Abolition & Opium: Masculinity and Race across Asian & Caribbean British Imperialism",講述了十九世紀英國的殖民主義與男性主義思潮的關係。當時的社會把「文明」、「進步」與男性主義掛鈎,例如軍事力量就是文明男性的象徵,英國上下亦視戰爭與殖民為榮耀,後來解殖的風潮也有男性主義的助力,可見性別定型影響之大,與社會及政治局勢息息相關。

第三節由劉遙教授主講,劉教授是新加坡國立大學助理教授,研究興趣為政治學、政治經濟學、中國政治。他的演講主題為 "Small Banks, Big Politics: The Cause and Consequences of Bank Proliferation in China",以中國銀行的發展歷程及後果為中心。中國政府曾鼓勵民間及企業開辦私人銀行,使得中小企業發展蓬勃,但同時因管理不善,引致地方政府負債累累。有見及此,近年的政策有所轉變,政府重訂監管制度,確保私人銀行善用資產,於投資方面亦設立多種指引,期望解決目前的經濟困境。



王勝宇教授



陳鐵峰教授



劉遙教授



(左起)王勝宇教授、陳鐵峰教授、 黎志添教授、劉遙教授

吳多泰中國語文研究中心

第二屆京港澳高校中文學科研究生論壇

中國語言學的理論前沿與實踐探索

「第二屆京港澳高校中文學科研究生論壇:中國語言學的理論前沿與實踐探索」在2023年 11月17至18日於香港中文大學(下稱「中大」)舉行,由中大中國語言及文學系主辦;北京師範大學(下稱「北師大」)文學院、澳門大學(下稱「澳大」)中國語言文學系、中大中國文化研究所吳多泰中國語文研究中心協辦,是中大中國語言及文學系六十周年系慶活動之一。共有來自三所高校的12位研究生作報告(包括來自中大的黃錦鵬、羅琴芹、曾綉薇和鄭子鑫,來自北師大的劉昕曜、田海丁、王鉑和朱光鑫,來自澳大的叢冠良、戴瑜殷、董文琪和林諾疑),5位教授擔任主持人(包括來自中大的鄧盾教授、郭必之教授和孫葉楠教授,來自北師大的張維佳教授和來自澳大的張璟瑋教授),並進行現場點評。

本次論壇的開幕式在11月17日舉行,中大鄧思穎教授、北師大王立軍教授和澳大王銘宇教授出席並致辭。

兩日共有五場報告,內容包括語法、語音、社會語言學、方言和古代漢語。每位點評教授都針對報告內容提出了具體的指導和建議;提問環節中,其他參會師生也積極討論,結合自己的研究領域提出新的見解,氣氛熱烈。

本次論壇還設置了圓桌討論環節,由鄧思穎教授主持。鄧教授從本體理論、應用探索等角度,對本次論壇的12篇報告進行了回顧和總結,並尤其鼓勵研究生多參與討論、多做研究,為自己的研究總結出規律,以便踏出下一步。參會師生暢所欲言,發表心得體會,對於論壇流程設置、報告形式等問題,都提出了許多新的想法。

最後,鄧思穎教授主持了閉幕式,北師大和澳大的教授也分別發言,暢談參與本次論壇的 感受,以及對下一屆論壇的展望。鄧教授作總結發言,對於籌備過程中,三校師生的全力支持 與配合,以及所有工作人員的付出表示衷心感謝。



中國文化研究所學報

《中國文化研究所學報》第77期(2023年7月)

本期刊載論文四篇、書評六篇,共約二百一十頁。

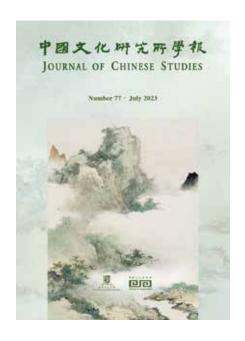
論文

任建敏:明後期「古田模式」下廣西荔浦土巡檢司的設置與調適

吳志廉:從諷勸到剖白:論錢謙益〈呂留侯字說〉兼述呂氏家難

周穎菁:被衝撞的廣州體制?——重估清代中法交往和貿易的濫觴

韓子奇、陳學然:宋王臺文化景觀與香港的歷史記憶流變



書評

De Weerdt, Hilde. *Performing Filial Piety in Northern Song China: Family, State, and Native Place.* By Cong Ellen Zhang.

Varsano, Paula. *Du Fu Transforms: Tradition and Ethics amid Societal Collapse.* By Lucas Bender.

Despeux, Catherine. *Healing with Poisons: Potent Medicines in Medieval China*. By Yan Liu.

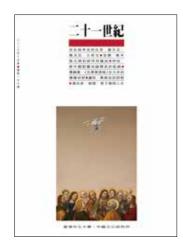
von Falkenhausen, Lothar. *The King's Harvest: A Political Ecology of China from the First Farmers to the First Empire.*By Brian Lander.

Rhoads, Edward. Daughters of the Flower Fragrant Garden: Two Sisters Separated by China's Civil War. By Zhuqing Li.

Schluessel, Eric. *The Sound of Salvation: Voice, Gender, and the Sufi Mediascape in China.* By Guangtian Ha.

詳細內容請瀏覽: https://www.ics.cuhk.edu.hk/zh/publication/periodicals/ics-journal

當代中國文化研究中心



《二十一世紀》2023年10月號,第199期

本期「二十一世紀評論」以「改良與革命的反思」為題,刊出香港中文大學第四屆「陳克文中國近代史講座」第二講「社會改良與社會革命:國共競爭下的道路選擇」的精彩內容,與讀者一同回顧和再思改良與革命的百年論爭。

二十一世紀評論

改良與革命的反思

楊天石、黃克武、王奇生:社會改良與社會革命:國共競爭下的道路選擇

學術論文

宮 陳:依違之間——晚年張元濟的認同和尷尬

林 盼:新中國對舊知識精英的吸納——以蔣維喬為例

曹嗣衡:《毛澤東語錄》在日本的傳播初探

研究筆記

楊天石:蔣介石的功過是非

景觀

盧 昉:「異教徒的詩歌」:基督教本色化與東西美學混合

觀察・隨筆

湯兆昇:奧本海默——物理、原子彈與人生

學人往事

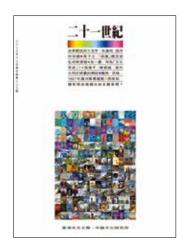
彭國翔:唐君毅與余英時的交往(下)

書評

伍 國:「英雄慣見亦常人」——評翟志成《新儒家眼中的胡適》

秦 暉:「測不準」的康生和測不準的體制——評余汝信編《康生年譜

———個中國共產黨人的一生(1898-1975)》



《二十一世紀》2023年12月號,第200期

今年是中國改革開放四十五周年,如何總結改革成果、深化改革方向,進而實現新的突破,亟待關心中國未來發展的海內外人士迫切思考。本期「二十一世紀評論」以「改革開放:回顧與反思」為題,邀請了三位專家學者撰文討論,希望收拋磚引玉之效。

二十一世紀評論

改革開放:回顧與反思

朱嘉明:中國經濟改革四十五年的思考札記

姚 洋:從改革開放到新時代:中國在經歷怎樣的變化?

何包鋼:從「內外一體」看中國政治改革

學術論文

高子文:民族性、現代性與話語建構:「話劇」概念的生成與演進

吳一慶:何為「文化革命」?——文化大革命發生學再探(上)

嚴飛、武瑞:中央政策分歧與地方派系分化——1967年廣州奪權運動 張景平、陳智威:中國當代水利志修纂的興起——以河西走廊為例

景觀

王 歡:氣功畫、心靈治療與身體革命

研究筆記

周保松:還有理由做個自由主義者嗎?

書評

田少穎:衷懷悲感總無名——評 Vladislav M. Zubok, Collapse: The Fall of

the Soviet Union

曲 升:冷戰史研究的「文化轉向」——評翟韜《文化冷戰與認同塑造:

美國對東南亞華人華僑宣傳研究(1949-1965)》

詳細內容請瀏覽: http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/21c/zh/issues/index.html

第十六屆研究生「現代與當代中國 | 研討班

「中國土地:1900-2024」

日期:2024年1月4日至5日

時間:上午9:00-下午5:30

語言:中文及英文

地點:香港中文大學文物館東翼二樓活動室

合辦:中國文化研究所、蔣經國基金會亞太漢學中心、

中國研究中心



中國文化研究所「中國文化體驗系列」

「南音藝粹承傳」

阮兆輝教授為資深粵劇表演藝術家,七歲從藝,拜名伶 麥炳榮為師,更精研廣東說唱之南音,是少數可以跨行當 演出的戲曲藝人。中國文化研究所有幸邀請阮教授於2024年 春講授「南音藝粹承傳」,教導南音說唱的基礎知識,並於 課堂上示範演唱以及講解唱法。活動與中大音樂系中國音樂 研究中心合辦,取址中大許讓成樓 304室,共十堂,於2024年 1月25日至3月28日期間舉行。



吳多泰中國語文研究中心

「中大芝大句法語義工作坊」

「中大芝大句法語義工作坊」由中國文化研究所吳多泰中國語文研究中心主辦,中大中國語言及文學系協辦,將於2024年3月4至5日在中大舉行,工作坊詳情可瀏覽https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/clrc/。

當代中國文化研究中心

第五屆「陳克文中國近代史講座」

中國文化研究所當代中國文化研究中心將於2024年3月舉辦第五屆「陳克文中國近代史講座」, 榮幸邀請到華東師範大學資深教授、清華大學國際與地區研究院歐亞研究中心主任、美國伍德羅·威爾遜國際學者中心資深研究員沈志華教授蒞臨中大作兩場演講,歡迎各界人士踴躍參與。詳情如下:

【公開講座】

「中朝蘇三角關係的歷史脈絡(1921-1991)」

日期:2024年3月11日(星期一)

時間:下午4:00-6:30(茶點招待設於下午3:30)

地點:香港中文大學康本國際學術園LT2演講廳

【座談會】

「朝鮮半島安全結構的變遷(1970-1990年代)」

講者:沈志華教授、李丹慧教授、牛軍教授

日期:2024年3月15日(星期五)

時間:下午4:00-6:30

地點:香港中文大學鄭裕彤樓LT1A演講廳

報名連結: https://forms.gle/vXyd1dMnH6PtTVcq7

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第五屆 陳克文中國近代史講座 北本市教授 北本市教授

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主編:黎志添執行編輯:香婷婷

校 對:朱敏翎(中文)、王琤(英文) 出 版:香港中文大學中國文化研究所